



British
Waterways
London

BOATING IN LONDON

FACILITIES, MAPS
AND WATERWAYS GUIDE



Discover the
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WELCOME TO LONDON'S CANALS, THE RIVERS LEE & STORT AND LONDON DOCKLANDS



Located within easy reach of the heart of the capital, London's hidden waterways offer the boater a tranquil retreat from which to explore city life. The Grand Union and Regent's Canals and Rivers Lee & Stort create a green corridor winding through central London and leading up into Hertfordshire and Essex. In east London, Docklands provides an impressive backdrop for visiting boats and the fascinating network of post-industrial Bow Back Rivers will form part of the 2012 Olympic Park and legacy for recreational boating.

With 100 miles of waterway to discover in and around London, the visiting boater can take it easy and enjoy a peaceful cruise on these calm waters, relax with a drink and a meal at a waterside pub or stop and visit some of the many nearby attractions. Throughout the summer there is a variety of fun-packed events taking place across the whole network from traditional boat festivals and rallies to open days at waterside attractions.

While cruising the London network, there are a number of general points to take into consideration. This guide is part of a series of free leaflets issued by British Waterways London and includes London-specific information needed to navigate these waterways, facilities for boaters and helpful advice.

Please take the time to read this booklet carefully to get the most out of exploring this exciting region.

General boat handling and boat safety information can be found in 'The Boater's Handbook', a guide jointly produced by British Waterways (BW) and the Environment Agency (EA). Free copies are available from either BW or EA Customer Services.

Please contact the relevant organisation directly for copies of any leaflets or guides that are mentioned or for information relating to their specific waterway.

Telephone numbers for all organisations referred to in the text are listed on page 16.

MOORING IN LONDON

There are designated visitor moorings listed in the table of facilities on pages 17-19. Visitor moorings in London and on the Lee & Stort are free for the specified period at most sites unless otherwise stated.

The duration may vary from 4 hours at very busy locations, to a maximum of 14 days, after which daily rates will be charged. Please note that visitor moorings cannot be reserved as they are run on a first come, first served basis. Many visitor moorings are located near shops, railway stations, pubs and places of interest.

When mooring, please ensure that your ropes do not cross the towpath. Please also ensure that your mooring pins are visible – if possible, tie a brightly coloured object such as a carrier bag to the top of each pin to warn other towpath users. Please do not drive mooring pins into concreted areas as there may be high-voltage cables running under the towpath.

N.B. At times of high rainfall and on semi-tidal stretches, such as between Brentford Gauging Lock and Thames Lock, please remember to allow for changes in water levels.

Boaters may moor on other stretches of the towpath (excluding official moorings and other designated sections) for up to 14 days provided they are not causing an obstruction. The offside (the bank opposite the towpath) is generally private land and not available for mooring. Double mooring of boats on visitor moorings is generally not permitted unless signs clearly say so. Exceptions include commercial boats delivering diesel and coal and historic working boat pairs. In residential areas, excessive running of engines/generators should be avoided. Please do not run your engine in gear when you are moored as it creates a wash which can erode the bank.

Mooring at lock landing stages, sanitary stations and facilities

Boaters should only moor at these locations while they are locking through or using the facilities. Once finished, you should move on and leave the area free for the next boater.

Long-term moorings

Unless you are planning to continuously cruise around the waterway network, you must have a permanent mooring site for your boat. If you are intending to live on your boat, you should have an officially designated **residential mooring** (with planning permission from the local authority). If



you are looking for somewhere to moor your boat, and only intend to use it occasionally or for leisure purposes, you will need a **non-residential/leisure mooring**. Moorings are operated by both British Waterways and other private operators and range from fully serviced offline marinas to basic towpath moorings. BW moorings are non-transferable.

Winter moorings

Some of our visitor moorings are suitable for winter moorings during the stoppage season, subject to availability. Please contact the London Office for further information and prices.

