

Crossing the Thames Estuary

Second Edition

Updates

Update No 5

There is one specific update (changes to buoyage in the Middle Deep) and three 'news' items

Item 1 – Middle Deep

Trinity House have announced their intention, in their NtM No 23 of 2015, to move and rename the three buoys currently in northern arm of the West Swin “on or around” 14th September, 2015.

The buoys to be moved are the South Whitaker, West Hook and N.E. Maplin. The technical detail and name change is:

S. Whitaker Lighted Buoy: to be moved to 51° 39'.536N., 001° 09'.393E., and to be renamed 'Maplin Approach'.

W. Hook Middle Lighted Buoy: to be moved to 51° 38'.290N., 001° 08'.862E., and to be renamed 'East Maplin'.

N.E. Maplin Lighted Buoy: to be moved to 51° 36'.776N., 001° 05'.501E., and to be renamed 'Maplin Middle'.

The new positions will be as shown overleaf.

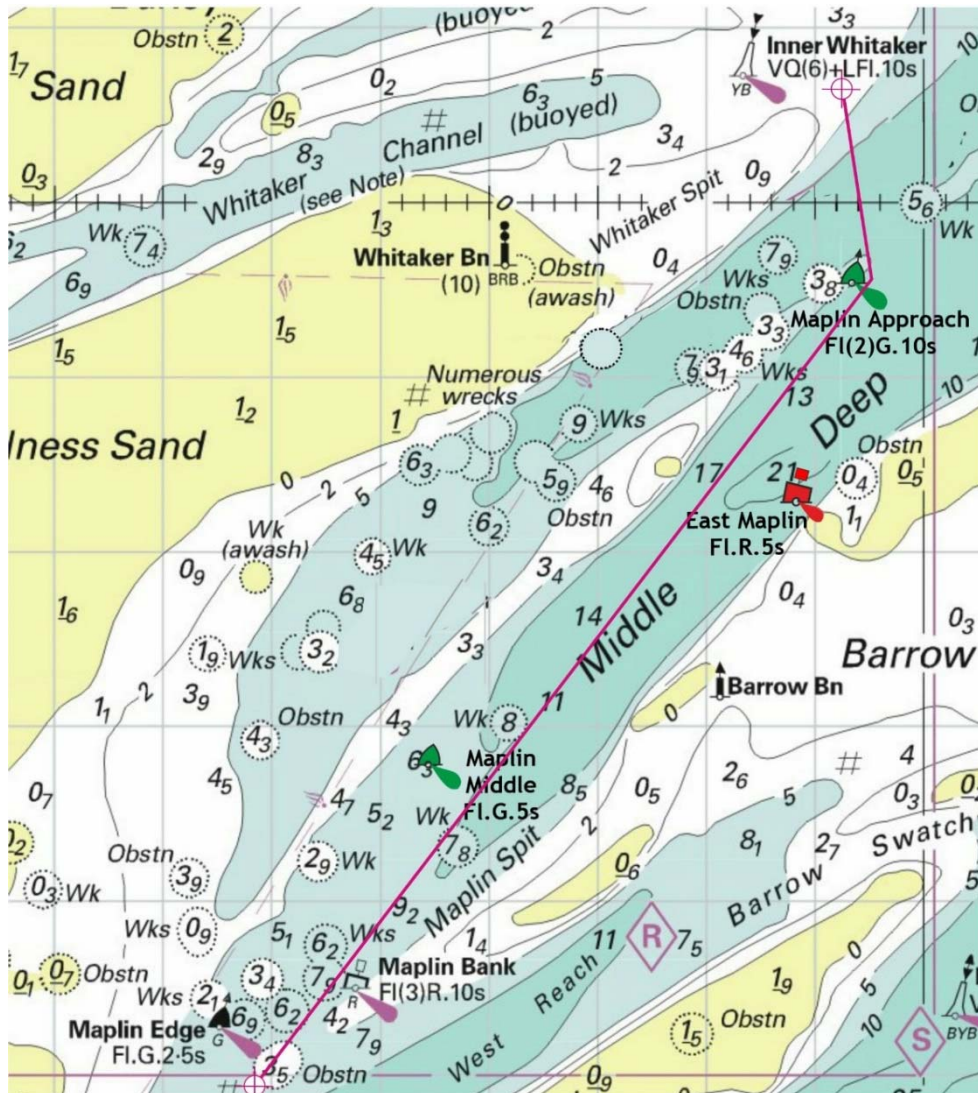
East Coast Pilot has made enquiries of Trinity House as to the reason for these moves and whilst there is at the moment no suggestion that the Shoeburyness Firing Range is extending its boundaries, the former buoyage did bring shipping and yachts in very close proximity to the edge of the Range and the re-positioning is intended to reduce the risk of encroachment. Of the three moves, perhaps the South Whitaker helps us least since that was well placed to give an easy visual mark to clear the Whitaker Spit.

