

Upper Medway Navigation

Customer Charter
2024-25

Our service for customers on the
Upper Medway Navigation from
Tonbridge to Allington

Welcome to the Upper Medway Navigation. The Upper Medway Navigation runs from the Leigh Flood Storage Area (2km to the west of Tonbridge), to Allington Lock just west of Maidstone. We are the navigation authority for this 31km long stretch of river which comprises 10 lock sites and associated weirs and sluices. Our navigation officers are based at Allington Lock House, the tidal gateway to the navigation.

This charter details the service we will provide our customers between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. We will monitor and report on our performance against the standards in this charter every year.

1. Lock and channel maintenance

Our aim is to provide a clear navigation from Easter to the end of September each year by dredging and clearing any obstructions that may inhibit the navigational channel. For any obstructions that we are unable to remove we will mark these with hazard warning buoys.

We will keep the lock chambers clear of debris and maintain the main channel to the depths stated in the table on the following page.

We undertake any maintenance activity that prevents navigation between the end of September and Easter of the following year.

We will give at least 28 days notice of any major planned works or maintenance via issue of a Notice to Mariners. These can be emailed directly or are listed on <https://therivermedway.co.uk/notice-to-mariners> within 24 hours of issue.

	Section of River			
Depth	Allington Lock to Maidstone	Maidstone to East Farleigh	East Farleigh to Yalding	Yalding to Tonbridge
	6'6 or 2m	4'3 or 1.3m	5'6 or 1.7m	4' or 1.2m

Throughout the year we will endeavour to keep our locks, landing stages, moorings, bridges, canoe passes and slipways in clean and safe working condition for boating and visitors alike.

2. Boater's facilities

We maintain our pump-outs, toilets and shower facilities, in a clean, safe and usable condition throughout the year.

3. Managing water level

We manage water levels to balance the many uses of the river, including boating, retaining enough for water companies to extract, managing flood risk and ensuring fisheries and water quality are protected. We monitor water levels on each river pen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We manage the weirs and sluices to provide the best conditions possible for all uses of the river. Our ability to control water levels may change in flood or drought conditions.

4. Service at Allington Lock

Our duty lock keepers help boats pass safely through Allington Lock. The normal opening times are:

1 March - 31 October: Three hours before high water and two hours after, where those hours fall between 07:00 and sunset;

1 November – 28 February: Three hours before high water and two hours after, where those hours fall between 08:00 – 16:00.

Our lock keepers are on standby outside these times and will respond to any passage requests subject to 24 hours notice.

5. Information for boating

We provide customers with information about any restrictions to using the river by posting the information on <https://therivermedway.co.uk/notice-to-mariners> and/or issuing a Notice to Mariners.

River flows can sometimes be hazardous for boating, especially after heavy rain. We update our information and advice on river conditions on <https://therivermedway.co.uk/strong-stream-advice/> and also provide a free text, email and phone notification service, the details of which are on the same web page.

We also provide information by displaying Strong Stream warning signs at all of our locks sites and major river access points.

Details of all Upper Medway Navigation bridge heights and tides at Allington Lock can be found at www.gov.uk/river-medway-bridges-locks-and-facilities-for-boaters#river-medway-bridge-heights and <https://therivermedway.co.uk/tide-times/> respectively.

6. Enforcement plan and activity

We support a safe and enjoyable environment for our customers. We will protect our river and income by undertaking planned enforcement activity on key dates throughout the year. We will place warning notices on those boats that fail to register and prosecute owners of boats that fail to respond to these notices.

7. Responding to incidents

We support the emergency services in dealing with emergency river incidents. In an emergency, you must call 999.

To report non-emergency river-related incidents, including pollution incidents, call our 24 hour incident hotline 0800 80 70 60. We will respond as soon as we can or advise you on the best course of action.

8. Registering your boat

All vessels kept or used on the Upper Medway Navigation must be registered with us. We provide a registration “plate” which you must display on your vessel. For vessels not based on the Upper Medway Navigation, short period registration is available to buy in advance, from Allington Lock or Tonbridge Tourist Information Centre at Tonbridge Castle.

We process postal applications within 10 working days and provide information on how to register boats, including the full schedule of charges and other requirements at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-medway-boat-registration-and-application-forms>

Would you like to find out more about us, or about your environment?

Then call us on

03708 506 506 (Mon–Fri 8–6)

Calls to 03 numbers cost the same as calls to standard geographic numbers (i.e. numbers beginning with 01 or 02).

E-Mail

enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

or visit our website

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

Incident hotline 0800 80 70 60 (24hrs)

Floodline 0845 988 1188