



# Thames RC – Basic Safety Awareness



## ALL active members of Thames must...

- Be able to swim 400m in rowing kit, or wear a lifejacket on the water at all times.
- Confirm in writing that they have read the Basic Safety Awareness documents.
- Know how to perform an emergency stop.
- Not use a boat without permission.
- Be aware of the responsibilities of their cox, steer and coach.
- Know what to do in the event of an accident, on or off the water.

## Lights for rowing boats

- White lights at both ends, visible through at least 180°.
- Must be attached to the boat, with a proper bracket, and not to the crew.
- Must carry a spare and a means of fixing it to the boat.
- Must be Safety Committee approved lights (not the tadpole style) from <http://www.bblrc.co.uk/lights/>
- Wear light or reflective clothing.

## Certification Levels for Coxes, Steers and Scullers

This is just a reminder. Please talk to any member of the Safety Committee for further details.

Level	Ability
0	Beginner
1	Basic
2	Competent
3	Advanced
4	Expert

Conditions		Coaching		
		1 to 1	Group	None
Conditions	Normal	0	1	2
	Difficult	1	2	3
	Dark or 2xDifficult	2	3	4
	Dark + Difficult	3	4	n/a

## All Coxes, Steers, Scullers and Coaches at Thames must...

- Be members of Thames.
- Be certified by the club Safety Committee.
- Only go out in conditions they are certified for, with appropriate supervision.
- Log all their outings out and in.
- Make sure their boats are properly lit.
- Make sure all safety equipment (bow ball, heel restraints, hatch covers, lifejacket, cox box, launch kit...) is in working order.
- Perform a risk assessment before every outing.

## If there is an Accident...

- If you fall out, stay with your boat. Get as much of your body out of the water as possible, and swim your boat to the bank.
- If your boat gets damaged, tell your coach, a member of the Safety Committee, and fill in the damage log at the top of the stairs.
- If you have or see an accident, or even a near miss, tell a member of the Safety Committee immediately. They will help you file the necessary reports.
- If you see an accident happen, offer what help you can, but do not put yourself at risk.
- Use the emergency numbers on the safety noticeboard to call for help. (Save the numbers in your phone now!)

## Emergency Stop – “Hold it Hard!”

- Slap the blade flat on the water at hands away.
- Carefully rotate the handle slightly towards you until the blade just enters the water.
- With the blade parallel to the surface of the water, raise your hands slowly until the water is half way up the loom.
- If you haven't stopped yet, keep rotating the handle towards you VERY SLOWLY until the blade is at 90° to the water.
- Keep control of the handle as it comes towards your chest.
- Back down if you need to.

## Seen someone misbehaving?

Crews or launches on the wrong side of the river? Coaches washing you down? Report them online at <http://incidentreporting.britisrowing.org>

**Remember to take your shoes off BEFORE putting your foot in the boat.**

## Risk Assessments

Before every outing, consider the risks that day. This is a list of some of the things you should think about, but is by no means exhaustive!

### The Water

- What are the conditions like? Is it windy, is it choppy, is it dark, is the stream running very fast, is the tide very high or very low?
- Is there ice on the hard, or fog so bad you can't see Fulham FC? If so, don't go out.

### The Crew and Coaches

- Is your coach and cox or steer certified to handle the conditions?
- Does your cox have a lifejacket and working cox box?
- Is everyone appropriately dressed?
- Is anyone sick or injured?

### The Equipment

- Do you have a bowball, all your heel restraints and all your hatch covers?
- Are your boat and blades in good condition?
- Do your boat and launch have appropriate lights?
- Does your launch have all its safety equipment (launch kit, bailer, paddle etc.), enough petrol, a kill cord and a lifejacket for the driver?

**IF IN DOUBT, DON'T GO OUT!**

## Sound Signals

Large cruisers will sometimes use sound signals to let you know what they're doing...

- I am steering right
- — I am steering left
- — — — — What the \*\*\*\*?

## Basic Tool Kit

- 10mm and 13mm spanners
- Adjustable spanner
- Flat head and cross head screwdrivers
- 5m tape measure
- Permanent marker pen
- Duct tape or electrical tape
- Spare nuts, washers and shoe laces

## These are specific to Thames, but please DO NOT...

- ...go downstream of Putney Bridge or upstream of Kew Rail Bridge at night.
- ...do starts or pieces inside the line of moored boats at Putney.
- ...leave damage unreported. It can't be fixed if no-one knows about it!
- ...use parcel tape to tape riggers together. Use cling wrap, Thames tape, duct tape or electrical tape instead.
- ...steal parts off other boats. Go to the spares cupboards in the workshop to find what you need.
- ...leave one single sculler to lock up the whole boathouse and put all the launches away.
- ...use equipment that is not allocated to you without getting permission first.

