



Safety Alert - Consider your Wash

Launch drivers should be aware of the wash they are creating and consider other water users. They should take action to ensure that their wash is not excessive. These actions can consist of a combination of reducing speed, improving the trim of and the position of their launch.

Speed is easy to control; it is just a matter of adjusting the throttle. In many cases there are speed limits imposed by the Navigation Authority. On the Tideway, for example, the limit is 8 knots ($\approx$ 9 mph) as stipulated in Bylaw 16 of the [Port of London Thames Byelaws 2012](#). This is the speed through the water and **not** the speed over the ground. The speed measured using a Global Positioning by Satellite (GPS) app on a phone will be the speed over the ground.

Wash can also depend on the attitude of the launch in the water. The waterline should be parallel to the gunwale and boats should not have their bows high above the water, particularly when accelerating. This causes excessive wash and obstructs the driver's view forward.

Attitude can be influenced by the weight distribution in the launch. It can be difficult to obtain the correct attitude when using a lightweight, tiller-steered launch as most of the weight tends to be positioned in the stern. Launch drivers should use a tiller extension so that they can move their bodyweight further forward.

Boat attitude can also be improved by having an additional person aboard or by fixing weights in the bow. It is particularly helpful to have an additional person so that one can drive and the other can coach.

If there is a desire to video the crew there should be a second person in the boat. It is not safe for launch drivers use videos. They should maintain a good lookout in all directions.

Coaches should try to position their launches so that the crew is either immediately ahead or between the coach and the bank so that the launch is towards the centre of the waterway. In that way the coach will tend to prevent their crew from straying into the middle of the waterway. The coach will need to keep a good lookout ahead.



Be considerate to others when you are driving your launch

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