

### 9.3 Value of open space

There is increasing recognition of the contribution that open space can make to people's health and wellbeing.<sup>1</sup>

The use of green spaces is one way in which people can use and enjoy their local environment. The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs 2001 Survey of Public Attitudes to Quality of Life and to the Environment found that just under half of adults aged 18 or over visited local green spaces or countryside, without using a car or other transport, at least once a month. A further quarter visited occasionally. However, one in ten never did so, while a further one in six said that they had no access without a car or other transport. People aged over 45 were the most likely to visit green spaces on 'most days', while those aged over 65 were the most likely never to do so.

Green space also has the potential to create biodiversity. For over a quarter of its length the river runs through designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). These nationally designated landscapes provide ideal opportunities for wider countryside recreation.

The river has a major role to play in providing accessible open space, recognised by Government.

Government's planning guidance defines green space as 'all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs that offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.'<sup>2</sup>

The guidance outlines how good policies for open space, sport and recreation can deliver the Government's broader objectives of urban renewal, social and community inclusion, health and wellbeing and sustainable development. Local authorities are advised to carry out a cross departmental audit (linking planning, community strategy and the Best Value process) of existing provision against an assessment of local community needs and aspirations. External groups should also play an integral part in the assessment.



#### Policy 8 - sport and recreation

##### We will realise the open-space opportunities provided by the Thames

###### Possible actions

- 1 work in partnership through the River Thames Alliance to ensure that the value of the river is included in open-space audits and development plans
- 2 provide accurate up-to-date information about sport and recreation opportunities on the river
- 3 provide facilities for multi sport clubs

### 9.4 Access and walking (map 9)

The Thames Path opened in 1996 as one of only 13 National Trails in England and is unique in following a river. It runs for 294 kilometres from the source of the river to the Thames Barrier in Greenwich. (The research findings that follow, however, have been selected to include only users from the source to Teddington).

The Thames Path was established by the Countryside Agency and has a management group drawn from all the highway authorities, the Countryside Agency, the Environment Agency and Tourism South East. A small team funded by the Countryside Agency and the highway authorities is hosted by Oxfordshire County Council and undertakes the day-to-day management of the Thames Path with much of the physical maintenance carried out by volunteers. The Thames Path Management Strategy contains many of the aspirations set out in this document.<sup>1</sup>

Two thirds of its users live within 16 kilometres. Although 39 per cent walk to the riverside, 55 per cent come by car and only 3 per cent use public transport.<sup>1</sup>

The path, used equally by men and women, is an important asset supporting the objective to involve more women in exercise. 81 per cent of visitors appreciated the presence of lock keepers and 71 per cent had their enjoyment enhanced by motorboats.<sup>2</sup>

The river also acts as a barrier. This has a number of significant consequences. Settlements on the bank opposite the Thames Path cannot gain access unless there is a local bridge or ferry. Existing road bridges tend to funnel traffic creating congestion black spots. This in turn deters alternative transport modes, such as walking and cycling, delays buses, and produces air and noise pollution as well as considerable frustration.

The lower reaches, particularly between Cleeve and Marsh Lock and downstream of Marlow, are well served by rail connections. However, footpath links from stations to the river could be improved in many instances. Examples include Appleford, Wargrave, Culham, Goring, Pangbourne and Tilehurst. The upper reaches of the river are relatively inaccessible by public transport.

#### Policy 9 - access

##### We will encourage people to travel to the river on foot or by cycle

###### Possible actions

- 1 create footpath links and cycleways to the river, particularly from urban areas
- 2 provide bridges or ferry services to cross the river for access to the Thames Path
- 3 use fingerposts and waymarking to identify all access points

#### Policy 10 - access

##### We will encourage walking alongside the river and on the adjoining access land and rights of way network

###### Possible actions

- 1 align the Thames Path next to the river<sup>2</sup> on legally defined public rights of way, protecting the bank from erosion when necessary and possible
- 2 create, sign and promote circular walks incorporating the Thames Path
- 3 provide campsites or budget accommodation at 16 kilometre intervals (a day's walk)
- 4 provide drinking water and toilets at all lock sites
- 5 work with the National Trail Office to promote the Thames Path