## Launch Essentials

- At least one life buoy
- A paddle, in case of engine failure
- A bailing device
- A megaphone fitted with a klaxon device or similar device capable of making a warning signal, such as a whistle
- A green launch kit containing: thermal blankets, to cover anyone pulled from the water; a rope of at least 10 metres in length; and a sharp knife.
- A painter (and anchor if appropriate) of sufficient length and strength for the conditions and area
- Kill cord
- Enough petrol for the outing
- Lifejacket or buoyancy aid for the driver plus at least one spare, for anyone pulled from the water
- Proper (PLA compliant) lighting at night
- A driver certified by the Safety Committee!

## Safety Committee – Contact Details

Chris George	020 8874 2013	<a href="mailto:chrisgeorge@rowing.atics.co.uk">chrisgeorge@rowing.atics.co.uk</a>
Caroline Smith	0773 646 9856	<a href="mailto:cs2thecox@hotmail.com">cs2thecox@hotmail.com</a>
Dan Hickling	07714 749 978	<a href="mailto:dan.hickling@hotmail.co.uk">dan.hickling@hotmail.co.uk</a>

## Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency services, including Lifeboat	999 or 112
Chiswick Lifeboat Station (non-emergency)	020 8995 5534
Charing Cross Hospital (Hammersmith)	020 8846 1234
St George's Hospital (Tooting)	020 8672 1255



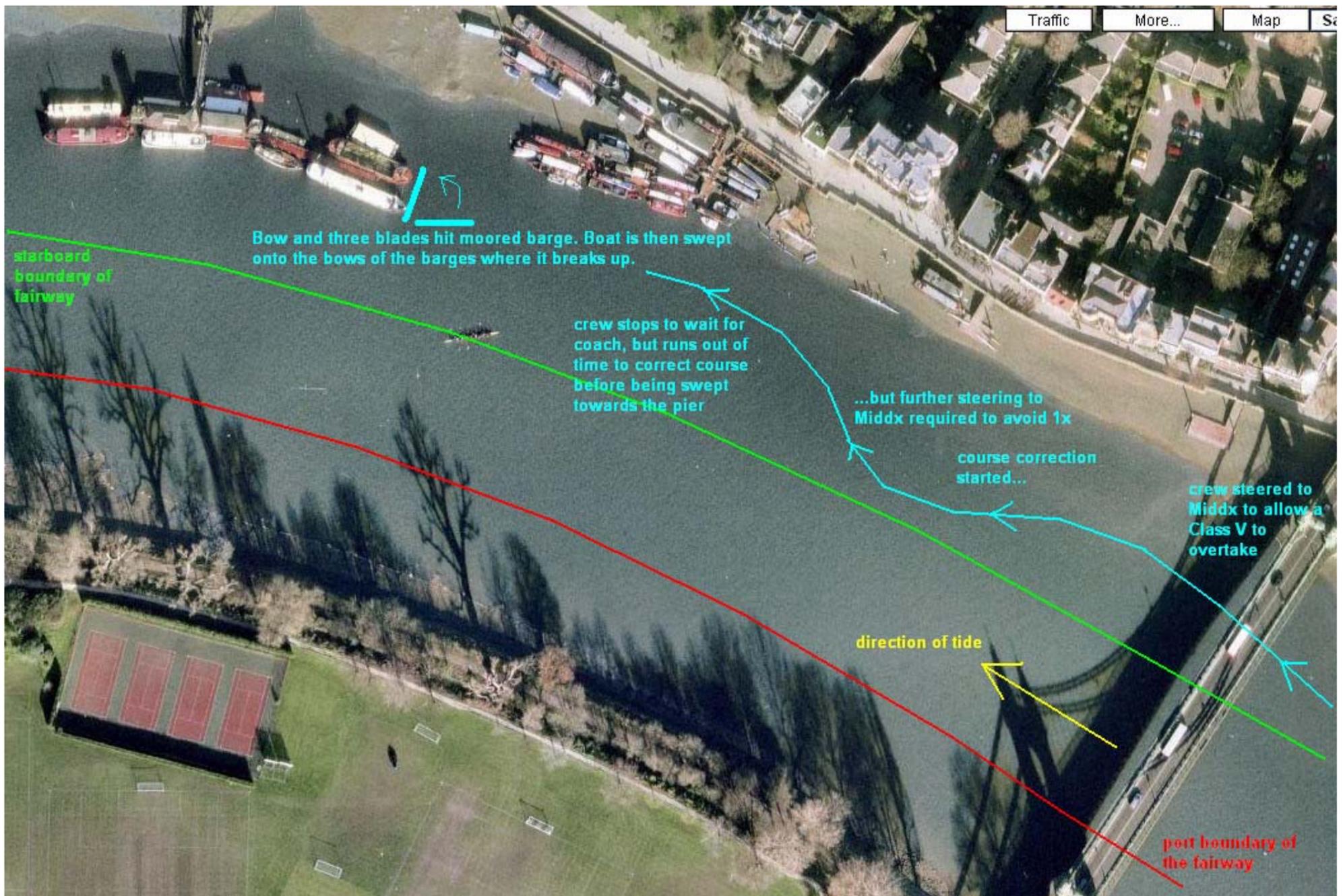
## Dove Pier Incident – Thames RC Summary

