

Thames Sailing Barge Trust

Hansel House, Walden Close, Gt Totham, CM9 8UJ

Sailing Barge Safety Leaflet

A trip on one of our Thames Sailing Barges should be a safe and enjoyable experience, but as they are traditional vessels designed in the 19th century with heavy gear and equipment you do have to apply common sense and take reasonable care by following some simple safety precautions. Thames sailing barges are very different from modern vessels and even experienced yachtsmen will find unexpected features and will not be familiar with the gear - the picture below shows that even the names of some of the sails and rigging may be new to you!

Please take time to read the information in this leaflet and the full safety policy below as they explain the safety precautions you need to follow when sailing with us. We are proud of our excellent safety record and our volunteer crews are always happy to help you learn more about our craft and how they are handled.

We hope you will enjoy sailing on our barges

Thames Sailing Barge Trust.

TSBT Sailing and Charters Limited

SAFETY POLICY

Introduction

o **Passengers** must listen to instructions and follow the direction of the Skipper or mate in all safety matters. The safety of the ship, her passengers and crew is paramount. A safety briefing that covers all the points below will be given at the start of the trip. If you are unsure of any safety instruction the skipper or mate will be happy to explain it in more detail.

o **Emergencies** - Both barges are equipped with life jackets for all crew and passengers to use in emergency situations. You will be shown where they are located and their use will be demonstrated during the safety briefing. The barge carries other safety equipment including a self inflating 16 man life raft, life buoys, distress flares, salvage and hand pumps, fire extinguishers, first aid kits and smoke & gas detectors. Emergency exits from below deck are signed and skylights in the cabins provide an alternative exit in an emergency.

o **Fire** - in the event of fire please gather on deck and await the instructions of the skipper or mate. Fire extinguishers are situated in key locations below deck and should be used by trained personnel only. Prevention of fire is important whilst on board - gas cookers must be supervised whilst alight and the gas supply should be isolated after use. Tilley and paraffin lamps are used for lighting and navigation and must only be used by the skipper or mate. Gas cylinders and flammable liquids are stored on deck - avoid smoking whilst near them.

o **Safety on deck** - Passengers must take care to move slowly along the deck, not run on deck, avoid tripping and always keep a good handhold. Be careful to avoid bumping in to other people or being knocked over by the ships gear. When the barge is sailing you should always walk along the windward deck. Lifelines and stanchions are fitted to help reduce the risk of anyone falling over the side - if the barge is taking part in a match (barge race) the lifelines are removed to allow the crew to work efficiently so passengers must take **extra** care. If you see anyone fall overboard raise the alarm by shouting 'man overboard' and point to the casualty. Keep pointing to the casualty throughout the recovery procedure.

o **Life jackets** - everyone is advised to wear a life jacket whilst on deck. All non or poor swimmers and young persons under 16 must wear a life jacket at all times on deck when the barge is underway as must all passengers when in the barge boat. Our life jackets are only suitable for people weighing over 40kg - lighter adults and children must bring a suitable lifejacket rated to 150N. Children under 7 must be harnessed to an adult when on deck and underway.

This safety policy is issued by THAMES SAILING BARGE TRUST and TSBT Sailing and Charters Limited a trading subsidiary company of the Trust which is not a registered charity but donates its profits to the Trust. Nothing in this leaflet constitutes a contract between any passenger and the Trust.

Safety whilst sailing

o **Thames sailing barges** are traditional vessels designed in the 19th century with heavy gear and equipment which has the potential to cause injury. Care must be taken in the following areas -

o **Main and fore horses** - Please take great care when near the main and fore horses - never sit or stand on, close to or immediately forward of these when the barge is sailing. Move quickly but carefully forward and aft when passing over the fore and main horse.

o **Winches, windlass, anchor, ropes and other sailing gear** - We encourage passengers to help with the sailing of the barge but please **only as directed** by the skipper or mate. For your safety make sure you don't stand on or in any rope or coil of rope. The winches and windlass have unguarded gears, cogs and pawls - be sure to keep hands and clothing clear of these whilst the winch is operating and remember not to sit or stand on the windlass or the anchor chain or winches. Only the Skipper, Mate, Third Hand or other experienced crew under supervision or training should handle the anchor chain to drop the anchor, or use the winches to lower the leeboards or mainsail.

o **Going alongside** - When a barge comes into moor alongside or onto a buoy make sure you keep clear of operations unless authorised by the skipper or mate. Remember the skipper will need to have good visibility - the best place to avoid obstructing their view is to sit on the main hatch or by the mast.

o **Barge boat** - All passengers **must** wear a life jacket at all times while using the boat. Don't stand up in the boat except when getting in or out of it. Do not smoke in the boat because it carries petrol.

o **Going aloft/access to engine room** - Only the skipper, mate, third hand or persons under training are allowed to climb the rigging and go aloft or access the engine room.

o **Man overboard** - see notes "Safety on Deck".