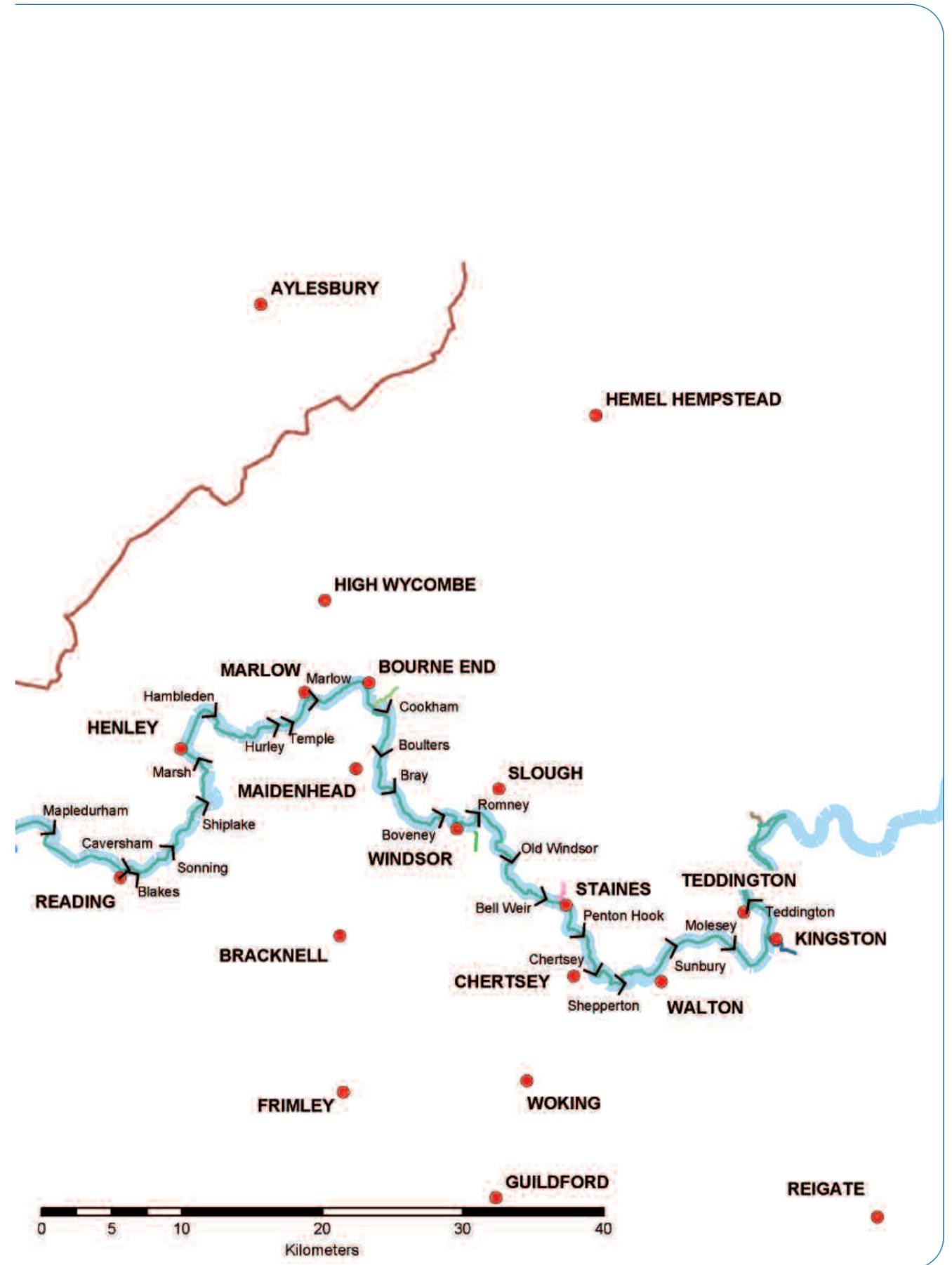
The Thames is the only river to have a designated National Trail. Walking is a low-cost activity that promotes health.

<sup>1</sup> PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, July 2002

<sup>2</sup> A good overview of the literature is found in Planning Bulletin 12, Planning for Open Space, Sport England, September 2002

<sup>1</sup> The Thames Path National Trail Management Strategy 2001-2006, Countryside Agency

<sup>2</sup> National Trails Thames Path User Survey 1999, Centre for Leisure Research



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## Policy 11 - access

**We will encourage access by public transport****Possible actions**

- 1 encourage bus and train services, especially at weekends, to the riverside
- 2 promote access by train or bus, to walk along the Thames Path returning from a different train/bus stop (using leaflets, website, posters, special timetabling, shuttle buses, ticket deals etc.)
- 3 improve footpath links and signage between stations and river

Making recreation facilities accessible by public transport promotes social inclusion. Public transport is better for the environment than more cars.

## Policy 12 - access

**We will provide facilities for those needing access by car****Possible actions**

- 1 create car parks to serve popular angling and boating reaches
- 2 provide adjacent slipways where necessary

Cars are used for access by anglers carrying bulky equipment, and by people bringing canoes and trailed boats. Parking is needed for people with mobility problems, and 55 per cent of walkers use cars to get to the riverside.

## Policy 13 - access

**We will provide access for people with disabilities****Possible actions**

- 1 carry out an audit to identify barriers to access
- 2 provide ramps for wheelchair access to lock sites and the Thames Path
- 3 create a wide level path free from stiles, to accommodate people with mobility problems
- 4 create access and platforms to facilitate angling by people with disabilities
- 5 introduce scent trails and interpretation for people with visual impairment
- 6 provide accurate information so that people with disabilities are able to make an informed decision about suitability of access

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires service providers to take reasonable steps to overcome barriers to access. The accessibility of rights of way to blind or partially-sighted persons and others with mobility problems must be considered when Rights of Way Improvement Plans are prepared.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Statutory Guidance under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2002, Section 60-62. Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, November 2002

## 9.5 Cycling (map 10)

In the 1980s, when the proposal to create the Thames Path was being developed, the Countryside Commission's (now Countryside Agency) expectation was that substantial parts of the path would be suitable for shared use by walkers and cyclists. However, after extensive consultation, the submission document, which was approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment, stated '.... it has become apparent that, far from being an obvious candidate for such a route, there are more problems associated with such dual use than would be encountered on other paths...' The Thames Path National Trail was therefore, after deliberation, created as a long distance route for walkers.

In summary, the document concluded that:

- The likely level of cycling use would have a detrimental effect on unimproved surfaces, or would require surface improvements, which would be detrimental to the visual character of rural stretches.
- In some urban areas there was insufficient width to enable shared use without conflict.
- There were three stretches that would be suitable for shared use and unlikely to cause conflicts with other users of the path. It was proposed that they should be included in the National Trail: Runnymede to Windsor, Sonning to Reading and Donnington Bridge to Godstow (Oxford).

There is a need to create better access to the countryside for cyclists on safe transport routes. Recreational cycling makes an important financial contribution to rural economies and can also help to address social exclusion.

Cycling is encouraged and supported as a sustainable means of transport that offers a beneficial alternative to the car for getting to the river. However, the

Thames Path management group's policy is not to designate the trail itself as a long distance route for cyclists.<sup>1</sup> It will support, in principle, the development of cycle routes sharing alignment with parts of the trail, unless it is considered that the development will reduce the quality of experience for all walkers, including people using pushchairs and mobility aids and other disabled users of the Thames Path.

Where cycling is not already established, the management group's policy is that generally, in rural areas and through informal open spaces in urban areas, the path should be kept for walkers only. (Unless shared use of short sections of path is the only way to complete a safe link on a cycle route.)