### What happened?

On 7<sup>th</sup> October 2006 a Thames novice women's eight was swept on to the boats moored at the eastern end of Dove Pier by a fast-flowing incoming tide, and broke in to several pieces. Their coaching launch, going to their aid, was also swept between the moored boats. All 8 rowers, the cox and 2 coaches ended up in the water, with one of the rowers being swept under the pier. Very luckily, no-one was hurt.

### Why did it happen?

- The crew was made up of fairly inexperienced novices and the cox, despite having local sculling experience, was a novice at coxing.
- The conditions were generally good, but the tide was running in abnormally fast.
- The crew unnecessarily moved out of the fairway to let a Class V motor vessel overtake near Hammersmith Bridge, and a sculler crossing to land at Furnivall (who should have given way to the eight) then prevented them steering back onto a safe course in time to avoid collision with the pier.
- The accompanying coaching launch had let itself become separated from the crew, so couldn't offer advice or direction to the novice cox and crew until it was too late.



### What is Thames doing to stop this happening again?

For the start of the 2008-09 season, Thames launched its in house Steering Certificate. This aims to provide a certification structure for all those who steer boats, be they scullers, coxes, rowers who are foot steering or coaches in launches. The level of coaching cover required for steerers of various levels in different conditions can be found on the front page of this leaflet, and further details of the Steering Certificate can be found on the Safety pages of the Thames website at <http://www.thamesrc.co.uk>

In addition, from the start of the 2009-10 season, all active club members who do not steer are required to complete the Thames Basic Safety Awareness reading to ensure that they have a good basic knowledge of the local navigation rules and safety procedures at Thames.

### What can I do to stop this happening again?

#### Rowers:

- Complete the Basic Safety Awareness reading (this leaflet!) and keep yourself up to date with any changes to the safety information, and any other information sent round the TRC Safety Yahoo group.
- Before each outing, make sure you have checked that your cox or steer is certified at the right level for the conditions, **and** that you are accompanied by a coach if you need to be.
- If you are unhappy with any safety-related decisions at any point before or during an outing, speak up. Your cox/steer and coach have a duty to address your concerns.

