

PLA HARBOUR MASTER'S RECREATIONAL NAVIGATION GROUP

Notes of the meeting held at Pinnacle House on 13th October 2015

Present:

Mark Towns (<i>Chairman</i>)	PLA, Harbour Master Upper (HMU)
Darren Knight	PLA, Deputy Harbour Master (Safety Management)
Jon Beckett	PLA, Assistant Harbour Master Recreational
Kevin East	British Canoeing
Tony Reynolds	TRRC Rowing Safety Advisor
Bill Mitchell	TRRC PLA Liaison Officer
Harry Whelan	Kayaking in London
Michael Shefras	RYA Thames Valley and London Region / ATYC
David Jones	Association of Thames Yacht Clubs
Richard Hart	Association of Thames Yacht Clubs
David Beaumont	Dutch Barge Association
Mike Thomas	Dragon Boating
Mike Wardle	Shadwell Basin Activity Centre
Banny	National Community Boats Association
Alex Hester	Chelsea Kayak Club

Apologies: Roger Squires (Inland Waterway Association), Pamela Chart (ATYC), Trevor Window (PLA Marine River Inspector)

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Minutes of the PHRNG held on 24th March 2015 were approved.

3. Actions from Last Meeting

a. Kayak/Canoe/SUP Identification Marks

- i. Chelsea Kayak Club showcased their ID sticker trials. It was noted that the use of retro-reflective 'SOLAS' tape allowed the ID numbering to stick well to kayaks while increasing the visibility of the kayak and the ID. These stickers have been tested on club kayaks and after 9 months, are still in good condition.
- ii. Various size and colour options were discussed. Black 40mm lettering on 50mm SOLAS tape was decided to be the best option. The format of the ID would be 2 numbers followed by a 3 letter abbreviation for the club. This would be placed on each side just forward of the 'cockpit'.
- iii. It was noted that craft participating in large paddling events are required by British Canoeing to display an ID when taking part. This project should consider this when developing the ID system.
- iv. HMU stated that backing from British Canoeing would be needed to take this forward. As this would be applicable to all paddlesports, wider discussions by British Canoeing may be needed both internally and with other paddle sport representatives.
- v. The cost implications were highlighted by the group and assistance from the PLA and/or British Canoeing was suggested. Stickers may cost up to £2 each if purchased separately and so, the possibility of bulk purchasing should be looked at to reduce the cost.

- b. TRRC Coaching Qualification** – to consider within British Rowing whether once a Coach has gained his Level 2 coaching qualifications that they are then assessed for their local knowledge operations.

- i. The development of the Coaching Qualification is well underway. The requirement for paid coaches to hold this endorsement is included in the new edition of the Rowing Code. **Action Closed.**

c. PLA Ebb Tide Flag Warning System

- i. AHMR to break down the number of days at each level of the Flag Status for future PHRNG meetings. **Ongoing Action** – Black: 115, Green: 75

4. Publications Update

a. PLA Ebb Tide Flag Warning

- i. AHMR liaised with Environment Agency and TRRC to review the PLA Ebb Tide Flag Warning System. The main points of the review are included as Appendix B and will be taken forward by AHMR.

b. Safety Bulletins – 1 safety bulletin has been issued since the last PHRNG meeting

- i. No. 2 of 2015 - Illegal and Dangerous use of Weighted Heaving Lines
- ii. Another safety bulleting based on the ATSB report on the Kota Wajar / Blazing Keel collision is being drafted. The main causes being lack of visibility, inoperable RADAR and no AIS transponder on board, which will be the focus of the bulletin.

c. Rowing on the Tideway Code of Practice

- i. The new edition of the Rowing Code has been published. Briefings for club safety advisors are taking place to discuss the new code, recent trends in incidents and the introduction of the Coaching Qualification.

d. Paddling / SUP guide

- i. AHMR circulated an initial idea for the chapter headings of the proposed Paddling Code of Practice (Appendix C) which was based on the layout of the Rowing Code.
Action: Appendix C is to be reviewed by the group and feedback comments to AHMR to assist in the code's development.
Action: AHMR is to update the PLA's paddling guide, so that it is dated 2015, after a recent update to clarify that paddlers should not follow the Rowing Code.
- ii. A guide to Stand up Paddle boarding, which explains the recently introduced restrictions on allowing SUP below Putney, has been drafted. Corporate Affairs is working on this guide to make it user friendly. This guide will be promulgated once complete.

e. App / TTNC / Online Events

- i. HMU updated PHRNG on the status of the online events calendar, the progress of which is dependant on budgetary constraints but is likely to be developed alongside an app.
Ongoing Action: AHMR continues to work on this project with our IT specialists and Corporate Affairs team.
- ii. PLA Corporate Affairs team are currently reviewing the Boating on the Thames Website and will look to include MAIB reports on the pages.
- iii. It is hoped that a forum for TTNC members is developed, so that river knowledge can be shared amongst the members.
- iv. A series of river trips between Teddington and Woolwich have taken place for TTNC members which have been well received. Membership is over 1000 which continues to grow.
- v. The TTNC Pre-Season Briefing for 2016 will be on 16th March, where it is hoped that approximately 150 people will attend.

