

The Port of London Authority's (PLA) Thames Byelaws 2012 (Byelaw 13) limit the use of Stand up Paddleboards to areas authorised by the PLA, which the PLA had previously restricted to the river between Putney Pier and Teddington. Latest PLA guidance, developed with the paddleboarding community, now extends this authorised area to encompass the Thames between Putney Pier and Tower Bridge, under certain conditions.

Novice paddleboarders, and those with limited experience, should continue to restrict themselves to paddling on the more benign and easier to navigate river between Teddington and Putney Pier.

When navigating in this area, paddleboarders must ensure they follow the guidance published on the paddling section of the Boating on the Thames website.

Downstream of Putney Pier the river is much busier, with the presence of fast ferries, plus barges with limited manoeuvrability. As a result, navigating a paddleboard requires greater knowledge, skill and preparation. The use of the tidal Thames for paddleboarding below Putney Pier is therefore only permitted for more experienced paddlers who have undertaken recognised training courses, and only at the times when the river will be less busy.

As a minimum, when paddling below Putney Pier paddleboarders must comply with the following rules:

- Paddle in a group of at least three, with a leader ratio of 1:4
- Have at least one person in the group carrying a VHF radio and maintain a listening watch on VHF ch.14



- Always wear a buoyancy aid
- Do not paddle below Putney Pier between three hours before High Water and one hour after High Water at London Bridge due to the presence of large freight vessels.
- Do not paddle between Chelsea Bridge and Tower Bridge during peak traffic periods, which occur daily from 11:00 to 18:00 between Good Friday and 30 September

In order to demonstrate both the required degree of 'Local Knowledge' on the river and paddling skills, paddlers are required to attend courses to paddle below Putney Pier.



These courses are split into two levels, and successful completion allows you to paddle below Putney Pier under the specific conditions set out overleaf.

Paddleboarders wishing to attend one of these courses should contact info@active360.co.uk

Before paddling, we advise paddlers to consult the Boating on the Thames website to become familiar with the Thames and specifically read our paddling guidance which can be found here:

<http://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/Paddling>

There are links on Boating on the Thames to the Recreational Users Guide, tidal information, contact information for the Port of London Authority and a link to our Notices to Mariners, which should be checked before heading out onto the river. These may contain pertinent navigational information for your journey, such as events, river closures, arch closures, bridge works, etc.

We also recommend, that Thames navigators check weather forecasts before boating, and follow club/ commercial operator's weather



parameters. During fog or restricted visibility, standup paddleboarders should not navigate when they are unable to see the opposite bank of the river.

Night Paddling

As shown in the table overleaf, night paddling is only permitted for paddleboarders holding a Thames Skills Knowledge Level 1 qualification.

Paddling at night is more hazardous than in the day, and you should always make sure that someone knows you are out on the water, call the Duty Officer at London VTS, (VHF Ch.14 or 020 8855 0315) and always paddle in a group.

Please see our guide in the paddling section of the Boating on the Thames website for lighting at night. If you are going out for an evening paddle, even if you intend to return in daylight, you should take lights with you as daylight can fade very quickly.



	NO EXPERIENCE	SOME EXPERIENCE*	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 2 + LKE		
ABOVE PUTNEY PIER	<p style="text-align: center;">✗ No night paddling</p>						
BELOW PUTNEY PIER			<p style="text-align: center;">✗ No night paddling</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Paddle at night (as part of a group)</p>			
			<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Paddle as part of a club group, lead by a Level 2 (1:4 ratio)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Paddle as part of a club group</p>			
			<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Paddle as part of a commercial group, lead by a Level 2 (1:4 ratio)</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Lead a commercial group of paddlers with some experience</p>		
			<p style="text-align: center;">✗ No lone paddling</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Lead a group of paddlers with some experience (1:4 ratio)</p>		
			<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Lone paddling (daytime only)</p>				
BELOW CHELSEA BRIDGE			<p style="text-align: center;">✗ Do not paddle between Good Friday and September 30th from 11.00 – 18.00</p>				
			<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Paddle as part of a commercial group, lead by a Level 2 + LKE (1:4 ratio)</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Lead a commercial group of paddlers with some experience</p>		
			<p style="text-align: center;">✗ No club group paddling</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓ Paddle as a group of at least 3</p>			
			<p style="text-align: center;">✗ No night paddling</p>				
			<p style="text-align: center;">✗ No lone paddling</p>				
BELOW TOWER BRIDGE	<p>SUP is not permitted below Tower Bridge</p>						

* Some experience means that you have paddled on the Thames on at least three previous occasions