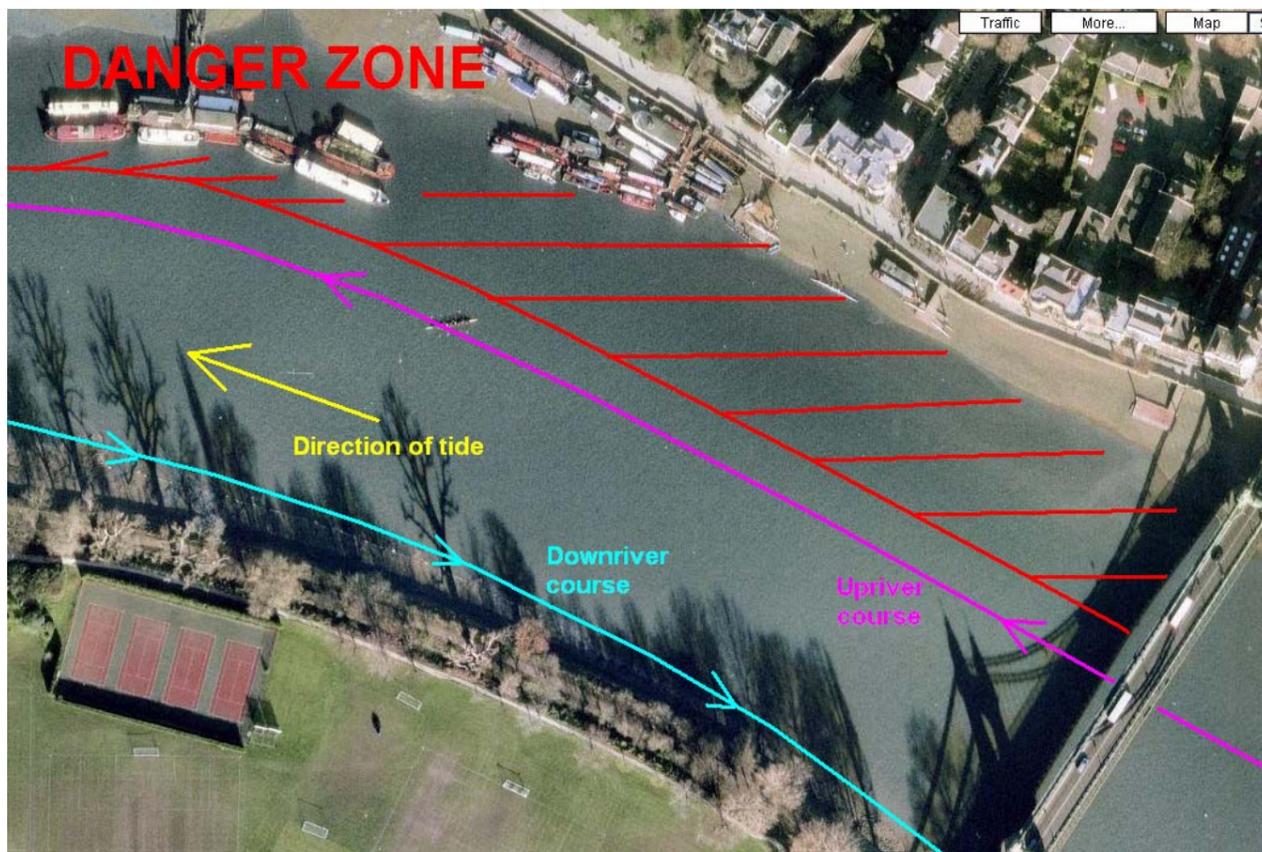
## Coxes and Steers:

- Make sure you understand the implications of being Master of your Vessel.
- Do your Level 0 at the very least, and aim to move up through the levels of the Steering Certificate as soon as you practically can. Keep yourself up to date with any changes to the safety information, and any other information sent round the TRC Safety Yahoo group.
- Consider the risks before each outing and make sure the conditions are safe and that you are prepared for them – lights, appropriate clothing etc. Continue to assess the risks throughout the outing and be prepared to adapt if the conditions have changed.
- Make sure you are accompanied by a coach if you need to be, based on your certified level and the conditions.
- If your coach asks you to do something which you consider to be dangerous then do not follow the instruction. Raise your concerns with your coach as soon as you can safely do so, and agree on a safe alternative.
- Do not steer your boat into the “danger zones” shown below.
- Do not stop your boat between Hammersmith Bridge and Dove Pier on an incoming tide.
- Check carefully for motor vessels behind you before entering the Restricted Zone around Hammersmith Bridge on an incoming tide, and wait before the RZ if necessary. Maintain a safe and correct course through the bridge and past Dove Pier (as shown below).

