

CIVIL SERVICE CANOE CLUB: CHISWICK RULES

Note: Canoeing and Kayaking are “Assumed Risk” – “Water contact sports” that may carry attendant risks. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks, and be responsible for their own action and involvement.

We would remind you that, in the interests of safe canoeing, you are required to obey a few simple rules for canoeing at Chiswick:

- We have appointed people of appropriate ability and experience to take charge of weekly meetings. You must obey their instructions.
- Whilst meetings at Chiswick are generally intended for all paddlers, the organiser has the right not to permit individuals to canoe – for example because of water or weather conditions, personal competence (including swimming ability) and experience, availability of suitable equipment, medical conditions, or otherwise. The leader also has the right to exclude anyone whose behaviour is regarded as unacceptable.
- Everyone must wear a suitable buoyancy aid – of the right size and properly done up – at all times on the river.
- Anyone who is not a Club member must sign the attendance sheet before going on the river.
- Someone experienced must always remain at the back of the group.
- Everyone – particularly, people at the back of the group – must keep a good all-round eye open for oarsmen, particularly behind you. Give clear, loud verbal warnings, in good time, and take appropriate, clear, avoiding action if needed.
- Keep together, as a group (or groups) on the river. Make sure your course is obvious to river users. Don't zig-zag all over the river, as this makes it much harder for others to avoid you.
- Keep clear of moored objects – barges etc – if there's any current running.
- All participants should be aware of the “rules of navigation on the Thames”, summarised below. The general rule is to keep on the right hand side of the river. Leaders should follow an appropriate course in the prevailing circumstances. It is vital to keep a good watch for all river users, but our overall goal is to minimise the risk of clashes with the predominant river users, rowers, whose accepted practice is broadly, when going with the tide, to stay in the middle of the river; and when going against the tide, to stick to the inside of bends. This leaves a third lane (the “outside” of the bends) unlikely to be used by rowers – and our preference is to use this “third lane” where practicable.
- There must be no paddling after dark, unless the group keeps well together, and there are people both at front and back with working torches.
- Anyone suffering from a medical condition that might be relevant to their safety must ensure that the organiser is aware of the condition, and any medication that may be required.
- All members should be aware of the risks of contracting Weil's Disease and other illnesses associated with canoeing. Appropriate precautions should be taken, such as the wearing of plasters over cuts.

Rules for Navigation of Vessels under Oars on the Tidal Thames from 1 May 2002

1. Background

This notice supersedes Permanent Notice to Mariners 5 of 1999 and promulgates revised rules which **come into force on 1 May 02**.

2. Navigation of Vessels Under Oars (Rowing Boats)

All rowing boats navigating on the tidal River Thames shall comply with the Port of London River Byelaws 1978 (as amended) which incorporate the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (as amended).

A proper lookout shall be maintained at all times (International Regulations - Rule 5).

Rowing boats shall, whenever possible, navigate outside of the main channel or fairway.

A rowing boat which for any reason has to navigate within the main channel or fairway, shall not impede the passage of a vessel which, because of draught or size, can safely navigate only within the main channel or fairway.

A rowing boat proceeding along the course of the main channel or fairway shall also comply with Rule 9(a) of the International Regulations and "keep as near to the outer limit of the channel or fairway which lies on her starboard side as is **safe and practicable**".

3. Special Rules for navigation of rowing boats and approved escorting vessels between Syon Reach and Putney Bridge.

It is recognised that there are parts of the river where it is not always "safe and practicable" for vessels under oars to keep to the starboard side. A Navigation Advisory Panel has drawn up revised special rules for navigation for such vessels navigating between Syon Reach and Putney.

Within the above limits rowing boats, canoes and approved escorting vessels:

- (a) when proceeding **with** the tide, are to keep to the starboard side of the fairway;
- (b) when proceeding **against** the tide, are to navigate as follows:
 - (i) between the Syon Crossing and the Chiswick Bridge Crossing, keep as close as is practicable to the Surrey shore;
 - (ii) between the Chiswick Bridge Crossing and the Chiswick Steps Crossing, keep as close as is practicable to the Middlesex shore;
 - (iii) between the Chiswick Steps Crossing and the Putney Crossing, keep as close as is practicable to the Surrey shore.

Note: Above the Syon Crossing and below the Putney Crossing rowers proceeding against the tide are reminded that they are to keep as near to the outer limit of the channel or fairway which lies on their starboard side as is safe and practicable.

- (c) The Crossing points are established in the following locations (see plan):

- (i) Syon Crossing – Syon Reach, opposite the Isleworth Ferry Gate (approximately 200 metres upstream of the PLA driftwood moorings).
- (ii) Chiswick Bridge Crossing – opposite the "Ship" public house (approximately 200 metres downstream of Chiswick Bridge).
- (iii) Chiswick Steps Crossing - 200 metres upstream of Chiswick Pier.
- (iv) Putney Crossing – by Bishop's Park steps approximately 100 metres upstream of Putney Road Bridge.

When crossing the river in accordance with the above rules, rowing boats and escorting vessels shall do so as quickly as possible and must avoid obstructing any other vessel proceeding along the fairway (River Byelaw 15(a)).

Rowing boats and escorting vessels shall not stop or turn about in the vicinity of the designated crossing points.

Note: Nothing in these rules precludes rowing boats and escorting vessels from crossing the river at other places when boating from or returning to boat houses provided that they shall do so as quickly as possible and avoid obstructing any other vessel proceeding along the fairway (River Byelaw 15(a)).

4. Kew Road Bridge and Pier

The visibility on the bend in the vicinity of Kew Bridge is particularly restricted and passenger boats regularly manoeuvre on and off Kew Pier. **All craft are to navigate with extreme caution in the area.**

Power driven vessels are reminded to sound one prolonged blast when approaching the bridge from either direction (International Regulations – Rule 34a) and when leaving Kew Pier (PLA Byelaw - 36). All vessels are to listen carefully for and be guided by the sound signals.

Civil Service Canoe Club note: The map (our own unofficial extract from the PLA map) shows where the crossing points are, for the stretch of river we use most often.

Crossing Points for Rowing Boats