Where cycling is already established, the management group recommends that local authorities convert public footpaths to bridleways by agreement with the landowner under Section 25 of the Highways Act 1980 (rather than converting footpaths to cycle tracks, because they are not recorded upon the Definitive Map). In such cases the management group asks for provision of a two-metre wide path for walkers, physically segregated by a landscaped strip from a further three metre wide path for cyclists.

There is strong demand for cycling to be encouraged, exemplified by the work of Sustrans.<sup>2</sup> Local authorities are encouraged to establish attractive, high-quality alternative routes for cyclists where the Thames Path is not suitable.

Areas for traffic-free cycling can be found in many parks, forests and gardens in the wider river corridor. For example, Swinley Forest in Bracknell is within 16 kilometres (10 miles) of Old Windsor Lock. Development of cycle routes parallel to the Thames Path will be acceptable if it does not adversely affect landscape character or the experience of other trail users.

## Policy 14 - access

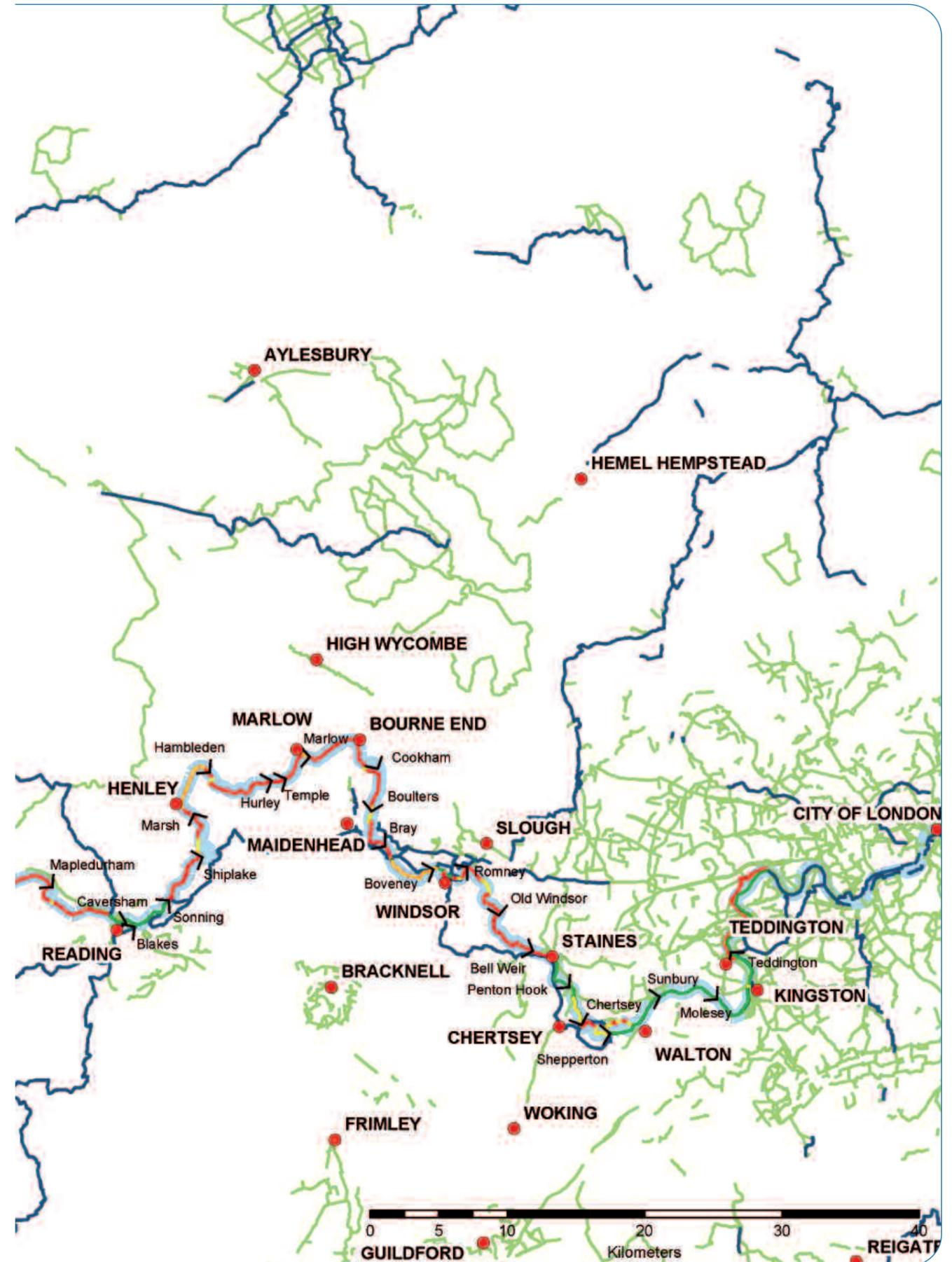
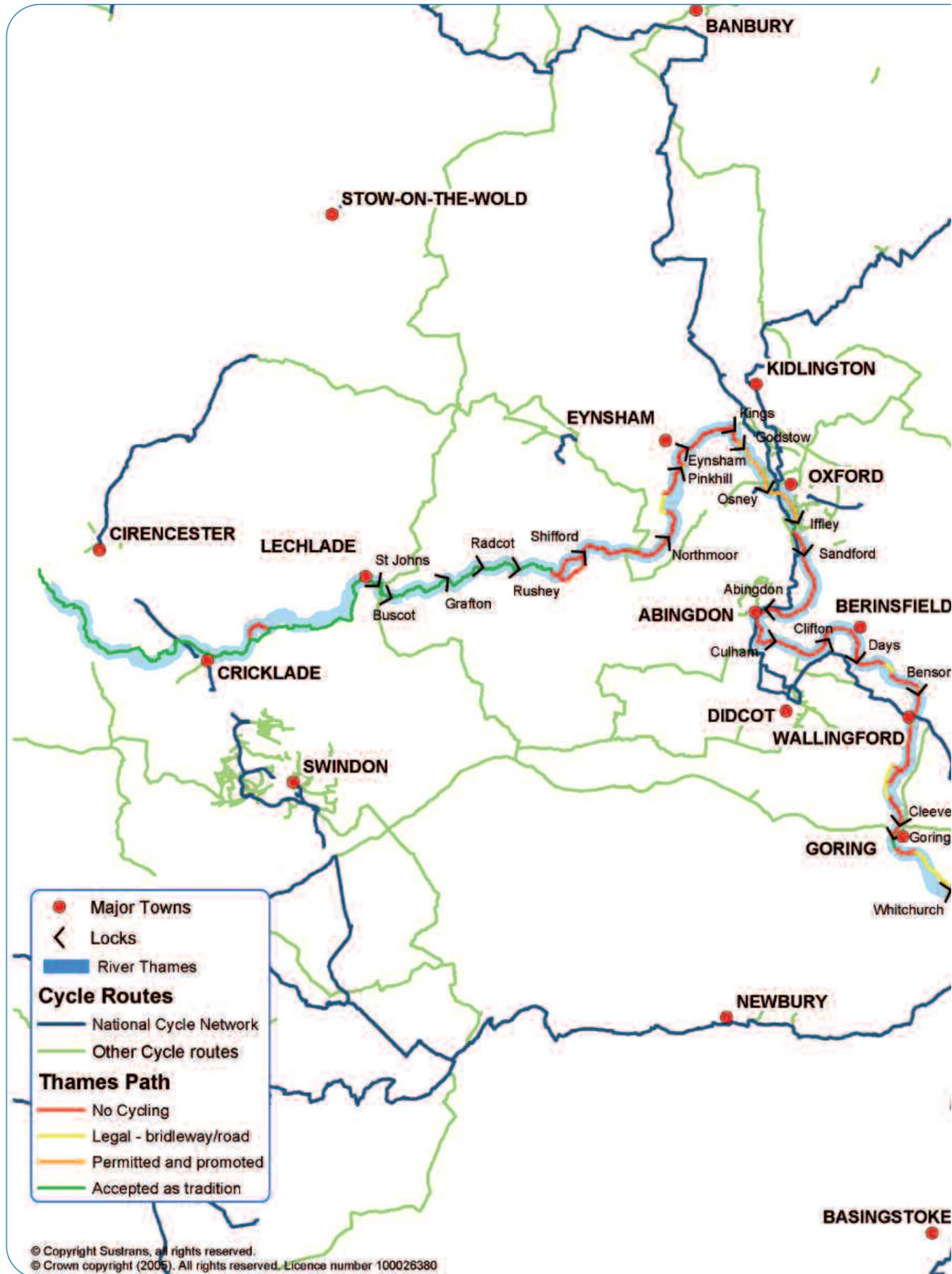
**We will encourage cycling alongside the river where it is appropriate****Possible actions**

