

ACCESS TO THE RIVER THAMES
STEPS, STAIRS AND LANDING PLACES
ON THE TIDAL THAMES

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ACCESS TO THE RIVER THAMES

Steps, stairs and landing places on the tidal Thames

INTRODUCTION

In 1995 the Port of London Authority published a report under the above title, which “contains the first comprehensive survey of these facilities , their condition and status and addresses their usage”.

As a member of the River Thames Society’s Central Tideway and Estuary Branch I thought it would be useful to compile a similar survey to see what had happened during the last fifteen years. Following the PLA’s method, I visited all the sites listed and describe their current condition and accessibility.

Sites are on listed on a borough basis, covering the fifteen London riparian authorities and the five in Essex and Kent, working from the tidal limit at Teddington to the Estuary. I tried to observe sites from the land and river, but this was not always possible due to development or inaccessibility – a few I could not trace.

I have not covered the history or ownership of the access points but it is important to maintain their status and condition for present and future river users. Information about any changes would be appreciated in order for the entries to be kept up to date.

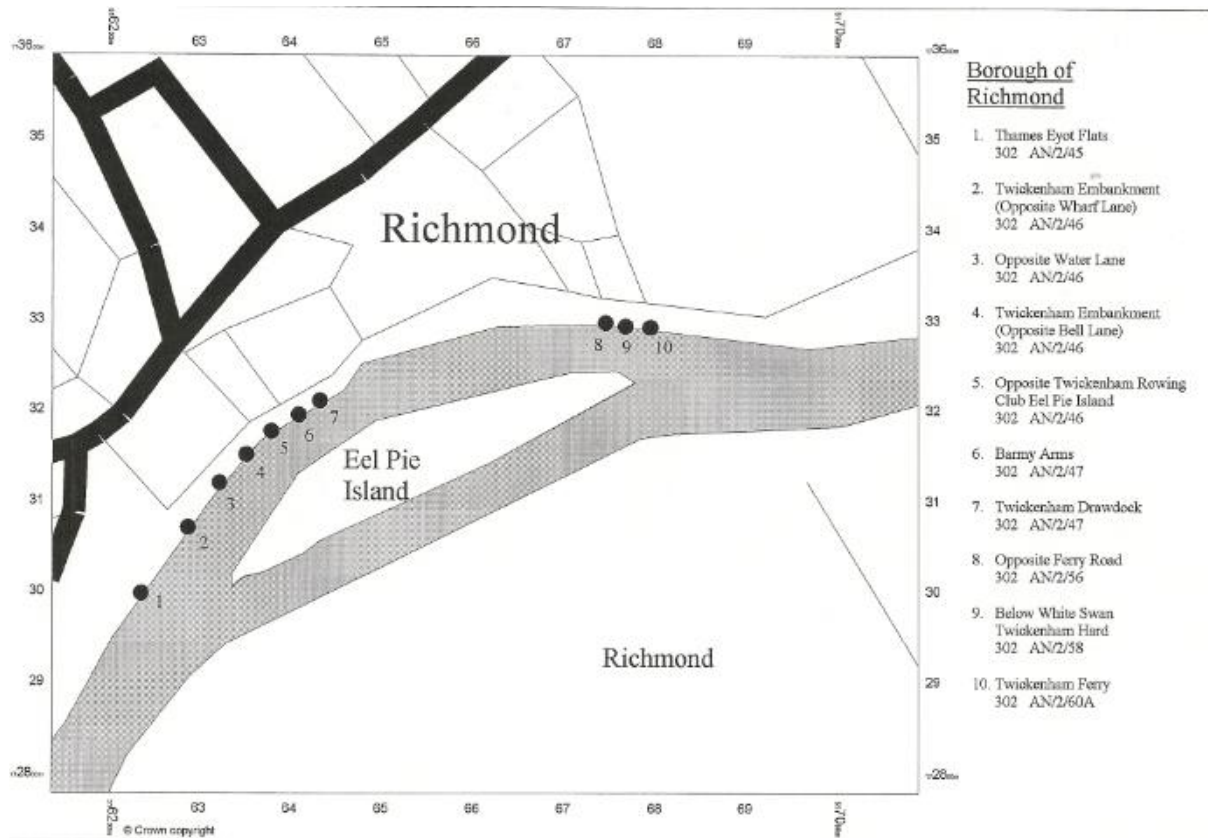
Thanks are due to the PLA, members of the Hurlingham Yacht Club, other RTS members and to the many people along the way who helped with the project. My wife Jo made sense of my notes and presented them in an accessible form, as did Francesca Rödel who made up for my lack of computer skills.