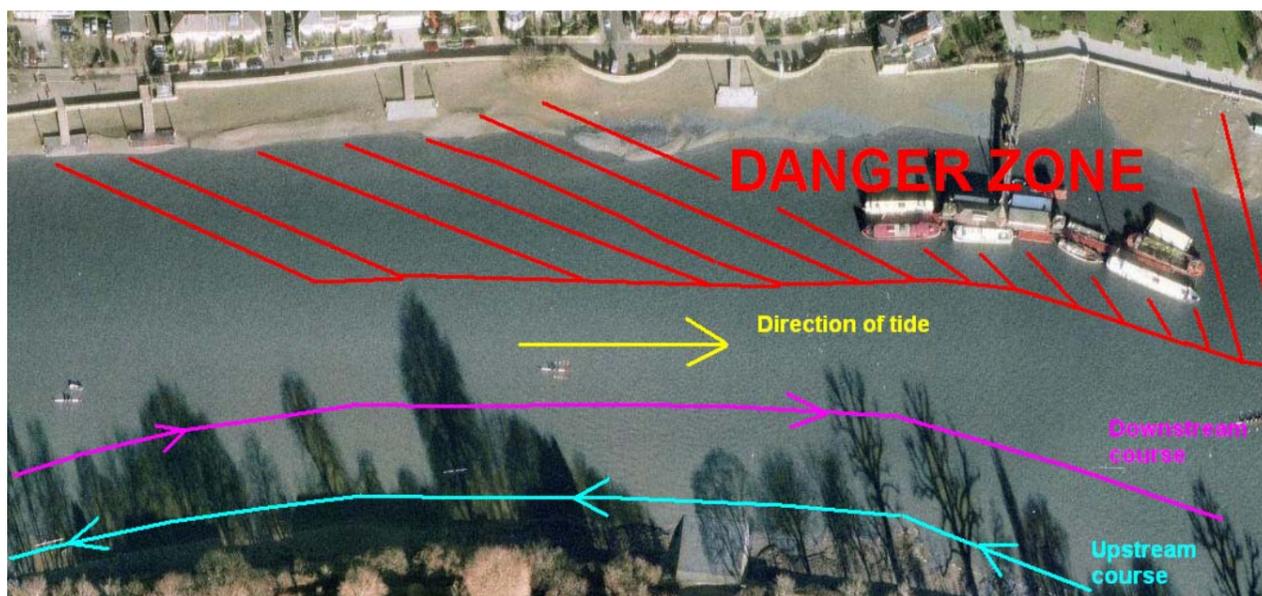
## Coaches:

- Do your Level 0 and pass your Level 2 test. Aim to move up through the higher coaching and launch driving levels as they become available.
- Make sure all the rowers in your crews have completed their Basic Safety Awareness reading. If not, **do not** let them out on the water.
- Consider the risks before each outing and make sure the conditions are safe and that you are prepared for them – lights etc. Continue to assess the risks throughout the outing and be prepared to adapt your plans if the conditions have changed.
- Check what level your coxes and steers are certified to and make sure you provide adequate coaching for their level and the conditions.
- If any of your rowers, coxes or steers are uncomfortable with any aspect of safety before or during an outing, listen to them and think carefully before deciding and agreeing how to proceed.
- Do not ask your crews to steer into the “danger zones” shown below and, if necessary, use your launch to encourage them to stay on the correct, and safest, course (as shown below).
- Do not ask your crews to stop between Hammersmith Bridge and Dove Pier on an incoming tide.
- Stay well within hailing distance of all of your crews at all times.