- 1 clarify where cycling is currently permitted
- 2 define on a reach-by-reach basis lengths that are appropriate with reference to the Thames Path National Trail Cycling Policy
- 3 sign cycle routes, particularly where they join/leave the Thames Path
- 4 make improvements to the path surface
- 5 improve access to cycle routes, including consideration of new bridge crossings

There is demand for leisure cycling on traffic-free routes. Cycling is a low cost activity that promotes health.

<sup>1</sup> Thames Path National Trail Cycling Policy, 2005 - 2010

<sup>2</sup> The Thames Path. A study of possible access improvements for walkers, cyclists and people with limited mobility. Sustrans November 2003



## 9.6 Angling

The average distance travelled by someone going fishing is 32 kilometres.<sup>1</sup> Over 168,000 holders of rod licences live within 32 kilometres of the river.<sup>2</sup>

Lake fisheries, however, have grown in popularity and are now the most popular venue being fished by 79 per cent of licence holders compared to 61 per cent fishing rivers (and 21 per cent canals).<sup>3</sup>

Although half those who fished rivers thought that there had been positive changes over the last 20 years, just under one third felt river fisheries had actually become worse. The issue of non-native invasive species, particularly crayfish, was of greatest concern.<sup>3</sup>

The economic value of angling is significant, with Thames Region rod licence holders spending, on

average, £534 a year for licences, permits, day tickets, bait and tackle.<sup>3</sup>

Getting more people into fishing brings significant economic and social benefits<sup>4</sup>. Angling can contribute to social inclusion and reduce crime. A national *Get Hooked on Fishing* scheme, supported by the police, specifically targets young people at risk of offending and has achieved:

- zero offending
- 80 per cent reduction in truancy
- increased literacy and general education performance.

Angling is also one of the most popular sports for people with disabilities.



### Policy 15 - angling

#### We will encourage angling along the river

##### Possible actions

- 1 support taster sessions with free block licences and reduced price for beginners licences
- 2 provide improved access and facilities, particularly for anglers with disabilities
- 3 promote fishing permits for use at locks and weirs
- 4 provide up-to-date information on free and day ticket lengths
- 5 promote angling on the Environment Agency's 'free' towpath length below Staines
- 6 research ways to manage crayfish

Fishing is an outdoor sport, readily accessible at a number of levels, with the potential to be totally inclusive.

<sup>1</sup> 1994 National Angling Survey, National Rivers Authority

<sup>2</sup> 2003 Environment Agency rod licence holders

<sup>3</sup> Thames Region Fisheries Strategy and Newscast Research, ADAS for Environment Agency, January 2005

<sup>4</sup> Angling 2015 Getting more people into fishing, Environment Agency, December 2004

## 9.7 Rowing

The Thames is by far the most significant river for competitive rowing in the UK. 45 per cent of the Amateur Rowing Association's (ARA) 20,000 members are registered in the Thames Region. (Some are based on the tidal Thames.)

