

Appendix D

CANOEING AND KAYAKING

**Additional information on the classification of inland water, weirs and
the flood alert system for the River Thames**

Applies to sections 4.07, 4.08 and 4.09 of the main document.

**Appendix D to the Off-Site and Hazardous Activities recommendations and advice
document**

1.01 Classification of inland water

The classification gives local examples of types of water that are referred to in paragraph of the main document.

PLEASE NOTE - The fact that a stretch of water is listed below does not indicate that there is a right of access to it and the list gives examples only, it is not comprehensive.

Very Sheltered Water

For the period 1 April - 30 September only.

River Kennet (canal sections only) and the Kennet and Avon Canal to the West Berkshire boundary at GR 326702.

Other tributaries of the River Thames (under normal or yellow alert - see 'Flood Alert System on the River Thames' below). Please note, there is no right of navigation on these tributaries and before using them permission must be obtained from the appropriate riparian owners.

Pools, ponds and gravel pits not classified as grade 1 (see below).

Sheltered Water

Under normal or yellow alert conditions only, the following.

River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon Canal, river sections and locks from Town Lock, Newbury (GR 470671) down to the River Thames.

River Thames from Wallingford bridge to Wraysbury (GR 028717) excluding all weirs.

Queen Mother Reservoir (Datchet Sailing Club), Summerleaze Pit (Maidenhead Sailing Club), Theale Lake (Burghfield Sailing Club, Berkshire Schools and Sail Training Centre).

Moderate Inland Water

Under amber and red alert conditions (see 'Flood Alert System on the River Thames' below) and when there is a strong stream warning adjacent to weirs and locks, the following.

River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon Canal, river sections and locks from Town Lock, Newbury (MR 470671) down to the River Thames.

River Thames from Wallingford bridge to Wraysbury (GR 028717).

Other tributaries of the River Thames.

All weirs are grade 2 minimum (see 'weirs' below).

1.02 The use of weirs for canoeing and kayaking

Weirs with **anti-scour sills** can be very dangerous and are **prohibited** to all canoes and kayaks.

Someone of at least BCU Level 3 Coach standard must assess weirs for use before they are used.

Canoeists wishing to use a weir pool must seek permission from the Chief Navigation Inspector of the Environmental Agency.

The Chief Navigation Inspector who has prepared the following statement for this document.

"Any groups wishing to use a weir pool must seek permission from the Chief Navigation Inspector, Kings Meadow House, Kings Meadow Road, Reading RG1 8DB, telephone Reading 0118 953 5000, mainly to avoid conflict of interest with others who may be using the pool on specific dates. Blanket permission can be granted to local groups to use some of the weirs for training purposes only, on the understanding that they may arrive and find it unavailable due to water conditions, or in use by other organisations."

1.03 Flood Alert System and Strong Stream Warnings, River Thames

General information on the condition of the water level (other than locks) may be obtained from the Chief Navigation Inspector's Office at the address given above. Water conditions at weirs can be obtained from lock keepers.

Flood Alert System

The Environment Agency uses the following flood alert system. It is important to understand that this system gives information on land drainage and not on the rate of water movement or flow.

Yellow Alert

This is a land drainage alert when large amounts of water are in the soil. It gives some indication of the state of the river but may not seriously affect the level and flow. A yellow alert can remain in operation for as long as one year or even more.

Amber Alert

Flooding is imminent. The river bank is full.

Red Alert

This gives two to three hours warning before the river overflows its banks and floods the adjoining land. Often a fast flowing current.

Strong Stream Warnings

These warnings are displayed above and below locks. They are displayed, as a rule of thumb, when weirs are between 2/3 and 3/4 open.

Under these conditions the Environment Agency recommend boats to tie up and not to proceed. This applies especially to canoes. Strong Stream warning notices go out on a lock by lock basis and information is available locally from lock-keepers.