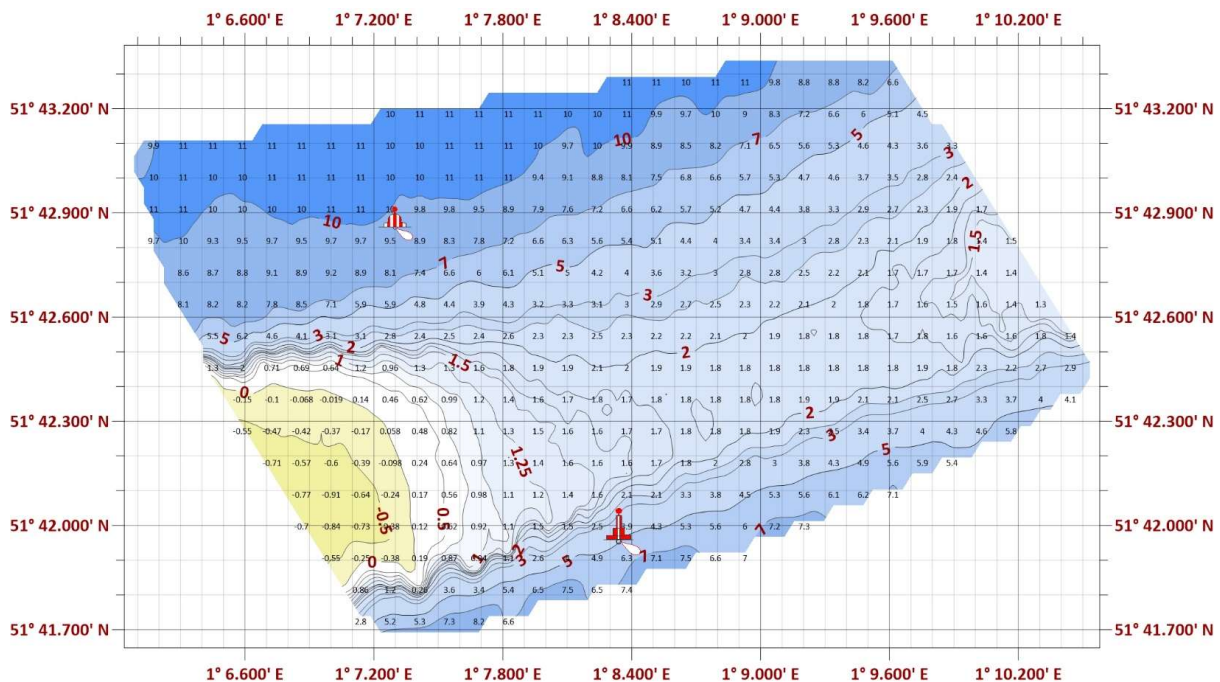


Consolidated Update

The Consolidate Update will add new material as required.

Dated: 3rd June, 2022

1. The Spitway: On the 30th May, we conducted a survey of the Spitway. Lovely flat conditions during the process which was very convenient and makes accuracy simples. The conclusion is that the swatchway has changed very little. It remains the best water to the east of the safe water buoys at 1.8m at chart datum. There is a new download comprising the chartlet and some notes and profiles at: <https://www.crossingthethamesestuary.com/page29.html>



2. The London Array Wind Farm – Foulger’s Gat

The Wind Farm notified a local Notices to Mariners on 1st June about a 3 month maintenance programme that will affect many turbines. The work comprises diving works associated with the cable protection system, using subsea installation tools. Divers will operate from an 8m rib and a support vessel which require a 500m exclusion zone.

There is no advance plan of order as it will depend on conditions and other issues. Some turbines adjacent to Foulger’s Gat may therefore be affected.

There should be sufficient room to still use Foulger’s Gat, perhaps unless work is being undertaken on turbines either side of the Gat at the same time. The Wind Farm prefer you to call on VHF 16 prior to entering as a standard procedure but while this works is under progress and you can see they are obviously working in that area, a call in advance would be important. Also the Duty Marine Coordinator can be called on **01843 855 795** marinecoordinators@londonarray.com.

Full details of the Notice can be seen on: <https://www.crossingthethamesestuary.com/page9.html>

Select the Local Authority list from the menu and scroll down to Week 23.