On the non-tidal Thames, 54 clubs, 6 universities and 29 schools are registered (plus over 30 Oxford colleges).

Participation has been growing and the ARA has two development officers working on the Thames. Successful initiatives include a scheme to link schools new to rowing with existing clubs on the river.

Several thriving clubs (who otherwise might be taking a lead in encouraging increased participation) are hampered by inadequate facilities. This needs addressing in accordance with Sport and Recreation Policy 7.

The river does not always provide ideal conditions, particularly for novices. In summer, there is potential conflict with other users, and in winter strong streams present problems. Growth in rowing, especially if accompanied by increases in powered boating, will need careful management. Off channel provision being developed at Dorney Lake (between Windsor and Maidenhead) and at Caversham Lake, near Reading, is desirable.

Dorney Lake is already changing patterns of activity. For example, Marlow and Wallingford Regattas, two of over fifty traditionally held on the river each year, have now relocated to the purpose-built course. Nevertheless, the river will continue to be a venue of international importance for events such as Henley Royal Regatta.

The river also has a tradition of distance and recreational rowing, epitomised by Jerome K Jerome's classic *Three Men in a Boat*. The ARA is promoting recreational rowing, with five clubs on the river specifically welcoming non-competitive members.



45 per cent of the Amateur Rowing Association's 20,000 members are registered in the Thames Region.

### 9.8 Canoeing

There are 21 canoe clubs on the Thames. Based on a 1995 average of 147 members, this suggests club-based participation of 3,087<sup>1</sup>.

The British Canoe Union (BCU) has an individual membership of over 25,000, 469 affiliated clubs and 145 approved centres. The BCU currently pays the Environment Agency so that each BCU member is allowed to register a canoe for use on the river as part of the yearly membership fee.

The river provides a facility for novices, training, casual and competitive canoeing, including the annual Devizes to Westminster race.

Water flowing over some weirs (notably Hurley, Hambleden and Shepperton) can create good conditions for white water canoeing. Hurley is an important venue for rodeo and freestyle competitions.

#### Case study 5



© Andrew Jackson

#### White water canoeing at Hambleden Weir

Using advice from local canoe groups and George Parr, an expert in white water design, the sluices at Hambleden Weir were modified to allow optimum conditions for white water paddling to be created at any flow. The design also reduced erosion of banks and islands around the weir.

#### Relevance to plan policies:

- creates attraction to take up low-cost boating
- encourages participation in sport

<sup>1</sup> Space to live, space to play. A Recreation Strategy for the River Thames. Eileen McKeever, National Rivers Authority, 1995.

### 9.9 Sailing

Sailing is a popular pursuit in the region with 21 clubs on the Thames. Based on a 1995 average membership of 175, this suggests a total participation of 3,675.<sup>1</sup> Stillwater sites, such as reservoirs and lakes/gravel workings, principally serve its needs. In particular, reservoirs in the Thames Valley support active sailing clubs with at least one having developed into a 'centre of excellence' for the sport.

### 9.10 Motor cruising

There are 32 motor boat cruising clubs between Teddington and Lechlade, the earliest dating back to 1930. Several commercial marinas incorporate club premises. Some clubs are affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association and many also belong to the Association of Thames Yacht Clubs, which have approximate combined membership of 2,500. These clubs provide training and in some cases moorings, as well as providing a social programme. (See section 10 for further information on powered boating.)

### 9.11 Swimming

The policy of the Environment Agency is to recommend against swimming in the river. There are many risks. For example: the water is often surprisingly cold; there can be strong currents; boaters can find it hard to see and avoid swimmers; there are unseen underwater obstructions; the depth of the water is often uncertain; swimmers may be vulnerable to waterborne diseases.

Nevertheless, swimming does take place. There are organised activities such as the Windsor Triathlon and even commercially promoted adventure swimming holidays that use the upper reaches. The River and Lake Swimming Association promotes responsible open water swimming, giving safety advice and warning of the dangers. On the other hand, there are frequent occasions when children and youths jump and dive off bridges, causing danger to themselves and other users.

#### Policy 16 - boating

#### We will make it easier to take up low cost boating

#### Possible actions

- 1 provide canoe portage points above and below all locks
- 2 provide campsites or budget accommodation at 16 kilometre intervals (a day's paddle/row)
- 3 improve slipways and car/trailer parks
- 4 provide white water for canoeists at existing weirs where feasible

It is important that people with low incomes are able to enjoy boating.



## 10.0 Powered boating

### 10.1 Trends on the river

The River Thames is one of the oldest and most important waterways in Europe. Its heyday as a commercial transport route was during the late 19th century.

It grew in popularity as a leisure destination, reaching a peak in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Since then there has been a dramatic decrease in the use of the Thames as a waterway. 43 waterside boatyards have closed and the sites put to other uses since Stanfords Map of the River Thames was published in 1960.<sup>1</sup>