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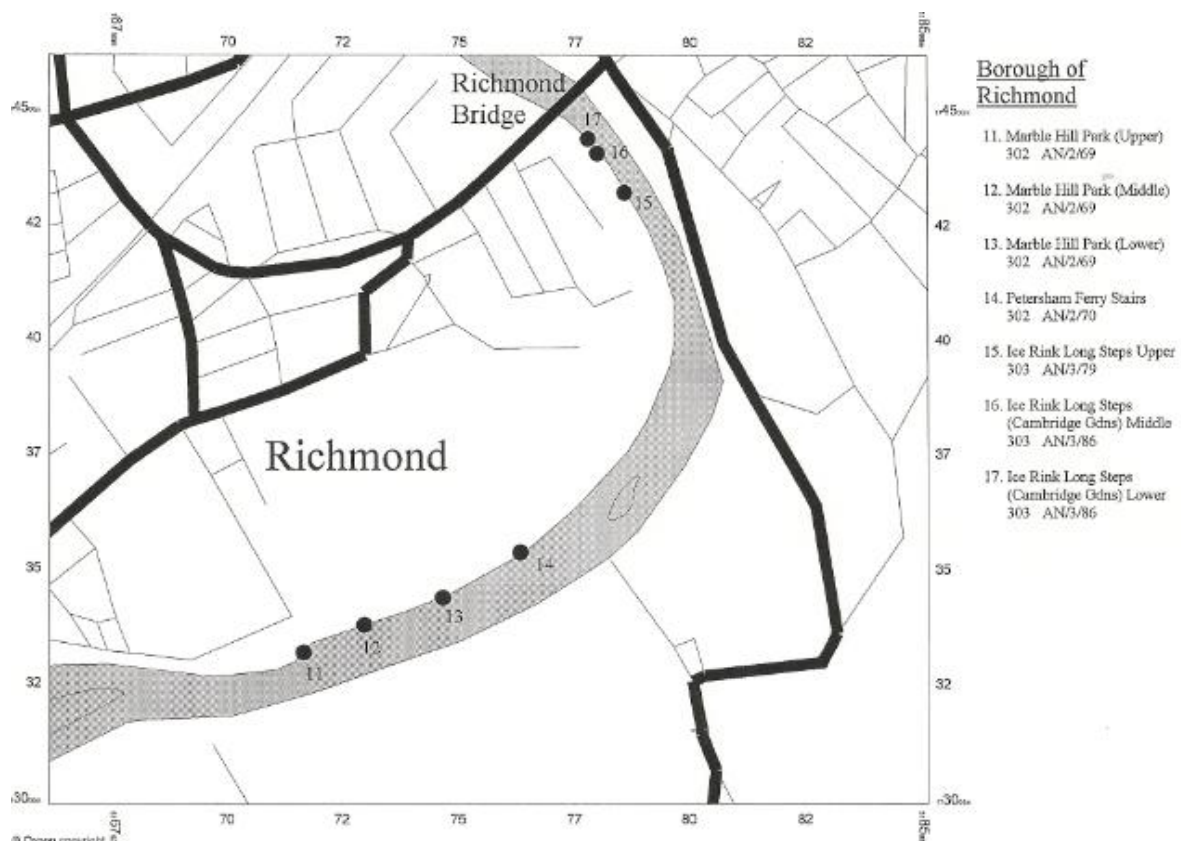
RICHMOND UPON THAMES