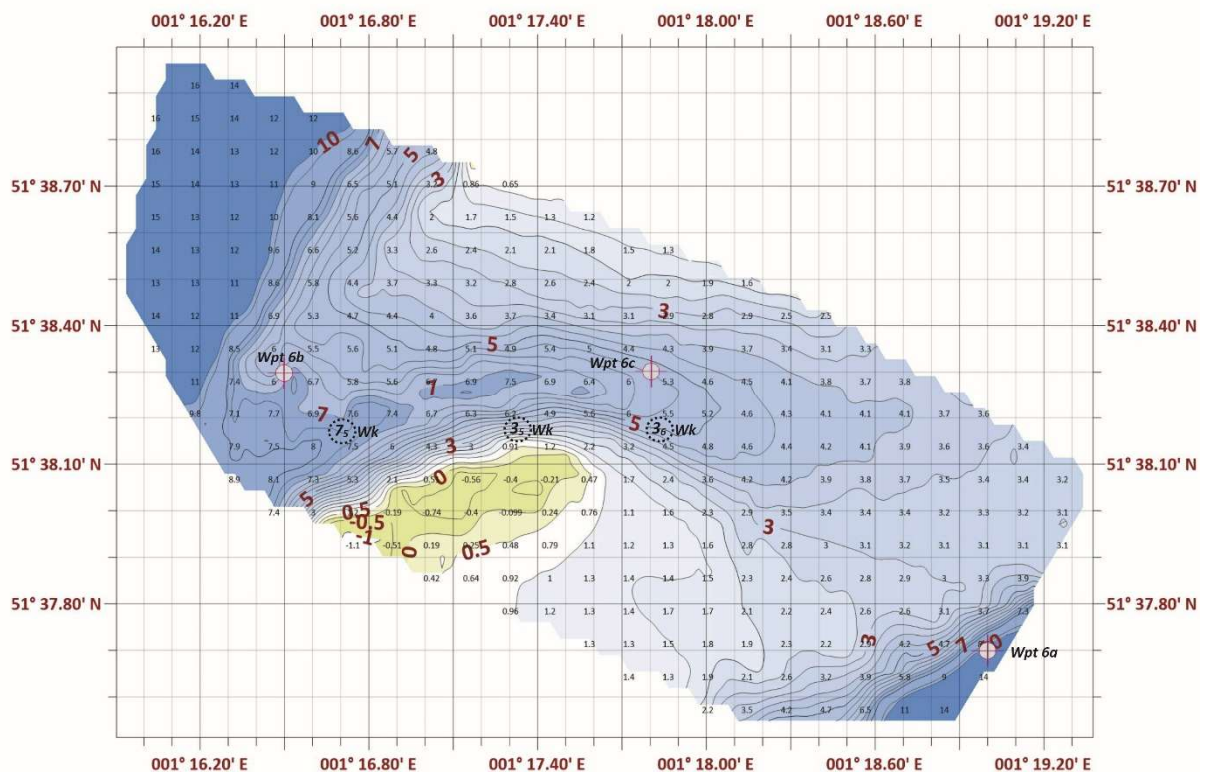
Dated: 20th May, 2022

Four issues: a small correction to the text of the Third Edition, a revised chartlet and waypoint for the SW Sunk swatchway, a recommendation not to use the Middle Sunk crossing at the present, and a warning about electronic charts updates.

1. Correction: Page 11, Table of Waypoints: Wpt 23 Whitaker Spit – amend the description to: “Inner Whitaker bears 96°(T), 0.56nm”. Apologies for the error. The previous description related to the South Whitaker SHM which was removed quite some time ago. The waypoint remains at the same location.

2. SW Sunk swatchway: We completed a re-survey on 18th May, 2022. The swatchway remains entirely useable (and indeed has been).

The swatchway is, though, subject to some changes. The SW Knoll is the most significant feature there and I consider the drying part of the knoll has migrated further to both the north and east. Because of the movement to the east we noticed that the tide rip that occurs in the flood tide did extend further. Because of the north and east movement I am recommending that the mid waypoint should be moved in a similar way.



Revised recommendation – Wpt 6c - 51°38'30N, 001°17'80E. Wpts 6a and 6b remain as before.

You can download and print off the chartlet on the Download page:

<https://www.crossingthethamesestuary.com/page29.html>

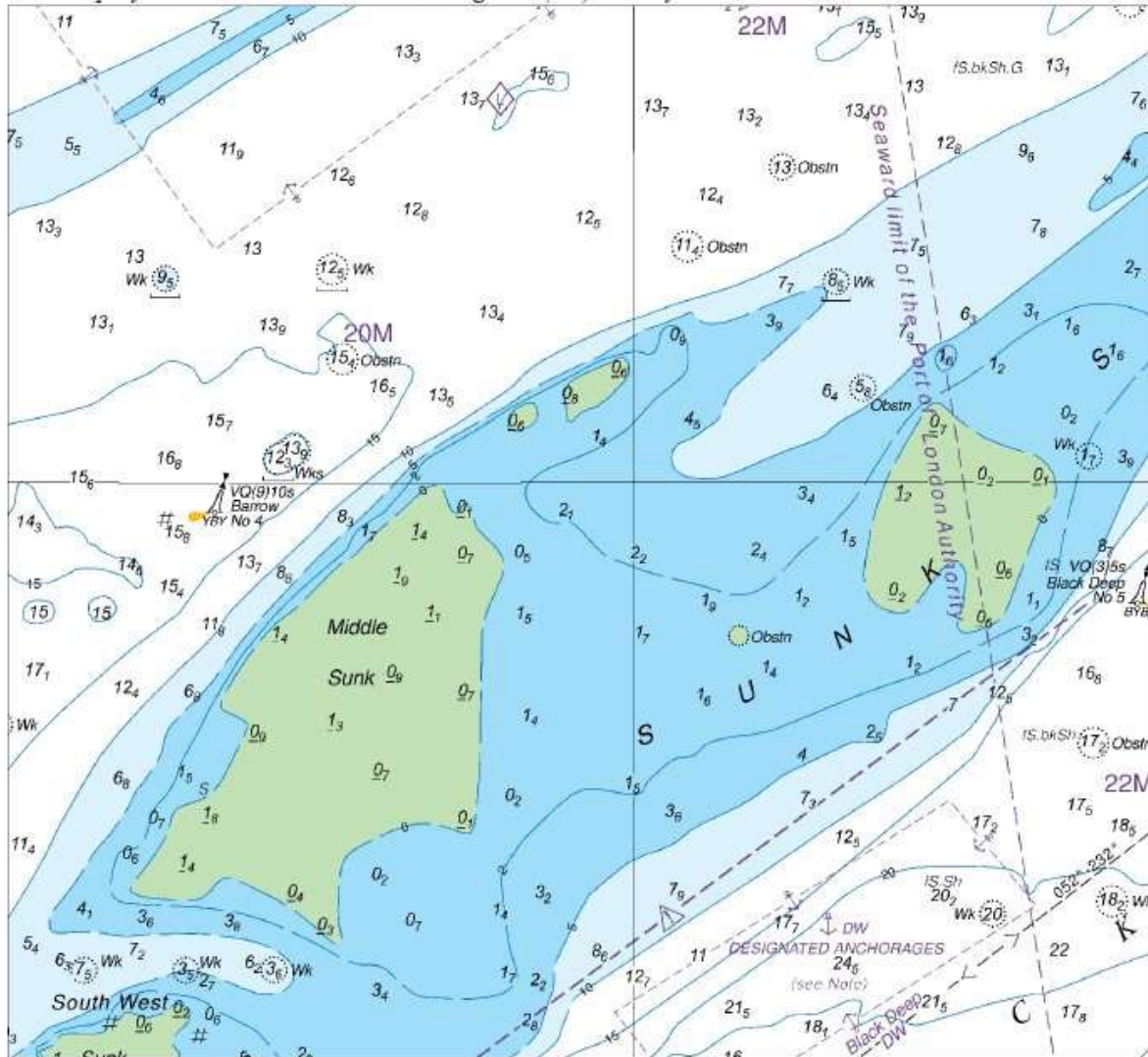
The tide does run quite hard through the swatch. In the last hour of the flood we still experienced a 2 kt east to west tide close to the edge of the SW Knoll – hence the tide rip. Following the track between the recommended waypoints will keep you well clear of the tide rip (which isn't there at all states of the tide).

You can see an example of the tide rip taken in 2021: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jimnl_ktjc I do stress though there is ample room to stay well clear of the rip.

I regard the mid point waypoint as fixed but 'frequent' users could moderate wpts 6a and 6b being aware of the depths.

3. Middle Sunk crossing: My recommendation at present is not to use the Middle Sunk subject to a re-survey as soon as possible this year. At the end of last season we did an exploratory on the Middle Sunk. As a result of that, the UKHO issued a block using part of our data and part of a Port of London Authority survey. The result is:

To accompany Notice to Mariners 5173/2021. Image Size (mm) 145.4 by 158.2



Block for Chart No 1975

Copyright UKHO

Note the shallow finger extending northeast from the Middle Sunk. It is possible to go round to the northeast clear of that 'finger' but it is also necessary to avoid the marked 'Obstn'. That is the remains of the old 1950's Sunk beacon. Given that while the SW Sunk swatch remains easy and safe, using the Middle Sunk to reach to and from the Essex Rivers really provides no benefit. It may be that the Middle Sunk could be a good route to and from Harwich Harbour but the data need more empirical work.

4. Electronic Charts: A word about electronic charts, indeed a general observation first.

'Up-to-date' typically means 'incorporating or aware of the latest information'. Looking at the above image, the data is up to date BUT you need to look on a Standard Nautical Chart (SNC) at the 'Source' dialogue box to appreciate how recent the latest information is. The block above is adding the September, 2021 data in respect to the 'finger' of the Middle Sunk but the SW Sunk data is using 2020 data. That is because our survey in 2021 was too late for the edition of the SNC.

Electronic charts follow the UKHO SNCs but there is no information available on any electronic charts (as far as I know) as to how recent the data is. I have Navionics and C-Map and both are 'up-to-date'. So I can tell you PROVIDED you updated one of those electronic charts THIS year (I checked in April), you would have the correction for the Middle Sunk BUT the SW Sunk is shown in the position in 2020. Given that the SW Knoll has migrated each year to the NE, you should not rely on the contours at that location on either electronic chart even if it is 'up-to-date'. If it is not up to date, the contours at that location will be worse and should not be used. If your electronic chart is not updated for several years, just following the deepest water at the SW Sunk could bring you over the drying areas. Please do follow the recommended waypoints.

The UKHO have told me that there will be a new edition of the relevant SNC later this year so we will ensure they get the 18th May data very shortly.

I should add a final rider: the Little Sunk crossing has no concerns. Several readers have used this already this year without any concerns.

Happy season

Roger Gaspar