The implications for Routes in the Second Edition are not extensive but there is a change to the advice regarding Sectors C6 (Maplin Edge to NE Maplin) and C7 (NE Maplin to Whitaker Spit) and a number of consequential buoyage name changes that need to be noted. These are set out by page number overleaf.

Passage Planning following these changes

Although there is absolutely no reason why the existing tracks for Sectors C6 and 7 cannot be used in the future, most people will probably wish to follow the buoyage and move to the Middle Deep. That does bring a minor increase in the overall length of the sectors between the Maplin Edge and Whitaker Spit waypoints of 0.13nm but this is minimal for passage planning purposes. I therefore recommend that readers continue to use the existing tables for these two Sectors for their passage planning.

Routing following these changes



For actual passage via the Middle Deep and benefit from the visual marks following the moves, regard Sector C6 as a direct track from the Maplin Edge waypoint (existing waypoint 23) to the Maplin Approach starboard hand buoy (note the direction of buoyage is towards the Thames) and then a shorter Sector C7 from the Maplin Approach buoy to the Whitaker Spit waypoint (existing waypoint 25).

This will have the following consequences for Sectors C6 and C7:

| C6 | | Maplin Edge - Maplin Approach | | |
|----|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| 23 | Maplin Edge | 51°34'89N 001°03'77E | 5.82nm | 037°(T) Northbound |
| 24 | Maplin Approach | 51°39'54N 001°09'39E | | 217°(T) Southbound |
| C7 | | Maplin Approach - Whitaker Spit | | |
| 24 | Maplin Approach | 51°39'54N 001°09'39E | 1.13nm | 355°(T) Northbound |
| 25 | Whitaker Spit | 51°40'66N 001°09'23E | | 179°(T) Southbound |

Note that these changes will occur on or around 14th September, 2015

Specific corrections to the Text (text boxes and images have been produced where appropriate for those who prefer to cut and paste amendments)

Preface – page iii – in the ‘C’ Sector index amend C6 to read ‘Maplin Edge to Maplin Approach - Page No 28/45’. Amend C7 to read ‘Maplin Approach to Whitaker Spit - Page No 28/45’

Main Text

Pages 15 and 43 – Underneath the Sector image insert ‘Note the changes to Sectors C6 and C7 including new coordinates for Waypoint 24 described in Update 5 of 2015.’

Pages 28 and 45 – Amend heading to ‘Sector C6 – Maplin Edge to Maplin Approach’ and insert the following in place of the existing paragraphs:

The start waypoint for this sector is before the Maplin Edge starboard hand buoy (*Fl.G.2.5s*).