NORTH BANK



- 1. Thames Eyot Flats - 2 flights in good condition, access possible through grounds of flats.**
- 2. Twickenham Embankment (opposite Wharf Lane) - stairs - good condition and access.**
- 3. Opposite Water Lane - stairs, downstream of bridge to Eel Pie Island, good condition and access.**
- 4. Twickenham Embankment (opposite Bell Lane) - stairs - good condition and access.**
- 5. Opposite Twickenham Rowing Club - Eel Pie Island - 2 sets stairs – good condition and access.**

6. Barmy Arms - stairs – good condition and access.
7. Twickenham Drawdock - good condition and access.
8. Opposite Ferry Road - drawdock in reasonable condition, good access.
9. Below White Swan, Twickenham Hard - aka Swan Hard - drawdock, good condition and access.
10. Twickenham Ferry - poor condition, chain across entrance, marked “Private Property”.



11. Marble Hill Park (Upper) - there are two flights of stairs at edge of gardens, upstream of Hammerton’s Ferry, both good condition and access.
12. Marble Hill Park (Middle) - could this be 2nd flight of 11 above? Otherwise, no trace.

13. Marble Hill Park (Lower) - stairs opposite path to House, good condition and access.

14. Petersham Ferry Stairs - good condition and access.

15. Ice Rink Long Steps Upper - good condition and access.

16. Ice Rink Long Steps (Cambridge Gardens) Middle - good condition and access.

17. Ice Rink Long Steps (Cambridge Gardens) Lower - reasonable condition, good access.

NB. None of the following are shown on map.

18. Drawdock upstream of Richmond Bridge - good condition and access.

19. Willoughby Road - Drawdock - good condition and access.

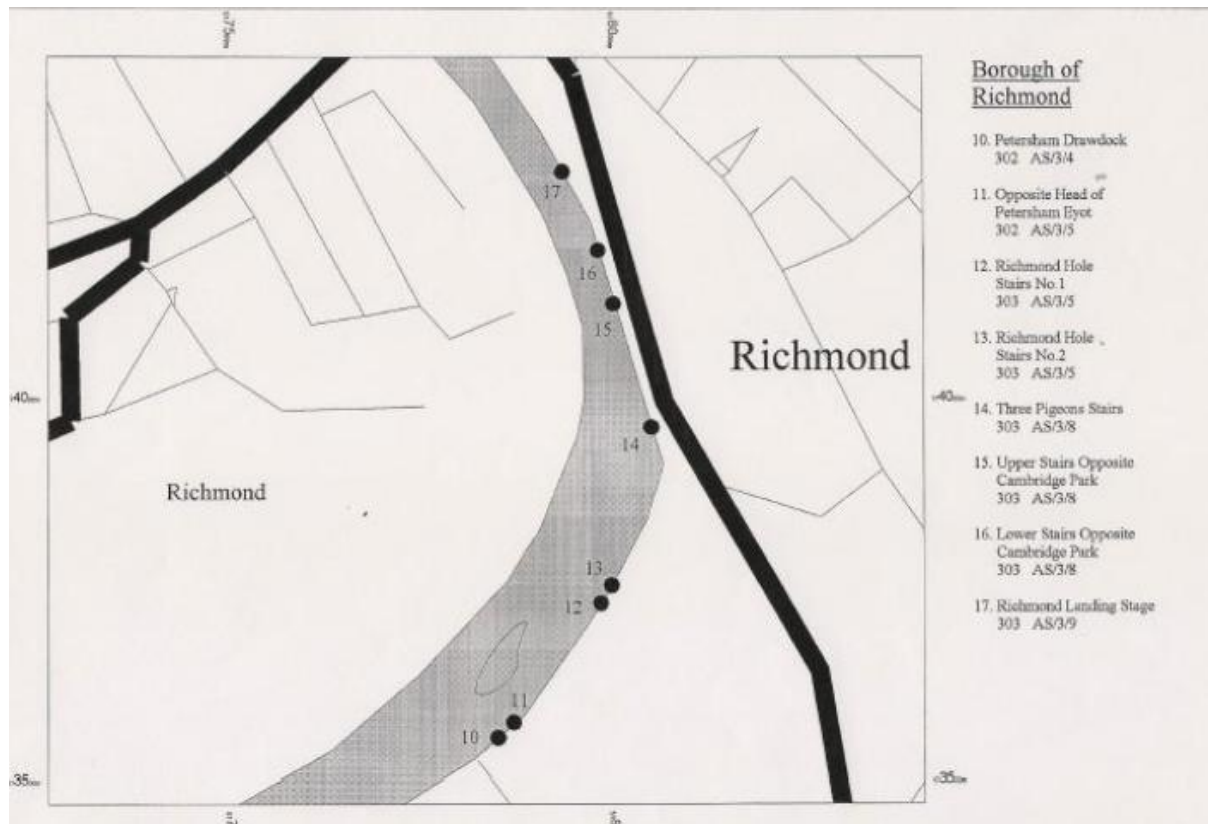
20. Duck's Walk - at rear of Sea Cadet hut is boat slip, with 2 sets of metal steps that access a footpath, open dawn to dusk.