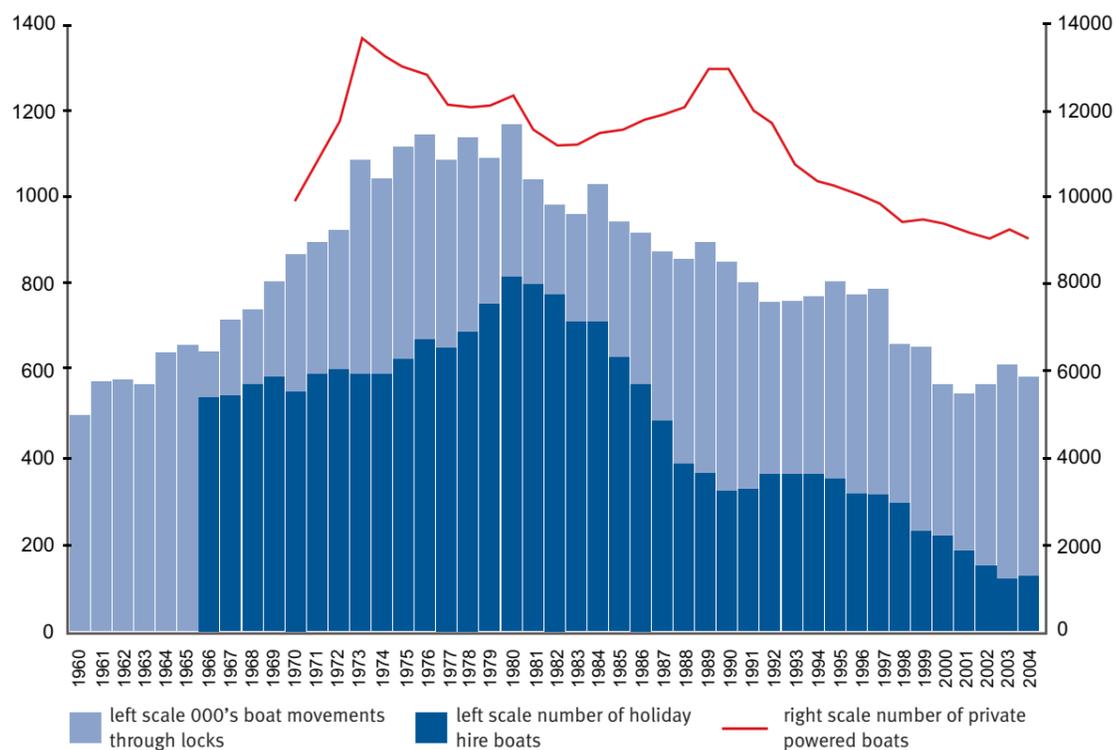
Since 1980, the number of holiday hire boats registered on the Thames has fallen by 85 per cent, from 815 to 123 in 2004.

The number of privately-owned powered boats has dropped 30 per cent since 1990, from 12,993 to 9,049 in 2004.

The decline in boats since 1990 has reduced Environment Agency income to spend on the river by £7.2 million and resulted in a further £111 million being lost to the local economy.<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding this decline, the river is home to 16 per cent of all the privately-owned powered boats on Britain's inland waterways.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 2 Thames traffic related to boat numbers 1960 - 2004

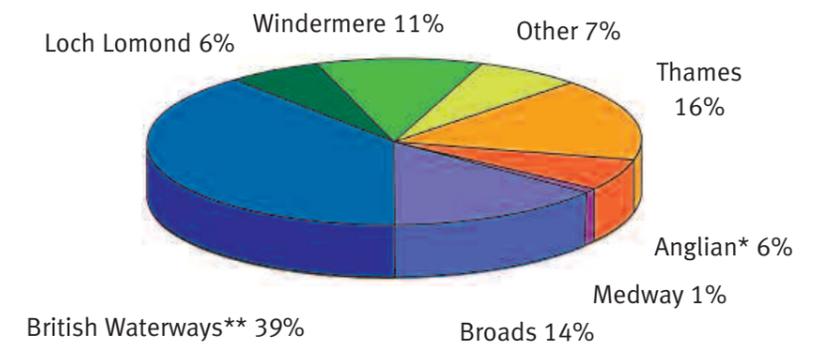


<sup>1</sup> Thames Boating Trades Association Boatyard Survey.

<sup>2</sup> Estimated loss up to the end of 2004, based on Environment Agency Thames Region Registrations Statistics and spend data from Extended Economic Valuation of the Thames, Ecotec Research and Consulting Ltd., February 2002

<sup>3</sup> Figures from the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities estimates, August 2002

Figure 3 Inland boating share of the market 2001



\* Waterways managed by Environment Agency Anglian Region

\*\* Waterways managed by British Waterways

The Environment Agency commissioned research into the boating market, both current and potential, to identify why private boat registrations are in decline.<sup>1</sup> The research showed:

- The reasons that people gave up boating were the same as on waterways generally (cost, time and change of personal circumstances).
- Boaters would like to see better moorings and facilities. Again, this is also the case on competitor navigations. Quality of product on the Thames does not explain the decline in boating.
- The primary reason for the decline in boating is that there is not enough active communication, encouraging people to consider boating on the Thames. (The research revealed greater awareness of the canals and Broads.)
- More and better advertising and promotion is therefore the key to attracting more people to boat on the Thames, which in turn will increase revenue through licences.
- Boating was seen to be a particularly therapeutic and appropriate antidote to today's stressful environment. The Thames is therefore well placed to attract new customers from the large and prosperous population in the South East.

- Encouraging trial is crucial: 'If you just get people out there trying it, some of them will just fall in love with it – the product will do the rest for you.'

The Environment Agency began marketing actions in 2001 as part of the Thames Ahead initiative. This appears to have arrested the decline in the number of privately-owned boats on the river.

The Environment Agency has a national policy to increase participation in boating on all its rivers, with a target of a 5 per cent increase between 2002 and 2007 in the number of boats registered.<sup>2</sup>

The increase in boat movements on the River Thames in 2003 is a consequence of the Environment Agency's *Summer on the Thames* campaign and the Inland Waterways Association National Festival held at Beale Park near Pangbourne, which attracted over 600 boats.

The Environment Agency also introduced new flexible visitor licences in 2003 that encourage boats from adjoining waterways to make more use of the river.

<sup>1</sup> Environment Agency. The attitudes and opinions of new registration holders and 'considerers'. Jackson Research Associates, March 2001

<sup>2</sup> 'Making it Happen', The Environment Agency's corporate strategy: 2002-2007

Policy 17 - boating

**We will encourage more boats to use the river**

**Possible actions**

- 1 resist loss/support provision of facilities like dry docks and boat repair yards
- 2 provide facilities for boaters (toilets, water points, refuse disposal etc.)
- 3 marketing to raise awareness of the river
- 4 run courses in boat ownership and boat-handling skills
- 5 promote events on the river

The number of privately-owned powered boats has dropped 30 per cent since 1990, from 12993 to 9049 in 2004.