### Incoming Tide



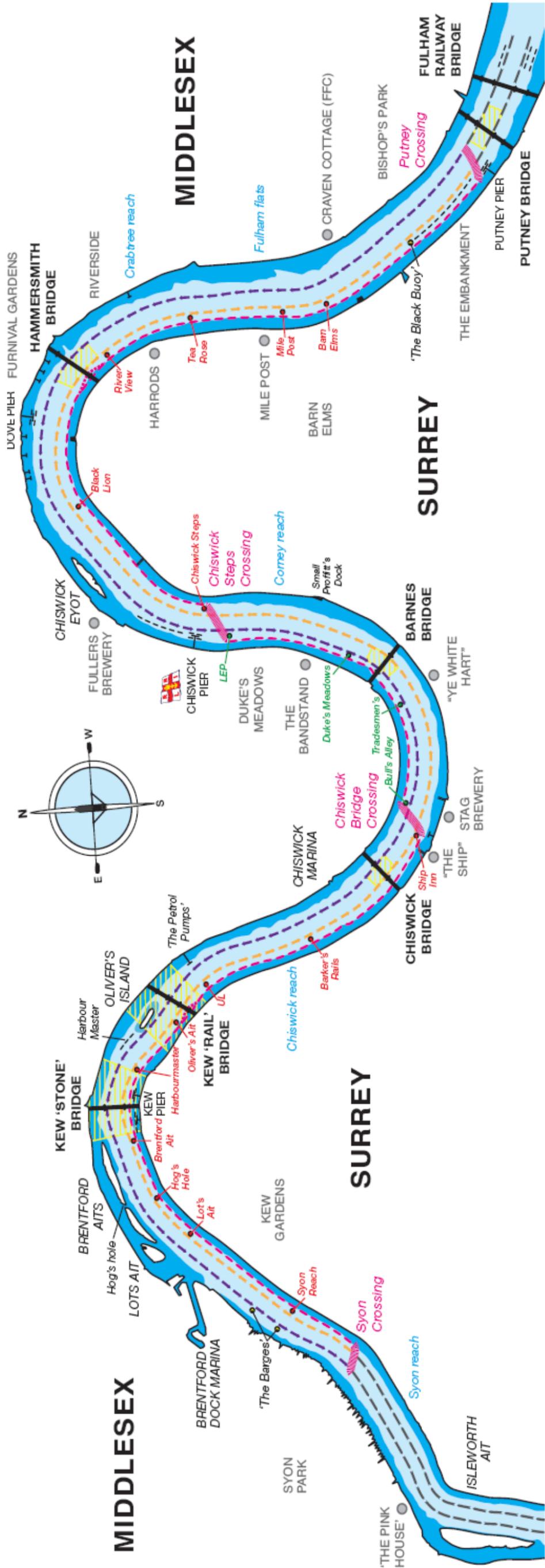
### Outgoing Tide



This summary has been prepared by the Thames Safety Committee. The full text of the Dove Pier incident report, on which this summary is based, is available on the Safety pages of the Thames website at <http://www.thamesrc.co.uk>

If you are planning on steering a boat at Thames, you will need to read the full report as part of your Level 0.

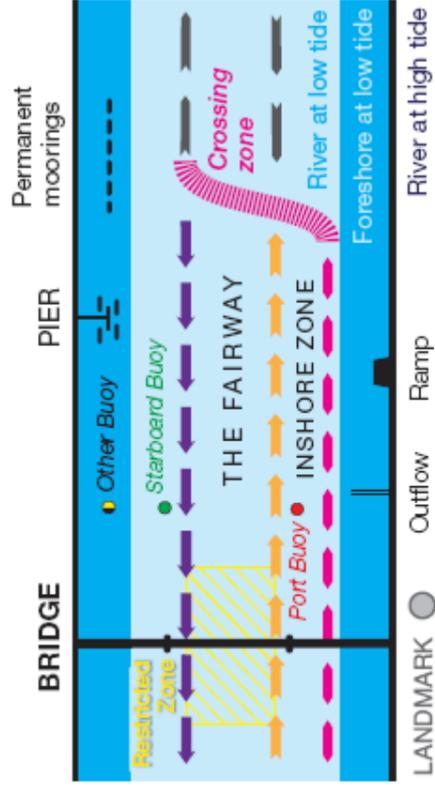
If you have any questions about the incident, the report, or that action Thames has taken to prevent a similar accident happening again, please get in touch with the Safety Committee, either using the contact details on the front of this leaflet or by emailing [safety@thamesrc.co.uk](mailto:safety@thamesrc.co.uk)



## Basic Principles of Tideway Navigation



A pocket guide - for a more detailed explanation see the wall charts in all Tideway clubs or visit [www.thames-rrc.org](http://www.thames-rrc.org). If you wish to report an infringement of the Code please use the on-line system via the TRRC safety page or go to <http://onlinerep.vorboss.net>



Line when proceeding **with the flood**

Line when proceeding **with the ebb**

Line when proceeding **against the stream (or working the slacks)**

Right hand rule applies (ColRegs)

This guide refers to the international conventions of port and starboard.

**Starboard** = bowside, a coxswain's right, a steersperson's left.

**Port** = strokeside, a coxswain's left, a steersperson's right.

- **When going against the stream (working the slacks)** - you must stay in the inshore zone, close to the bank and always inside the buoys. You may only cross the river at the designated crossing points, unless you are returning to a boathouse.

- **When going with the stream, either on the ebb or on the flood** - you must stay in the fairway. Keep to **starboard** of the channel at all times.

- **When meeting oncoming craft, keep to starboard** so as to pass **port** to **port**. However, at low water a big craft may need to be in the 'wrong' position. If it is safe you may pass **starboard** to **starboard**, but show your intentions early.

- You should always paddle according to the direction of the **stream**, not the tide. If you are not sure which way the stream is going, look at the buoys, bridges or moored boats.

- If in doubt when the tide turns, keep to **starboard**.

- Do not stop, turn or overtake within 75 metres of a bridge.

- Do not stop in a **crossing zone**

- If in doubt about any of the above always seek advice

- **Always keep a good lookout. Assume that others cannot see you.**