21. Ranelagh Drive - stairs - good condition and access.

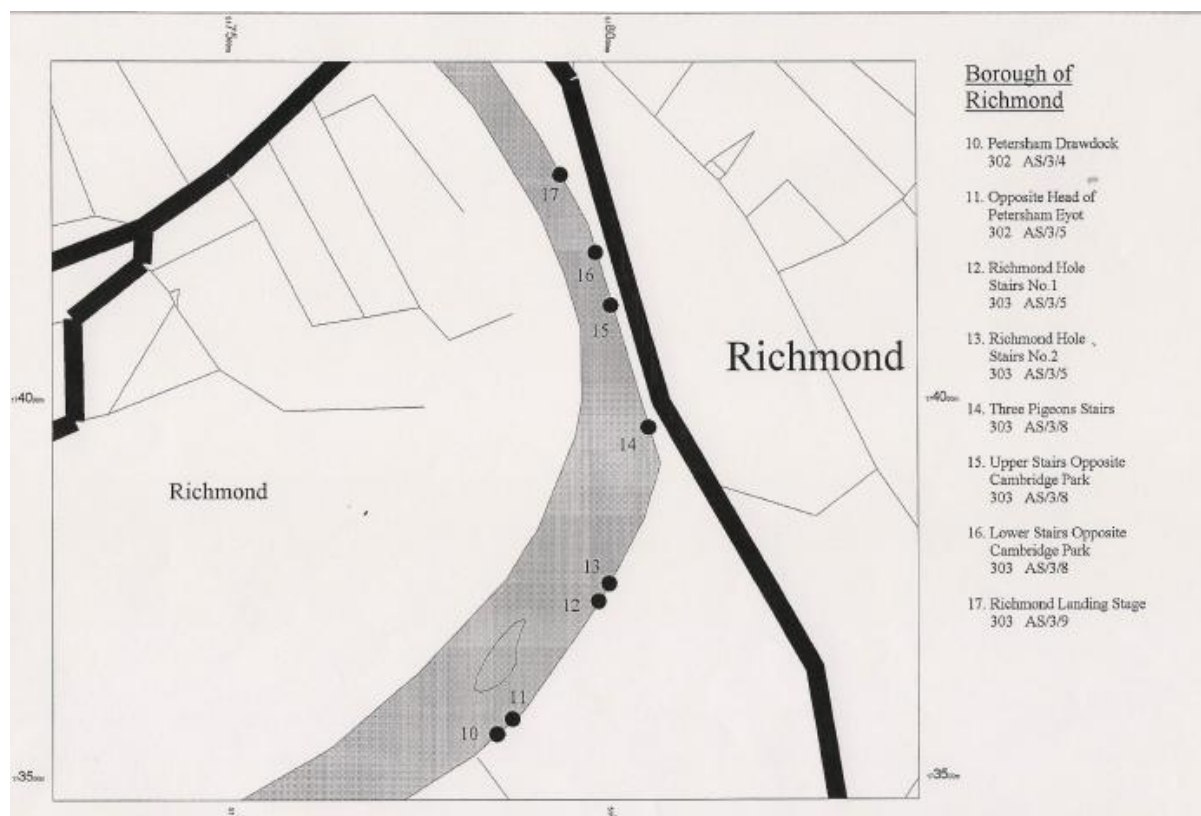
22. Three flights stairs between Richmond Lock Bridge and River Crane - good

23. condition (with some vegetation) and access.