The sustainability assessment looked at the possibility of defining carrying capacity for the river in terms of number of boats. It concluded that this was not an appropriate measure. Therefore, at the same time as taking actions to attract more boats, it is also important to monitor adverse impacts and continue initiatives to minimise them, such as:

- Provision of information to boaters via different mechanisms (e.g. through boat clubs, boatyards, licence application process, website, leaflets) to minimise negative effects and maximise the positive effects of boating.
- Promotion of good boat design and low-impact boating (e.g. electric boats, non-powered).
- Enforcement of the speed limit. (Whilst wash and its effects will depend on a range of factors including the boat type, width and depth of the river, research has shown that speed is a significant factor.) Mechanisms to consider include initiatives to educate boaters, marker posts, quoting acceptable times between locks and more policing.
- Promotion of bioengineering and good practice approaches to bank protection.
- Conserving sensitive parts of the waterway.

Although there is a right of navigation wherever Thames water flows, there are backwaters with highly valuable habitats that we will protect and enhance by discouraging powered navigation. This will be achieved by education (see Policy 27, action 5).

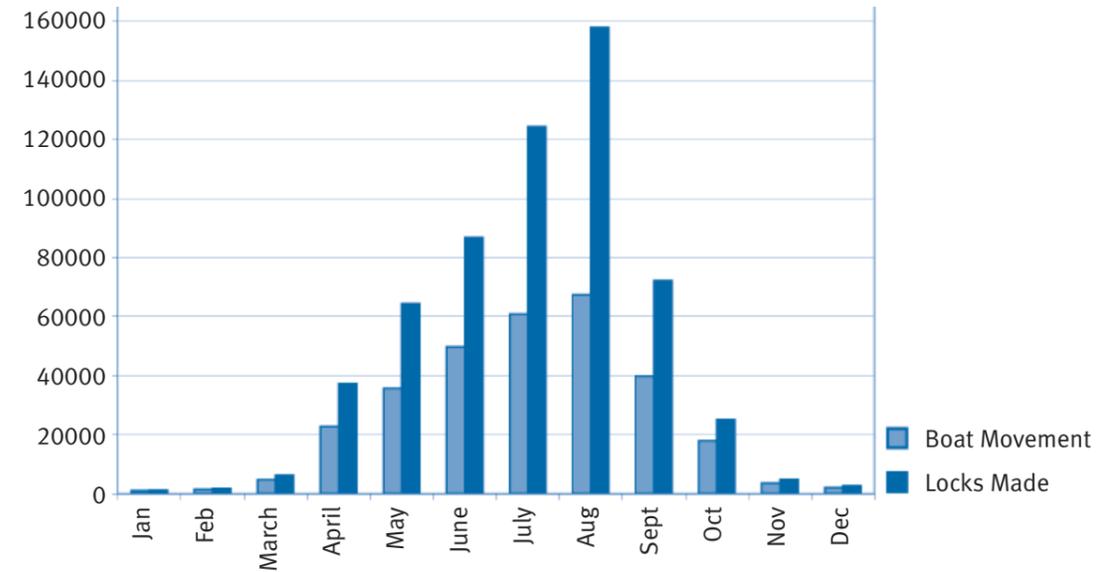
**10.2 Pattern of boat movement**

The upper reaches have only one quarter the volume of boat traffic compared to the busiest downstream reaches. The Cotswolds Canals restoration when completed will introduce more boat movement to the upper reaches.

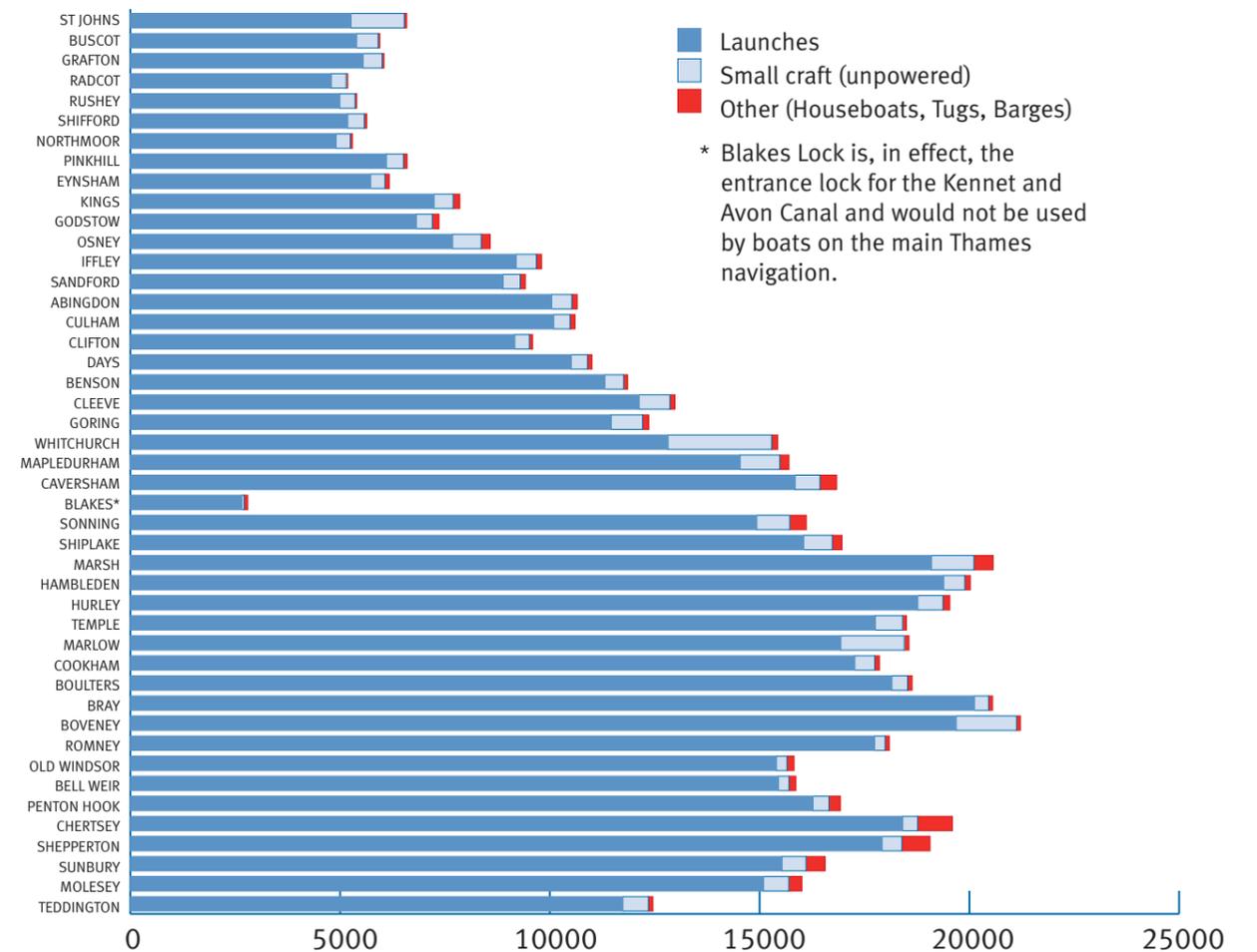
Activity is concentrated in the summer. This will be significant in considering the impact of climate change.