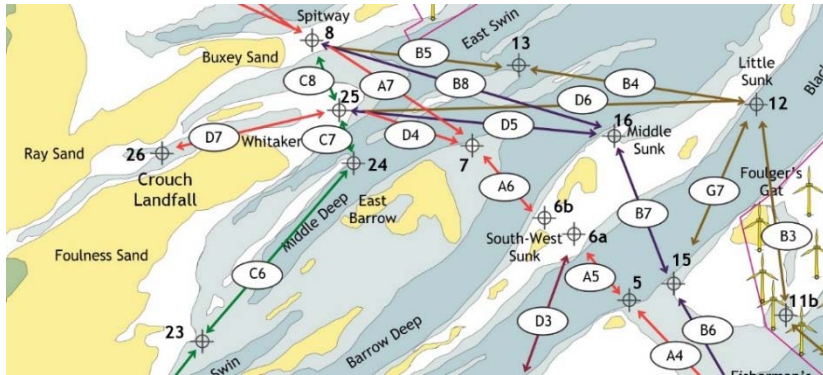
Owing to a move of buoyage by Trinity House in September, 2015 the original sector route which used to run to the west of the shoal ground now runs to the east through the Middle Deep. This has the advantage of distancing yachts from the edge of the Shoeburyness Firing Range and being generally deeper water. Frequent users of this route are the Prior Barges who trade between their base at Fingringhoe on the River Colne and London.

Readers will be able to continue the existing planning tables for passage timing calculations even though using this new routing through the Middle Deep as the impact on timing brought about by these changes is minimal. However, because this sector will be significantly longer and C7 corresponding shorter, the interim arrival time between C6 and C7 in the tables will not be accurate. Overall route times will, however, be fine.

Amend heading to ‘Sector C7 – Maplin Approach to Whitaker Spit’ and insert the following in place of the existing paragraph:

This short sector connects to the Whitaker Spit waypoint (waypoint 25). Cross track error is best avoided at the beginning of the flood to keep clear of the shallow Whitaker Spit to the west of the track. The northerly waypoint is adjacent to the Inner Whitaker north cardinal buoy (*VQ(6)+LFl.10s*) which marks the entrance to the Whitaker Channel for those bound for the Crouch (see later). Those heading for the Blackwater or Colne have a further short sector to the mid-point of the Spitway.

Page 29 – insert the following image in place of the existing image.



Page 58

Amend the Sector details for Sectors C6 and C7 in accordance with the details below or insert the provided table adjacent to the entry.

In the Sector for C6 and C7 amend NE Maplin to Maplin Approach in the heading (2 places) and in the name of waypoint 24 (2 places). Amend the waypoint to 51°39'54N 001°09'39E and the distances to 5.82nm and 1.13nm.

| C6 | | Maplin Edge - Maplin Approach | | |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| 23 | Maplin Edge | 51°34'89N 001°03'77E | 5.82nm | 037°(T) Northbound |
| 24 | Maplin Approach | 51°39'54N 001°09'39E | | 217°(T) Southbound |
| C7 | | Maplin Approach - Whitaker Spit | | |
| 24 | Maplin Approach | 51°39'54N 001°09'39E | 1.13nm | 355°(T) Northbound |
| 25 | Whitaker Spit | 51°40'66N 001°09'23E | | 179°(T) Southbound |

Page 62 – The Waypoint List

Waypoint 24 – amend the coordinates to 51°39'54N 001°09'39E, the name to 'Maplin Approach' and the location description to 'Adjacent to the Maplin Approach SHM'.

Pages 65 to 84

The Rolling Roads

The change in names and positions has consequences for every route in which Sectors C6 and C7 appear. This unfortunately is a rather long list but the change is identical in each route:

1. amend the names of NE Maplin, S. Whitaker and W. Hook Middle to 'Maplin Middle, Maplin Approach and East Maplin respectively';
2. indicate that the 'Maplin Middle' and 'East Maplin' are now in Sector C6;
3. amend the name of waypoint No 24 to 'Maplin Approach'.

The Routes affected are: 5, 11, 17, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50 and 52.

