

# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF TIDEWAY NAVIGATION CENTRAL

To accompany "Paddling on the Tideway – A Code of Practice for Paddling on the Tidal Thames" (Edition 1 2017)

All solo paddlers and group leaders must be fully conversant with the Paddling Code before navigating on the Tideway. The steers is Master of the Vessel and is legally responsible for the navigation, safety and behaviour of their boat / group

Always carry out a thorough Risk Assessment before going afloat – see the Paddling Code for further details

## Col Regs / starboard side rule applies

When paddling in either direction, and regardless of the stream direction, paddled boats should stay as close to the **Starboard** or right-hand bank as is safe

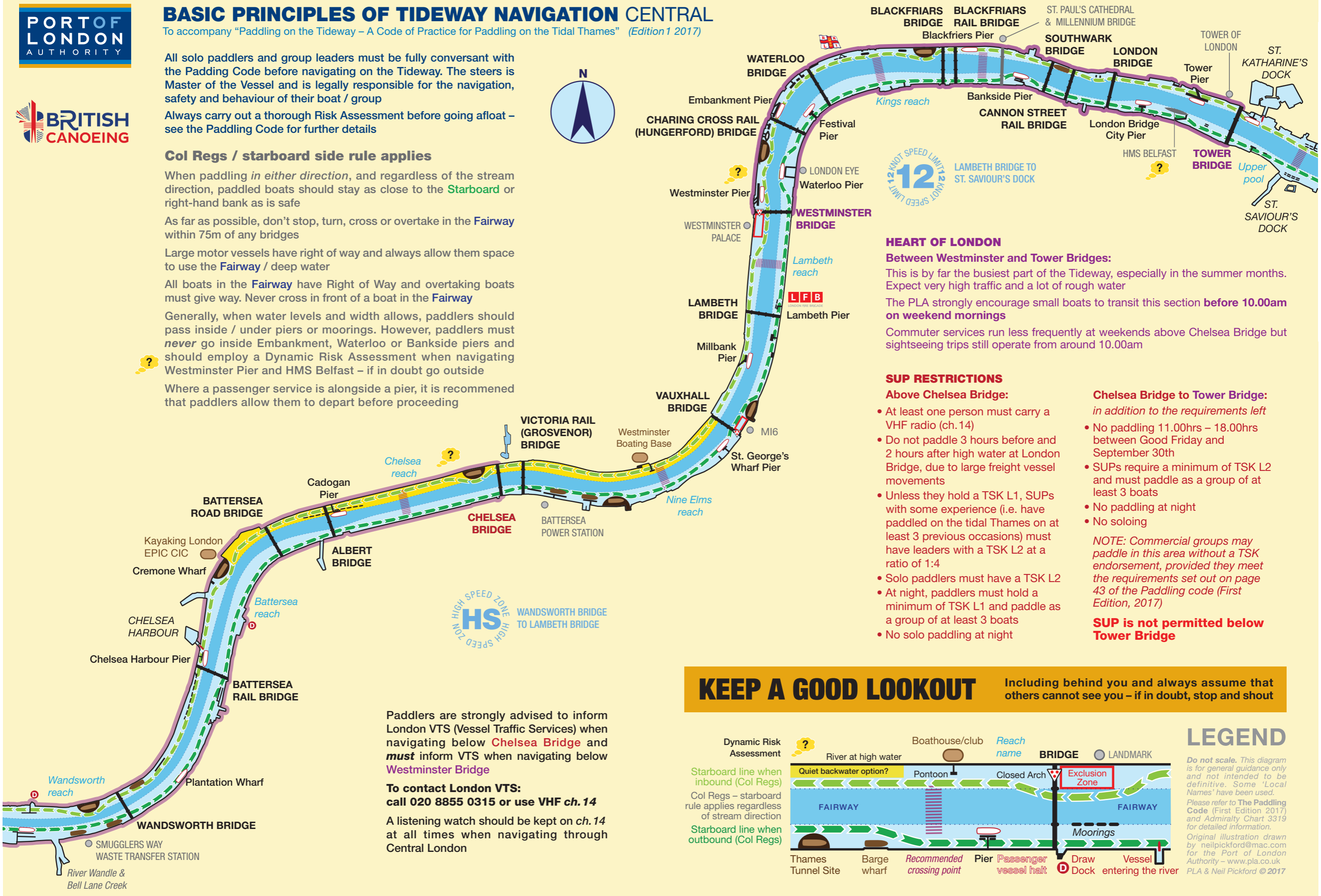
As far as possible, don't stop, turn, cross or overtake in the **Fairway** within 75m of any bridges