Further details of both British Waterways' and privately operated moorings can be found at our website www.waterscape.com

OTHER WATERWAY USERS

The waterways in and around London are a place of leisure and recreation used by many people for a variety of activities. All visitors are asked to respect the waterway environment and other users to ensure the waterways can be enjoyed by everyone.

Anglers

Most of London's canals and rivers are available for angling and the majority are leased to clubs who control day-to-day fishing on their stretch. Anglers may not fish at locks, landing stages, bridges, water points, turning points or designated moorings e.g. visitor moorings. When mooring up elsewhere, please avoid stopping near an angler. If you encounter a fishing match when cruising, please remember to maintain a steady, slow speed and keep to the centre of the navigation.

For a copy of BW London's angling leaflet visit www.waterscape.com or contact the London office.

Pedestrians and Cyclists

Pedestrians have priority over cyclists on the towpath and considerate cycling is permitted providing the towpath code of conduct is followed. Cyclists on towpaths in London do not need to carry a permit. All users should give way to oncoming users at bridges. Some bridges have poor visibility, so to avoid a collision check that someone isn't

already coming through. Cyclists should slow down, ring with 'Two Tings' and let other users through the bridge before continuing.



Please note cyclists no longer have to dismount to go under a bridge. Pedestrians should listen out for the Two Tings warning from cyclists which is not an order to get out of the way, but a signal that they are there.

British Waterways London recently launched the 'Two Tings' campaign which promotes safe, shared use of the towpath. For further details about the Two Tings campaign and the towpath code of conduct in London visit www.waterscape.com

Events

Many events take place on London's waterways, including boat rallies and gatherings. For further information visit www.waterscape.com or contact the London office.



LICENCES

All vessels on British Waterways' navigations are required to have a licence. The fee depends on the length of vessel, the type of licence and the duration required. Short term licences are available for either one week or one month (or multiples thereof). Long term licences are available for 3, 6 or 12 months.

For pleasure cruising on the canals and river navigations owned or managed by British Waterways you will require a Pleasure Boat Licence. This covers the 2,000 miles of our waterways. If you only wish to cruise on the River Lee and/or River Stort Navigations, you can purchase a River Only Licence. If you wish to cruise the non-tidal River Thames or the River Medway without limit over 12 months in addition to cruising our waters you can buy a Gold licence.

If you wish to use your boat for business purposes including renting out your boat, use as a trading craft, passenger boat or workshop you will need a valid Business Licence. Please contact our Leisure Business Team to discuss your plans and to obtain advice on the correct type of licence.

If you have a River Only Licence but wish to visit the canals in London including the Hertford Union Canal and transit to and from canal festivals such as Cavalcade in Little Venice, you will need to purchase a Short Term Canal Licence for the duration of your trip. You will receive a 50% discount on the normal 1 week or 1 month licence fee. If you are a short term visitor to our waterways from another navigation such as the River Thames you can purchase a short term licence in advance of your visit. You can do this in the same way as applying for a long term licence. Alternatively, short term licences can be purchased at entry points into the BW network, such as Thames Lock or Limehouse Basin.

For both long term and short term licences you need to provide copies of a current Boat Safety Certificate and your Insurance Certificate when you apply for your licence. You can apply for a licence in person at one of the offices listed on the opposite page, or you can request an application form by calling our national Customer Service Team on 01923 201 120 or download an application form from our website at www.waterscape.com

If you are renewing an existing licence and your boat safety certificate and insurance are still valid, and you are paying by credit card, you can renew your licence online at www.waterscape.com/renewal

For long term licences you will need to have a valid mooring under the British Waterways Act 1995 (details can be found in the 'Private Pleasure Boat Long Term Licences' booklet which can be obtained from the London office or via our website at www.waterscape.com/licensing).

If the vessel is to be used for purposes other than pleasure cruising, you will need a different type of licence to cover that activity. For further details contact the London office.

