

Appendix 2: Houseboat Areas – Examples of Good Practice

The Port of London Authority

The Port of London Authority introduced a byelaw in 2015 prohibiting the discharge of sewage into the Thames from houseboats. Individual communities are responsible for selecting a waste disposal method that best suits their needs, rather than following a blanket approach. Options may include using shore facilities, connecting boats to a sewer system, treating sewage on board, using compost or cassette toilets, or installing a tank for routine pump-out to a suitable receiver. This has led to the following solutions within the PLA's jurisdiction:

Poplar Marina (permanent, privately run) – Has on-site refuse and waste facilities.

Limehouse Basin (permanent, privately run) – Has on-site refuse and waste facilities.

South Dock Marina (run by Southwark Council) – Has a sewage pump.

St Katharine Docks (high-end, privately run) – Offers long-term and short-term moorings, including rubbish collection, water connection, and wastewater pump-out facilities.

Temporary stays (less than 14 days)

- Managed by the Canal & River Trust (CRT) along London's canals.
- Not all moorings offer services, but some provide service moorings with access to water, sewage, and disposal points. These should only be used while actively using the facilities. Alternatively, boaters can visit designated service points for these amenities.
- For grey water, the Port of London Authority recommends using only phosphate-free detergents and advises opting for environmentally sensitive washing products whenever possible. If feasible, wastewater systems should be re-plumbed so that both grey and blackwater are diverted to a holding tank and then disposed of through connection to a sewer, on-board treatment, or pumping out to a suitable receiver.

The Port of London Authority assigns responsibility for waste reception facilities to the operators of individual houseboats, piers, marinas, etc. Each operator must have a waste management plan detailing how and where waste is to be disposed of.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

- Since 2017, all houseboats in Amsterdam have been connected to the city's sewer system.
- As part of Project Schoonschip, technicians visited each boat to determine the optimal placement for the pump and collaborate with the owner to establish a timeline for the connection process.
- This process involved upgrades to the individual boat, as well as to the sewer system and quayside infrastructure. Upon completion of the ship-to-sewer connection, boat owners received a €1,250 subsidy.

- In Amsterdam, all houseboats are connected to the city's power grid and have an address and house number.

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

- Vancouver offers a mobile pump out service for houseboats at False Creek and Coal Harbour, as well as at several marinas.
- However, the city continues to struggle with water contamination issues. In 2020, the service assisted 398 boats and conducted 931 pump-outs, up from 112 boats in 2017. This rise is attributed to more people choosing to live on houseboats due to escalating housing costs. The city is now exploring alternative ways to fund the pump-out service but is concerned that introducing a fee could lead to illegal sewage discharges into the river.
- Other options under consideration include increasing business license fees for False Creek marinas or continuing to fund the service through sewage fees, which is raised from most property owners in the city.