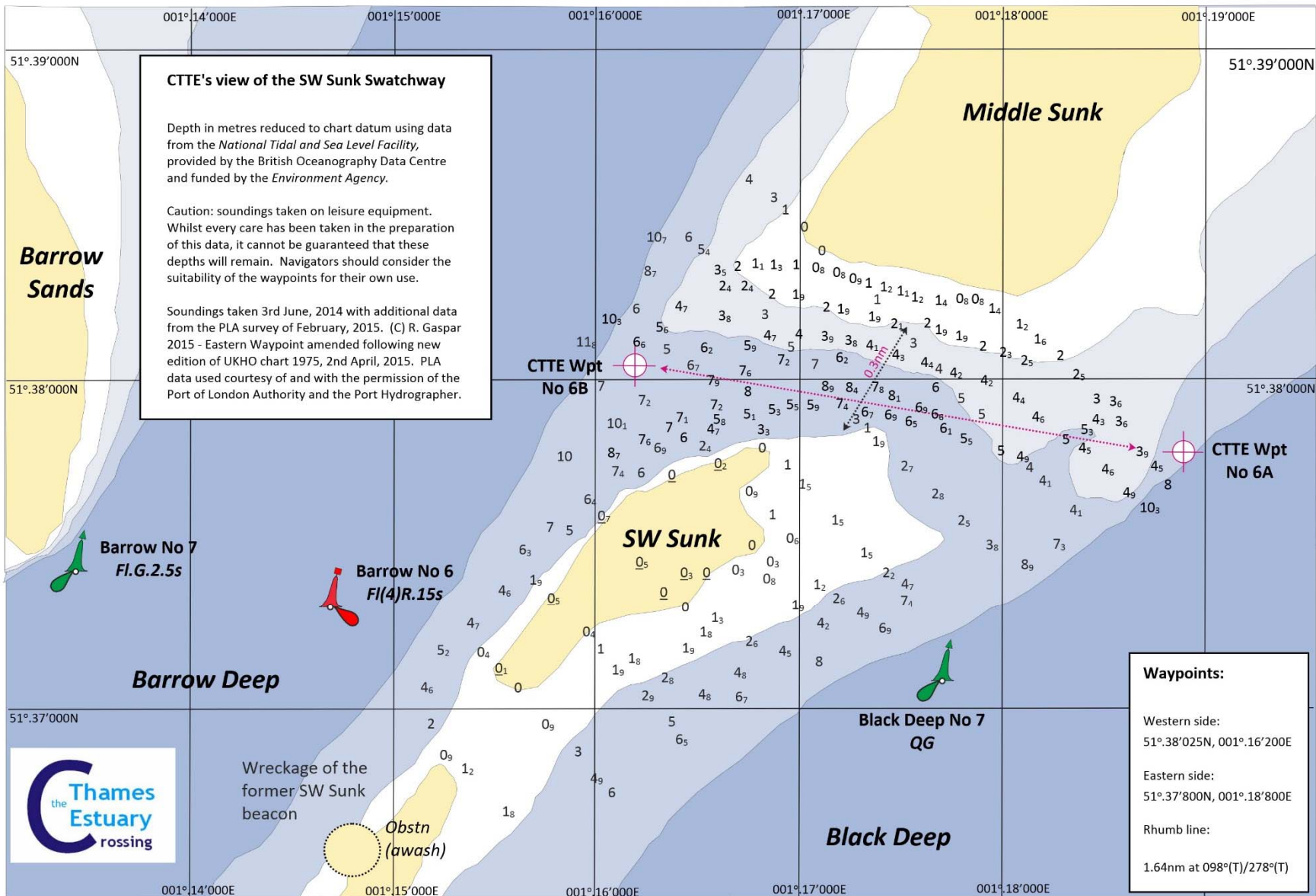
Planning Tables

It is unnecessary to alter any numerical entry in these tables as the former sectors will still provide accurate times. You may, however, wish to make some note that the old sectors are retained solely for passage planning purposes and not for routing.

Item 2 – The South-West Swatchway

The Port of London Authority has kindly given me permission to use their data from their survey of the SW Sunk in February of this year. The data has nigh perfect correlation where it overlaps my data from the previous year but has enabled me to add to the detail, in particular the shape of the Knoll to the south-west. The improved chartlet is overleaf and can be additionally downloaded from the Downloads page. It includes the amendment made to the eastern waypoint following the publication of the revised UKHO Chart 1975 (Thames Estuary – Northern Part).