Patrolling our canals and rivers

Our dedicated team of patrol officers regularly checks the 100 miles of canals and rivers in the London area to ensure that all craft are displaying a valid British Waterways licence and are adhering to our terms and conditions. With high demand for visitor moorings in the Capital, our mooring sites are regularly inspected to ensure that no boat overstays its welcome. On the ground enforcement means that our patrol officers have the authority to serve and action enforcement notices on unlicensed boats. Local patrol staff are backed up by an enforcement co-ordinator and central legal team.

Keeping the waterways safe

Patrol officers also liaise with local police and community groups to ensure they know about the canal network and familiarise themselves with waterways in their area. Any issues, such as anti-social behaviour and crime, are tracked and the police and local authorities are informed of any problem spots. See page 9 for details about reporting incidents.



How to obtain a licence

You can apply for any BW licence online at www.waterscape.com/licensing or obtain a short-term licence in person at one of the offices listed

below, or by calling the British Waterways London office. For a list of non-BW licence issuers please refer to the table of facilities on pages 17-19.

British Waterways - Paddington Office	Opening times	
Jena, Paddington Information Boat, moored by Starbucks Café, Sheldon Square, Paddington Central, London, W2 6TT	09:30 - 16:30 Monday to Friday	020 7985 7200
British Waterways - Brentford Office	Opening times	
Harbour Master's Office, 24 Canute House, Durham Wharf Drive, Brentford, TW8 8HP	08:30 - 13:00 and 13:30 - 16:30 Monday to Friday	020 7985 7780
British Waterways - Thames Lock Office	Opening times	
Dock Road, Brentford, TW8 8AG	Manned: 1 Apr – 30 Sep, two hours either side of high tide between 08:00 – 18:00. Pre-booking required at all other times. See Tidal Locks Availability leaflet for further details.	020 8568 2779
British Waterways - Limehouse Lock Office	Opening times	
Harbour Master's Office, Limehouse Lock, 46 Goodhart Place, London E14 8EG	Manned: Summer 1 Apr - 30 Sep 08:00 - 18:00 Winter 1 Oct - 31 Mar 08:00 - 16:00 Open every day except Christmas Day.	020 7308 9930
British Waterways - Docklands Office	Opening times	
420 Manchester Road, London E14 9ST	09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday	020 7517 5550

CONTINUOUS CRUISING



Moorings are normally essential for boat owners as you are legally required to have a permanent place to keep your boat when you are not on the move - whether it's a fully serviced marina or simply a spot on the towpath. However, if you have no ties (such as jobs or children at school), you can opt to cruise the canals non-stop, never staying at the same place for more than a fortnight. British Waterways has a special set of guidelines for these 'continuous cruisers'. Continuous cruising means genuine, progressive journeys around the network, with no overstay on visitor and temporary moorings.

Full details of our continuous cruising policy are available at:
www.waterscape.com/useful-downloads

British Waterways reserves the right to ask you for evidence should we have reason to believe you are not adhering to the continuous cruising guidelines.

NB: You must obey local signs and regulations restricting mooring at particular locations. These take precedence over the entitlements mentioned above.

SAFETY

Safety is British Waterways' top priority and we are keen to ensure that the waterway network is safe and secure. British Waterways has issued a set of customer service standards which includes 45 safety standards.

These standards cover safety for the following aspects of the navigation: bridges, channel and winding holes, landings and moorings, locks, lighting, signage and navigation aids, access points and tunnels.

To view all customer service and safety standards visit www.britishwaterways.co.uk and enter customer service into the search box.

Emergencies

Please contact British Waterways London immediately if you experience problems such as jammed lock gates, unusually low levels of water, obstructions and so on. If possible, pinpoint your location to help us deal with your call.