SOUTH BANK



1. Thames Young Mariners - stairs - good condition and access.
2. Opposite Chillingworth Eyot (Swan Island) - stairs - reasonable condition, good access.
3. Opposite Radnor Gardens - stairs - reasonable condition, good access.
4. Opposite Thames Eyot Flats - stairs – good condition and access.
5. Opposite Eel Pie Island - stairs – poor condition, good access.
6. Twickenham Ferry Steps - poor condition, some steps broken, good access.
7. Ham Landing Stages - good condition and access.
8. Hammerton's Ferry - stairs – good condition and access.
9. Ham House - stairs – good condition and access.



10. Petersham Drawdock - reasonable condition, good access.

11. Opposite head of Petersham Eyot - stairs – good condition and access,

12. Richmond Hole Stairs No.1 - good condition and access.

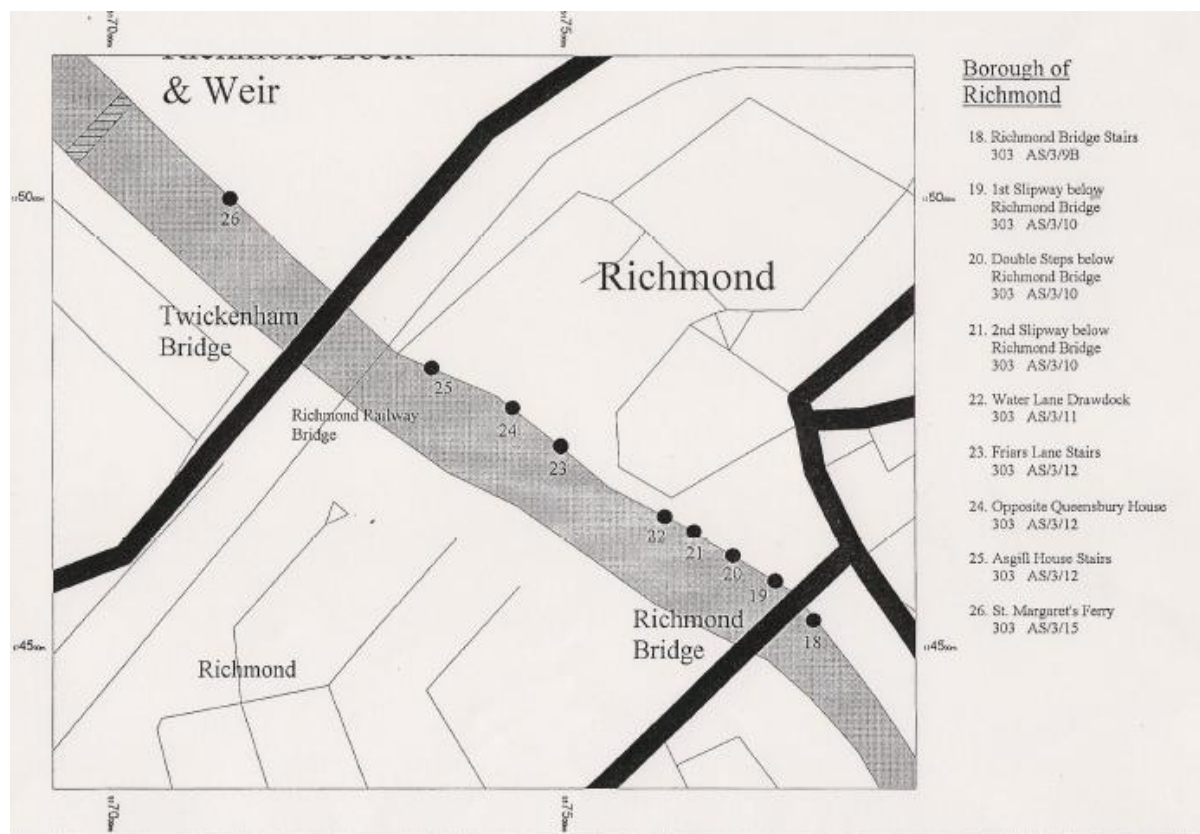
13. Richmond Hole Stairs No.2 - good condition and access.