**Figure 4 Average locks made and boat movement through all locks 2003-2004**



**Figure 5 Average annual lock traffic by type 2003-2004**



### 10.3 Permanent mooring

There are currently 5,600 permanent berths available to the public in marinas and other commercial moorings. This represents capacity for 62 per cent of the 9,049 private-powered boats registered. (2004 figures)

The remaining boats are moored on private berths, for example at the end of gardens. These may account for up to a third of the permanent moorings on the river (between 2000 and 3000 berths). Because of the large number and individual nature of private moorings, it is difficult to give precise occupancy levels. However, there appears to be between 300 and 1000 more boats registered than the total number of moorings. Some or all of these will be trailable craft, not permanently moored on the river.

Many commercial moorings are full and most report occupancy levels over 75 per cent.

The number of berths available on the river has fallen. There is little historic data, but comparisons with a 1993 survey suggest that there has been a decline of around 12 per cent to 18 per cent. Interestingly, annual private powered boat registrations have fallen 17 per cent over the same period.

Commercial operators perceive continued demand for moorings with several increasing the number of berths available at existing sites or planning to do so. New marinas have also been investigated at a number of locations. Clearly additional permanent moorings are necessary if more boats are attracted to the river.

They also need to be able to cater for different types of craft in comparison to earlier years. There has been significant growth in the number of narrow boats in recent years. Many existing moorings are unable to cater for this type of boat because of their length.

We will not normally allow the creation of new commercial sites for permanent mooring on the river itself or on its backwaters. This is to protect the character of the river and help prevent the loss of natural bank. Off-channel moorings are preferable because they do not obstruct the navigation and are safer when the river is in fast flow. Well designed new marinas can incorporate soft edges and undisturbed margins that can offer environmental benefit.

However, we would not like to lose the services provided by existing boatyards that are already located on the river itself. So we would consider applications to improve or extend moorings at such sites.

An individual resident is normally allowed to moor a boat on his or her river frontage, as long as it does not impede navigation. Any works to the bank or watercourse require the prior consent of the Environment Agency.

#### Policy 18 - permanent mooring

##### We will encourage the creation of new permanent moorings

###### Possible actions

- 1 promote creation of off-river basins with soft edge treatments
- 2 encourage improvement of existing moorings on the river supporting their extension where appropriate
- 3 examine capacity of reaches to accommodate more boats (with particular reference to lock use generated)

Adequate provision of moorings is the key requirement for boating. Existing moorings are at or near capacity.

### 10.4 Visitor moorings

Visitor moorings are, by far, the most requested area for improvement by boaters on the river.<sup>1</sup>

The draft waterway standard is for 24 hour/ overnight moorings to be provided within 30 minutes cruising. (See section 18.) This, however, is a rather crude measure. For example, there is greater demand than availability at many existing sites, particularly those providing access to towns and villages with pubs, restaurants, visitor attractions and other facilities. (The money that boaters spend can make an important contribution to the local economy.) Such sites often already have modified banks that facilitate the provision of mooring rings or bollards. It may often be possible to extend them to meet demand with minimal loss of natural habitat.

The increasing number of steel narrow boats has affected visitor moorings. Narrow boats are often longer than the average length of traditional craft on the river so reduce the number of boats able to moor. They also have larger water tanks and so occupy water points for longer. These issues need to be addressed.

The creation of new visitor moorings should be in accordance with the following guidance:

- When choosing sites to fill gaps in provision, we will avoid environmentally sensitive sites.
- There will be a presumption against choosing sites that require dredging, unless absolutely essential. Offshore jetties would be considered as an alternative.
- Unmodified banks will be left in a natural state, with mooring posts provided where possible to avoid damage from repeated use of mooring stakes.

#### Policy 19 - visitor mooring

##### We will provide visitor moorings to meet boaters' needs

###### Possible actions

- 1 provide sufficient value for money visitor and overnight moorings at all riverside towns and attractions
- 2 create moorings at new sites where required to meet the waterway standard
- 3 encourage boaters to welcome other boats to moor alongside
- 4 examine possibility of overnight moorings on part of, or adjacent to, lock landings

Better provision of visitor moorings is the most requested improvement by boaters.

There are more gaps in provision of visitor moorings than any other facility needed on the river. (see section 18.2 Facility gap analysis)

<sup>1</sup> Test Research (2003). Navigation licence survey, report for the Environment Agency (June 2003).