5. Events

- a. Autumn/Winter Rowing/Paddling Event Calendar** – NTM U14, U15 and M53 of 2015 have been published.

6. Incidents

- a. Incident review from 25th March to 30th September was circulated at the meeting, and AHMR ran through the review. (Included as Appendix A)
- b. It was noted that a large amount of incidents were due to lack of knowledge of the rules and regulations on the Thames, including speed limits.
Action: AHMR to send the Recreational Users Guide to Chandleries, marinas and clubs in the Thames region.
Action: AHMR to continue to develop signage at river entry points informing river users of the speed limit and any applicable local rules.
Action: AHMR to give briefings to the ATYC and IWA on the PLA and navigating on the tideway.
- c. Biodiesel – AHMR discussed recent incidents involving fuel supply issues and briefly discussed Appendix D

7. River Works

a. Central/Navigational Channel Arch Closures at:

i. Hammersmith Bridge

- The bridge is likely to be closed to road traffic from Summer 2016 for major refurbishment and strengthening works.
- Even though the project has not gone out to tender, discussions with a possible contractor has revealed that there will likely be a structure in the river to support the main phase of works in the centre arch. This may consist of piles on the northern channel edge.
- PHRNG will be advised when further details are known.

b. Garden Bridge

- i. Conditions imposed by Lambeth Council have yet to be met and construction cannot begin until this has been resolved.
- ii. Current schedule is for works to begin Feb 2016. Discussions with the contractor have produced a plan with minimal disruption to the river.
- iii. Inshore passage of the southern abutment will be maintained during the works, with the bridge sections being moored on the north side of the river, taking up 1/3 of the river for 2 or 3 days, being craned into place overnight.

c. Thames Tideway Tunnel

- i. No.2 Blackfriars will be CTN from mid November for 12 months. A jackup barge will be in place between the 2 bridges
- ii. Sheet piling works for the construction of the new pier will begin in December.
- iii. Spoil will be removed at Chambers Wharf from January (day work only)
- iv. Main activities around the TTT to begin latter part of 2016.

d. Nine Elms Reach – Battersea Power Station/Northern Line Extension

- i. Muckaway operations began last week (w/c 5/10/15) and will continue for a further 3 months.

e. Baynard House

- i. The king piles used for the cofferdam cannot be removed, despite the greatest efforts of the PLA salvage craft.
- ii. The piles will be cut 3m below the river bed.

f. Fulham FC

- i. Construction is programmed to begin Spring 2016.
- ii. The methodology for the construction and barge movements is yet to be discussed with HMU, but there will be no impact on the channel during the works.

- iii. There will likely be a buoyed off area around the worksite, but this will be to the north of the channel on the Fulham flats.

8. Cleaner Thames Campaign

- a. The Cleaner Thames Campaign was discussed briefly. More information can be found here:

<http://www.pla.co.uk/cleaner-thames/>

9. AOB

a. Kew Bridge No. 3 Arch

- i. PLA is undertaking work to look at possible dredging in and around no. 3 arch to improve the depths at low water.
- ii. This could allow rowers to row above Kew Road Bridge without the hazard of using the centre arch and the need for a 'spotter'.

b. Kew Bridge Pontoon

- i. After comments from many recreational groups about the potential hazard of Kew Bridge Pontoon, the PLA will investigate options for it's removal.

c. Kayak Leader Training

- i. Harry Whelan suggested that the PLA should run similar kayak leader training that took place in 08/09. This would consist of a central London trip by around 20 kayak group leaders so they can appreciate the hazards that central London has to offer, as well as a presentation on what the PLA does, together with a Q&A session.
- ii. It was suggested that an upriver session may be of benefit to the upriver clubs due to their interaction with rowers.

d. Red lights on Kayaks

- i. It had been noted that some clubs use red lights when kayaking at night, as well as no forward facing lighting at all.
Action: AHMR to liaise with canoe and kayak clubs to ensure the correct lighting is used. The Paddling Code of Practice will include advice on lighting.

e. PLA Presentations / Leisure User Education

- i. The ATYC offered the option for the PLA to give briefings on tideway navigation to the club members.
Action: AHMR to pursue these briefings.

DONM: 22nd March 2016 11:00-13:30 – at Pinnacle House