14. Three Pigeons Stairs - good condition and access.

15. Upper Stairs opposite Cambridge Park - good condition and access.

16. Lower Stairs opposite Cambridge Park - good condition and access.

17. Richmond Landing Stage - reasonable condition and good access.



18. Richmond Bridge Stairs - good condition and access.

19. First Slipway below Richmond Bridge - good condition and access.

20. Double Steps below Richmond Bridge - good condition and access.

21. Second Slipway below Richmond Bridge - good condition and access.

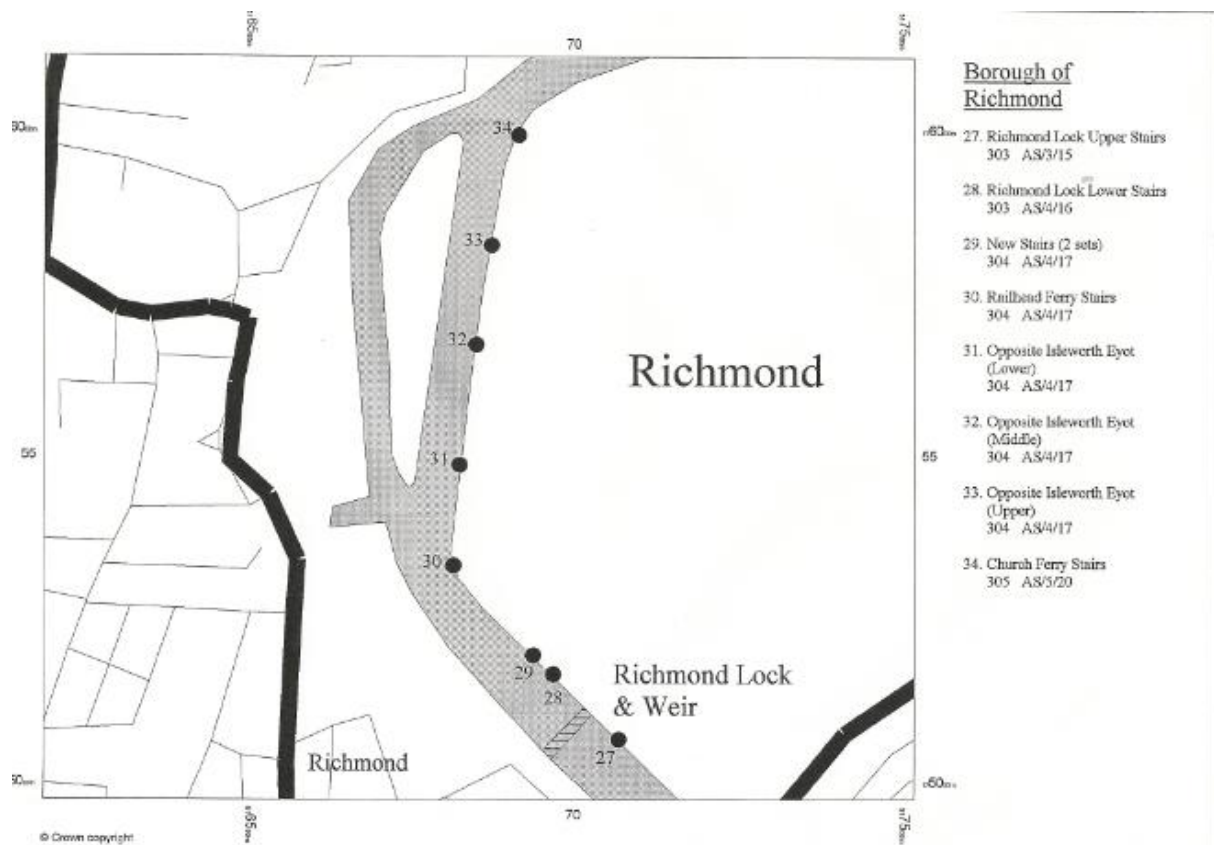
22. Water Lane Drawdock - reasonable condition, good access.