General safety

o **Trip hazards** - Try to become familiar with the layout of the barge and be careful not to trip or catch your clothing in the gear. There are also items of gear that are greased or oily and can dirty your clothing. Remember to always look where you are going and where you are putting your feet.

o **Stairs and down below** - Always walk backwards down the stairs holding on to the hand rail. Down below the keelson - a large girder - runs through the barge - when walking from one side of the saloon or galley to the other you must take care when stepping over it. Remember there are some areas with limited headroom down below.

o **Smoking** - no smoking down below or on deck near the gas & petrol storage

areas.

o **Cooking safety** - Never leave the cookers unattended when alight. Take extra care when handling hot pans and other kitchen equipment. When you have finished cooking turn off all burners/ovens and isolate the gas at the main switch next to the cookers.

o **First aid** - the skipper and mate are trained in first aid and we carry fully equipped first aid kits on board. If you or anyone else on board requires first aid you must let the skipper or mate know.

o **Medical/medication/allergies** - you must let the skipper or mate know if you have a medical condition (including back problems), suffer from any allergies or are taking any medication that may affect you whilst on board and that may affect your ability to assist with the sailing or other activity on board.

o **Sea sickness** - few people experience sea sickness on board a sailing barge. If you do feel seasick stay warm and dry, try to eat and drink regularly and if prone to sickness remember to bring along a suitable remedy.

o **Alcohol** - While use of alcohol is allowed no one should consume an excessive amount that leaves them unable to take reasonable care for their own and other's safety.

o **Safety at night** - passengers should not go up on deck at night alone

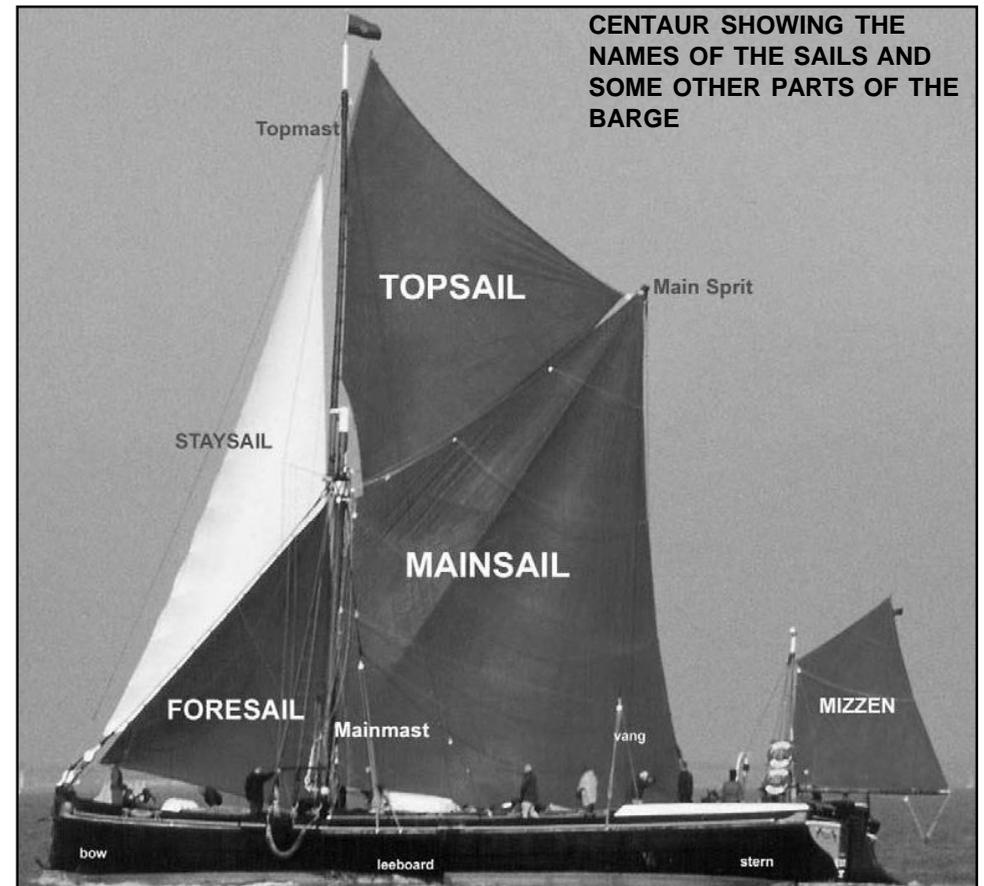
o **Toilets** - our barges are equipped with sea toilets. Please ask the skipper or mate if you are not sure how to operate these. Due to the risks of falling overboard passengers are asked not to urinate over the side of the barge.