Large motor vessels have right of way and always allow them space to use the **Fairway** / deep water

All boats in the **Fairway** have Right of Way and overtaking boats must give way. Never cross in front of a boat in the **Fairway**

Generally, when water levels and width allows, paddlers should pass inside / under piers or moorings. However, paddlers must **never** go inside Embankment, Waterloo or Bankside piers and should employ a Dynamic Risk Assessment when navigating Westminster Pier and HMS Belfast – if in doubt go outside

Where a passenger service is alongside a pier, it is recommended that paddlers allow them to depart before proceeding



**12**  
KNOT SPEED LIMIT  
KNOT SPEED LIMIT

**HS**  
HIGH SPEED ZONE  
WANDSWORTH BRIDGE TO LAMBETH BRIDGE

## HEART OF LONDON

### Between Westminster and Tower Bridges:

This is by far the busiest part of the Tideway, especially in the summer months. Expect very high traffic and a lot of rough water

The PLA strongly encourage small boats to transit this section **before 10.00am on weekend mornings**

Commuter services run less frequently at weekends above Chelsea Bridge but sightseeing trips still operate from around 10.00am

## SUP RESTRICTIONS

### Above Chelsea Bridge:

- At least one person must carry a VHF radio (ch. 14)
- Do not paddle 3 hours before and 2 hours after high water at London Bridge, due to large freight vessel movements
- Unless they hold a TSK L1, SUPs with some experience (i.e. have paddled on the tidal Thames on at least 3 previous occasions) must have leaders with a TSK L2 at a ratio of 1:4
- Solo paddlers must have a TSK L2
- At night, paddlers must hold a minimum of TSK L1 and paddle as a group of at least 3 boats
- No solo paddling at night

### Chelsea Bridge to Tower Bridge:

in addition to the requirements left

- No paddling 11.00hrs – 18.00hrs between Good Friday and September 30th
- SUPs require a minimum of TSK L2 and must paddle as a group of at least 3 boats
- No paddling at night
- No soloing

*NOTE: Commercial groups may paddle in this area without a TSK endorsement, provided they meet the requirements set out on page 43 of the Paddling code (First Edition, 2017)*

**SUP is not permitted below Tower Bridge**

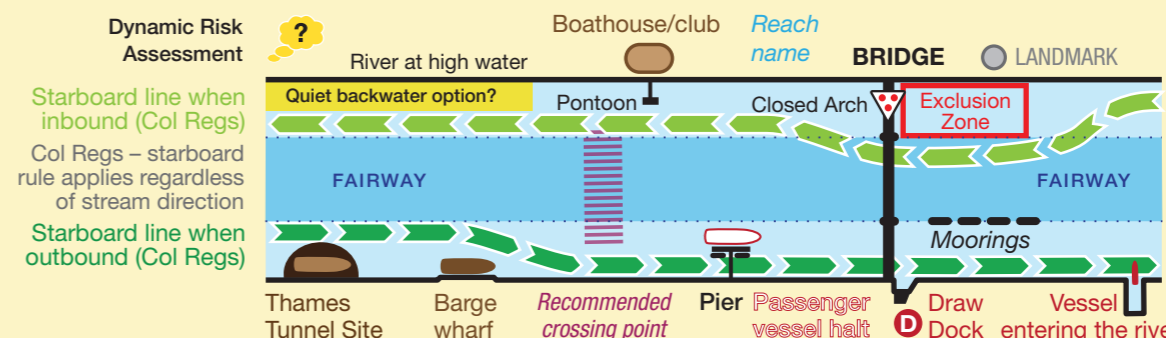
Paddlers are strongly advised to inform London VTS (Vessel Traffic Services) when navigating below **Chelsea Bridge** and **must** inform VTS when navigating below **Westminster Bridge**

**To contact London VTS:**  
call 020 8855 0315 or use VHF ch. 14

A listening watch should be kept on **ch. 14** at all times when navigating through Central London

## KEEP A GOOD LOOKOUT

Including behind you and always assume that others cannot see you – if in doubt, stop and shout



## LEGEND

*Do not scale. This diagram is for general guidance only and not intended to be definitive. Some 'Local Names' have been used. Please refer to The Paddling Code (First Edition 2017) and Admiralty Chart 3319 for detailed information. Original illustration drawn by neilpickford@mac.com for the Port of London Authority – www.pla.co.uk PLA & Neil Pickford © 2017*