

PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY: 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

ABOUT THE PLA

We are the UK's biggest port, central to the country's economy and ambitions for growth.

We are driven by our purpose to protect and improve the 95 mile stretch of the River Thames which is tidal – from Teddington Lock on the border of Surrey, through the heart of London, Kent, Essex and out to the North Sea. We reinvest all the money we make back into the tidal Thames region – caring for the river and supporting the communities who live and work along it.

2025 AT A GLANCE



Busiest year since 1973

In 2025, the Port handled more than 56m tonnes of cargo – the most in 50 years, confirming the PLA's status as the UK's biggest port. Our approach of supporting customers, investing in the future, and a commitment to innovate, means we are well placed to encourage and facilitate further growth.



Masterplanning

We progressed work towards a Port Masterplan covering over 20 local authorities along the tidal Thames. We are using our unique mix of marine and planning expertise, while working with local stakeholders, to identify sites suitable for economic development, for nature and biodiversity, and for tourism and physical activity.



Wet wipe island removal works

In a first of its kind clean-up operation, we led work to remove 5 million wet wipes from the foreshore in Hammersmith, which had formed the so-called Wet Wipe Island.



Water safety campaign

Through the summer, we led a water safety campaign encouraging young people to Stay Back, Stay Out and Stay Safe. Our campaign ran across local schools, community groups, and social media, reaching more than two million people along the tidal Thames.



Harbour Master compliance day

As part of our ongoing efforts to keep river users safe, we conduct regular compliance checks. Our team board vessels and speak with masters to ensure they are operating in line with PLA regulations.



Santa on the Thames - Gravesend

We gave Santa a ride along the river as he made a visit to children from Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School in Gravesend. While he gave gifts to pupils, the PLA presented cheques to local charities: QVSR Seafarers' Centre in Tilbury, Ellenor hospice care in Gravesend, and Elliott Holmes Memorial Trust, which provide support and help to people in our community all-year round.

2025 IN NUMBERS

RIVER USE

56.6m

Tonnes of goods handled (2024: 51.9m)



2.12m

Tonnes of inland waterways freight (2024: 2.64m)



596 River sporting events
(2024: 719)



12,848

Pilotage Acts (2024: 13,099)



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

153

Tonnes of material recovered from the river (2024: 65)



16,636

CO2 emissions (equivalent tonnes) (2024: 15,030)



215,000

Kilowatt hours generated (2024: 207,000)



212

Foreshore clean-ups supported (2024: 245)



NAVIGATION AND SAFETY

0

Serious navigational incidents (2024: 1)



FINANCE

£104.4m

Turnover (2024: £99.7m)



£2.2m

Community and Environmental Benefit (2024: £2.0m)



£17.4m

Operating surplus (2024: £17.8m)



HIGHEST PORT TONNAGE SINCE 1973

PORT TONNAGE FOR 2025

56.6 tonnes

1973: 57.2 tonnes

Overall tonnage for the Port of London reached 56.6m tonnes in 2025, which is the highest since 1973.

ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY: 2025

As a year-on-year comparison against 2024, this year saw growth of 9%. The main driver of this was a 23% increase in container cargo, which now accounts for half of all tonnage through the port. The Port of London remains primarily an importing port, with 80% of all tonnage being made up of arrivals. However, 2025 saw a large increase in the volume of exports, which were up by 30%. In addition to the growth in container cargo, the port saw growth in the trade of vegetable oils, forest products, grains, and sugar. However, there were some areas where trade volumes fell, such as in aggregates, motor vehicles, and chemicals.

PORT OF LONDON TRADE BY TYPE

OIL	21%
CONTAINERS/TRAILERS	51%
AGGREGATES AND CEMENT	15%
METALS	2%
FOREST PRODUCTS	2%
OTHER GOODS	9%



PORT TRADE

Trade (million tonnes)

	2025	2024
Imports	45.4	43.3
Exports	11.2	8.6
Total	56.6	51.9

Unitised traffic ('000 twenty-foot equivalent units)

	2025	2024
Imports	1,998	1,511
Exports	1,913	1,520
Total	3,911	3,031

Number of chargeable vessel arrivals to the Port of London

	2025	2024
Total	9,169	9,652*

Fuel traffic (million tonnes)

	2025	2024
Total	12.1	12.1

*restated

RIVER NAVIGATION AND SAFETY

	2025	2024
Navigational safety		
Marine incidents	446	425
Serious navigational incidents	0	1
Pilotage service		
No. of pilotage acts	12,848	13,096
No. of pilotage delays	19	68
Sea pilot acts service level	99.80%	99.5%
Hydrographic surveys		
Area surveyed (km ²)	115 km ²	147 km ²

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT

TOTAL COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT FOR 2025

£2.2m

2024: £2.0m

We have no shareholders and pay no dividends. We reinvest the money we make back into the river and communities who live and work alongside it. We were able to commit 10% more in 2025 than we did in 2024 – up to a total of £2.2m. Our approach is more than one-off donations; we work in partnership with local clubs, charities and expert providers along the length of the tidal Thames. In 2025, the PLA Board reconfirmed that up to 10% of pre-tax operating surplus should be ringfenced to support activities that help the communities and natural environment of the tidal Thames.

OUR TEAM

The PLA employs around 480 people afloat and ashore including the UK's largest cohort of marine and river pilots; harbour masters and river inspectors; marine services teams; VTS officers; engineers; hydrographers; planners and environmental experts; and corporate services professionals. The team provides 24-7 operations in the UK's biggest port and busiest inland waterway, ensuring navigational safety and maintaining access to global trading partners and recreational users alike.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

We have an ambitious environmental agenda encompassing air quality, decarbonisation, climate resilience, biodiversity, and water quality.

Some of our key performance metrics show:

- **Carbon emissions** in our direct control (Scope 1&2) decreased by 50%. This was driven by the completion of our switch to 100% sustainable HVO for our entire fleet.
- **River waste** collection increased by 135%. This was driven by the Hammersmith wet wipe clean-up, which removed over 114 tonnes of wet wipes from the foreshore
- **Energy use** remained broadly consistent year-on-year, with a modest increase in on-site renewable electricity generation from solar panels.
- **Gas consumption** fell significantly as a result of building improvements.
- **Waste generation** decreased by 42%, reflecting continued efforts to reduce, reuse, and manage waste more efficiently across our operations.

OUR VISION FOR THE THAMES IN 2050:

The UK's leading port, central to the nation's economy, with Net Zero emissions. A clean river, free of pollution and rubbish, supporting more sport, passengers and freight. A resilient Estuary, adapting to climate change and richer in wildlife. A more diverse Thames, providing jobs, learning and enjoyment to the whole community, and always, everyone, staying safe.



For the latest on 2030 Action Plan, visit: www.pla.co.uk/2030-action-plan

OUR VISION FOR THE THAMES IN 2050