- During office hours contact the local London office for all issues: 020 7985 7200
- Outside office hours call the British Waterways Emergency Helpline ('Freephone Canals'): 0800 4799947
- For pollution incidents call the Environment Agency: 0800 807 060
- If you see a sick or injured animal or bird call the RSPCA: 0300 1234 999
- For other non-navigational emergencies call 999

Incident Reporting

BW welcomes feedback from all of our customers, particularly where they may have encountered an incident while visiting the waterways. Visitor incident report forms can be downloaded from www.britishwaterways.co.uk/responsibilities/safety/visitor_incident_reporting.html



Please also inform the local police so that they have a record of the incident and take action if necessary. Reporting incidents to the police also helps them to establish a better picture of problem areas.

Planned Stoppages

Planned stoppages are usually held between October and March and are necessary for carrying out repairs to the waterways. Up to date stoppage information is listed on www.waterscape.com/stoppages or call the London office for details.

Emergency Stoppages

Emergency stoppages may be necessary at any time of the year. Visitors to www.waterscape.com can register to receive notification of emergency stoppages via email. Check with the local waterway office before setting out on your journey.

OTHER WATERWAYS



The Grand Union Canal is the gateway to the rest of the British Waterways' 2,000 mile canal network. The northern end gives boaters access to destinations such as Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, while to the south, its junction with the Thames leads to Henley, Oxford and the Kennet & Avon Canal.

Procedure for booking your passage to and from the Thames

The tidal locks at Bow, Limehouse and Brentford can only be used when British Waterways staff are in attendance. All boaters are requested to contact the appropriate lock office to give at least 24 hours advance notice of their journey. Bookings can be made seven days a week between 8am and 4pm. If leaving a message, please leave the date and time of your call, a contact name, the boat's name and a telephone number we can contact you on. Please also state which lock you would like to use, the direction in which you will be travelling and date and time locking is required.

All bookings must be confirmed with lock office staff who will also be able to advise you on local conditions that might affect your journey. British Waterways

reserves the right to refuse a boat entry onto our waterway network. Please use the free Tidal Locks Availability leaflet and upstream, downstream or estuary editions of the London Tideway Handbook available from BW London offices and via web download at www.waterscape.com/useful-downloads.

Bow Back Rivers

The towpaths and navigations which form part of the Olympic Park around Stratford will be closed until after the 2012 Games. These include the waterways which make up the Bow Back Rivers – the Old River Lea, City Mill River, Waterworks River, Bow Back River and Pudding Mill River. The new Prescott Lock will restore the Bow Back Rivers creating a green gateway for barges entering the Olympic Park and reviving water transport in the area for the first time in 50 years. The lock is part of a wider strategy to



maximise the use of rivers in the area for wildlife, navigation and people, creating a thriving waterway legacy. Construction of the lock will be complete in autumn 2008. For further information and updates visit www.britishwaterways.co.uk/olympics

Other navigation authorities in London

The Port of London Authority (PLA) manages the tidal Thames downstream of Teddington Lock. You do not need a licence for this section but there are rules of navigation you must comply with. Details are available in the PLA's free guide: 'The Tidal Thames, A Guide for Users of Recreational Craft'.

Boaters are advised that from 1 September 2006 General Directions from the PLA came into force making it compulsory for all boats over 13.7m (45ft) using the tidal Thames to be equipped with and use VHF radio. For more information contact the PLA.

The Environment Agency (EA) manages the Thames upstream of Teddington Lock and a licence is required for this part of the Thames. Contact the EA directly for further information.

Transit to the non-tidal Thames via canal

Customers with vessels which have a BW River Only Licence will need to purchase a short term Canal and River Licence to cover the period they are on the canal network. This includes vessels travelling from the Rivers Lee and Stort who wish to access the Thames at Brentford via the Regent's Canal. A 50% discount is available on the normal 1 week or 1 month licence fee. **For further information contact the London office.**

London Docklands

If you wish to visit London Docklands, bookings must always be made in advance. As the waterspace comprises working docks, only boaters with a confirmed berth or mooring space can come through the locks. However, visitors are welcome during special events which are held during the summer (please check the events listings on www.waterscape.com) and organised club visits are possible.