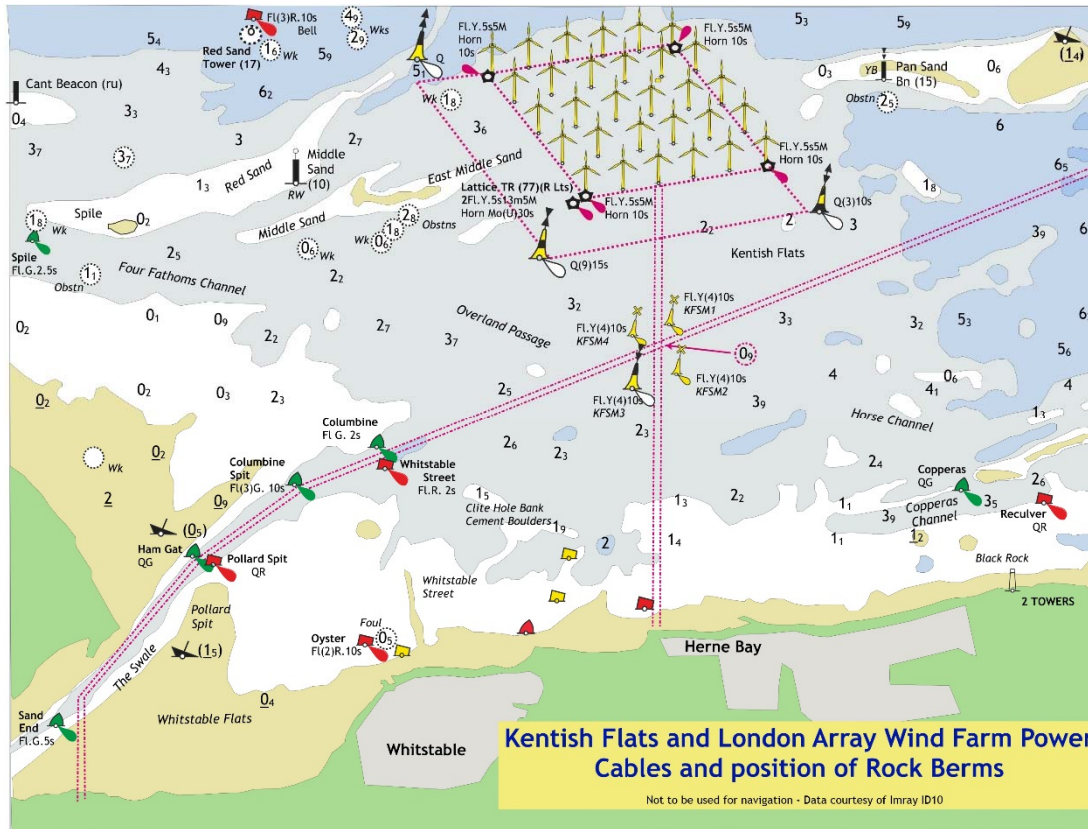
Note also please, the correction to the numbering of the Barrow Deep No 7 buoy (with grateful thanks to a couple of eagle-eyed readers and apologies if this caused any confusion in earlier chartlets).



Item 3 – Rock Berms

Where the power cables for the London Array Wind Farm cross the BritNed power cable and the Kentish Flats Wind Farm cables, two rock berms were established during the laying of the London Array cables. These are artificial rock structures to retain and protect the cables but they also had the effect of dramatically reducing depth: in the case of the BritNed crossing to 4m LAT and the Kentish Flats to 0.9m LAT (some reports from local Fishermen suggested this berm was awash).