o **Swimming** - We do not allow passengers to go swimming from the barge. Swimming from a beach at your own risk by capable swimmers may be possible during a sailing trip if conditions are suitable.

o **Contact details** - you must supply contact details at the time of booking for use in the case of emergencies.

o **TSBT Sailing and Charters Limited** Pudge and Centaur although owned by the Trust, are operated by the Trust's subsidiary company and although this safety policy is published by the Trust it applies to the operations of TSBT sailing and Charters Limited and is incorporated in the contract between that company and its passengers.

The Trust accepts no liability for the safety of sailing operations aboard Pudge and Centaur which are the sole responsibility of TSBT Sailing and Charters Limited.



CENTAUR SHOWING THE NAMES OF THE SAILS AND SOME OTHER PARTS OF THE BARGE



The picture above shows the deck view aft and clearly illustrates the main horse. In the lower right of the picture you can see the mainsheet block too. When the barge changes direction the sails can come across from one side to the other. Of course you'll be told what's happening and warned what to do or not to do but the skipper and mate will be insistent that you don't get in the way of the mainsheet as it slides across the main horse!

Our barges are crewed by a qualified Thames sailing barge Master and an experienced mate. Sometimes we have a third hand or a trainee mate too. The skippers and mates have many years of experience of sailing barges and they know what it's like sailing with both hardened sailors and inexperienced new people. They will want to help you learn what to do but if you just want to relax they will be happy to let you keep out of the way!

As a rule we ask that you DO NOT touch any of the equipment or ropes unless you are under the supervision of the crew or have already been shown what to do and asked to do it again.

On our barges everyone helps out down below with the food preparation, cooking and washing up. There are some basic rules about gas safety to bear in mind and you should be careful with hot kettles and pans as you would in any kitchen - just remember that this one moves sometimes!

When you are on deck you need to keep an eye on where you are treading as there are potential trip hazards such as the main horse (see picture above) and its equivalent at the forward end (the forehorse) as well as some ropes and chains.

On deck - as on any boat - you must take care not to fall overboard. If you cannot swim you MUST wear a lifejacket whenever you are on deck when we are underway. We advise every passenger to do so and you will be shown where the life jackets are and how they work. If you choose to wear one ask the mate or third hand to get it for you. If you have a child or young person with you who will not fit an adult life jacket they must bring their own. Children and young persons MUST wear a life jacket at all time on deck while the vessel is underway.

We have a bargeboat used for going ashore sometimes (you can see it in the picture opposite). Lifejackets MUST be worn in this boat.

When it's breezy and the barge heels over always remember to walk on the higher side (opposite the sails) as it's safest. We fit stanchions and lifelines to reduce the risk of anyone falling over the side. If you book to sail on a barge Match remember that we remove the lifelines when we are racing as it's difficult to race with them in the way of the gear.

Remember that the best way to avoid falling overboard is to be careful not to. Always try and hold on if you think you could fall. Don't run about on deck. Look around you so you don't get in the way of the sails and above all listen to what you are told!

Safety equipment

As well as having qualified and experienced crews our barges comply with strict regulations about safety equipment. Each barge carries the full range of safety, navigation, fire fighting, first aid and emergency equipment. Although our barges are traditional sailing ships they have modern auxiliary engines. Despite the safety equipment our skippers will not set sail if they judge the weather conditions to be unsafe.

Swimming

We can go to places where you can swim off the beach but please note we do not allow people to swim from the barge.

Safety at night

Because of the increased risks of falling overboard no-one should go on deck alone at night.

Our Safety Policy is set out in full on the backpage and is also downloadable from the website. Further instructions and safety advice will be given to you on board as required.

Above all, sailing should be fun! It is a safe activity if everyone takes care and you follow our simple rules.

We hope your trip on our Thames Sailing Barges Centaur or Pudge will be a relaxing experience away from it all on the timeless East Coast Rivers. Don't forget you can be more active and perhaps you'll come away with some new skills, but however you spend your time with us please make sure you stay safe!