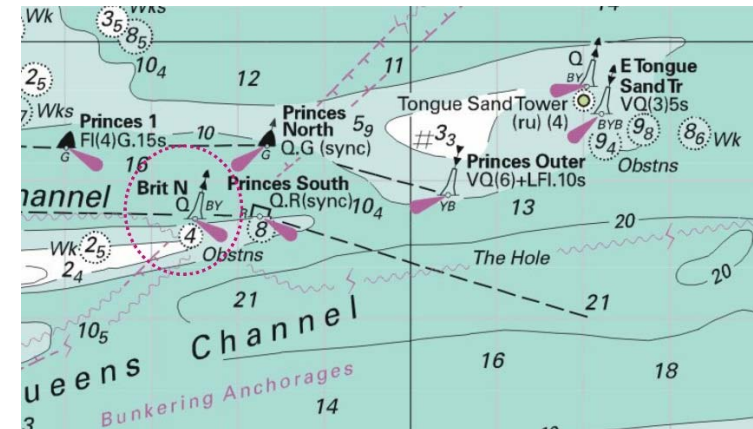
Both locations have been protected by buoyage but during recent extension work at the Kentish Flats, guard vessels have seen leisure craft apparently ignoring or unaware of the dangers. In consequence they have asked for a reminder to be published.



The BritNed crossing is actually at 51° 28'.583N, 001° 17'.417E with a North Cardinal Buoy exhibiting Q light characteristics established at 51°28.718N 001° 17.50E

The Kentish Flats/London array cable crossings have marker buoys at the following locations surrounding the shallow area of 0.9m:

- 51° 25.56N 001° 06.45E (KFSM1)
- 51° 25.00N 001° 06.44E (KFSM2)
- 51° 24.86N 001° 05.77E (KFSM3)
- 51° 25.41N 001° 05.69E (KFSM4)



Item 4 - Need to check Sector Tracks

There is a general warning in the book for readers to check that the sector tracks used for passage planning purposes are safe for actual routing and suitable for your vessel. In several places in the text there are specific warnings, for example there used to be such a warning in respect of Sector C7 (before this Update's amendments).

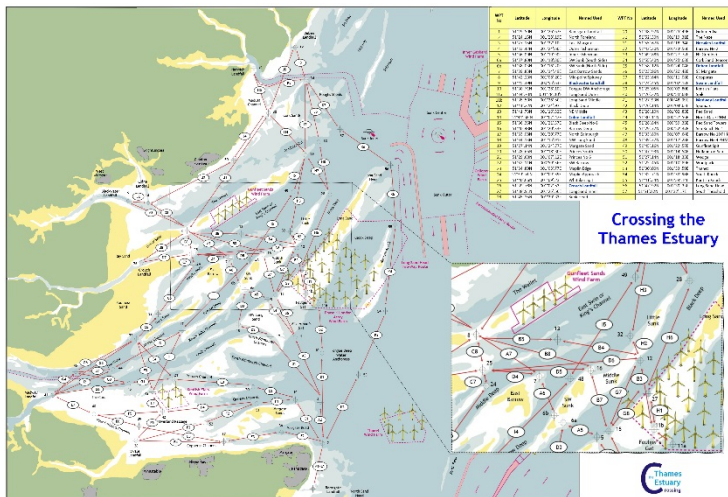
A reader has pointed out there is one Sector where such a warning is required but it is not included in the text for that Sector and the track passes over drying ground.

This is Sector G8 between the Black Deep No 8 (waypoint 15) and the Long Sand Inner (waypoint No 27) which is provided for those who wish to avoid using Foulger's Gat. Strict adherence to the sector track would have you bumping over the edge of the Long Sand as well as bringing you close to the turbines of the London Array Wind Farm.

There is no need to adhere to the sector track; it will suffice to follow the edge of the Black Deep channel. Note that the Port of London Authority restrict the use of the Black Deep to craft drawing over 6m and you should strictly avoid encroaching on the channel.

You may wish to make a cautionary annotation on Page 40 at the entry for Sector G8.

In case it is of interest



For my own reference I have created this overall image of all the routes and waypoints (corrected to Update 5). It is too small to work in A4 size but adequate in A3. For obvious reasons I do not want to make it generally available to those who have not purchased the second edition but if it is of use to registered readers who have access to an A3 printer or a print services such as Staples, I am happy to forward a copy of the PNG file to anyone who cares to notify me of their interest on info@crossingthamesestuary.com

Happy Sailing
Roger