23. Friars Lane Stairs - good condition and access.

24. Opposite Queensbury House - stairs - good condition and access.

25. Asgill House Stairs - good condition and access.

26. St. Margaret's Ferry - stairs - good condition and access,



27. Richmond Lock Upper Stairs - good condition and access.

28. Richmond Lock Lower Stairs - good condition and access.

29. New Stairs (two sets) - good condition and access.

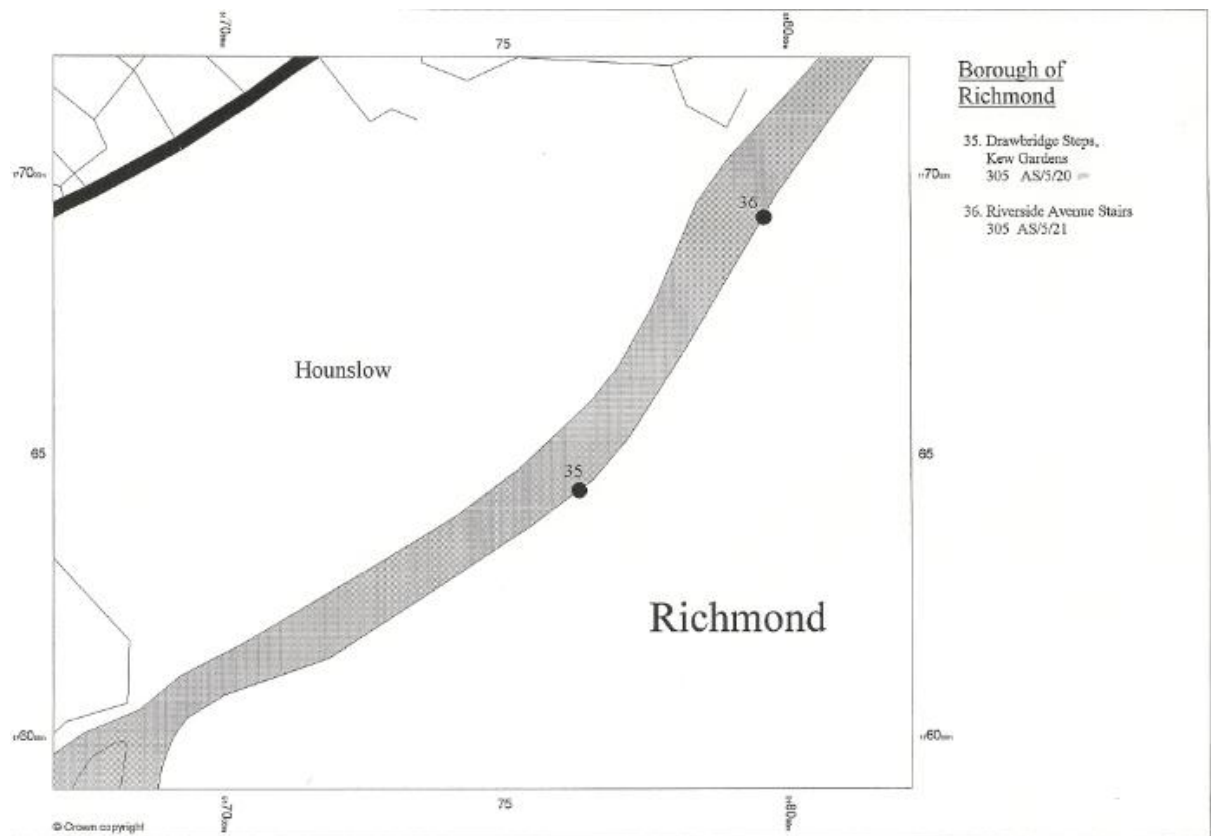
30. Railhead Ferry Stairs - good condition and access from River, overgrown on bank.

31. Opposite Isleworth Eyot (Upper) - good condition and access.

32. Opposite Isleworth Eyot (Middle) - good condition and access.

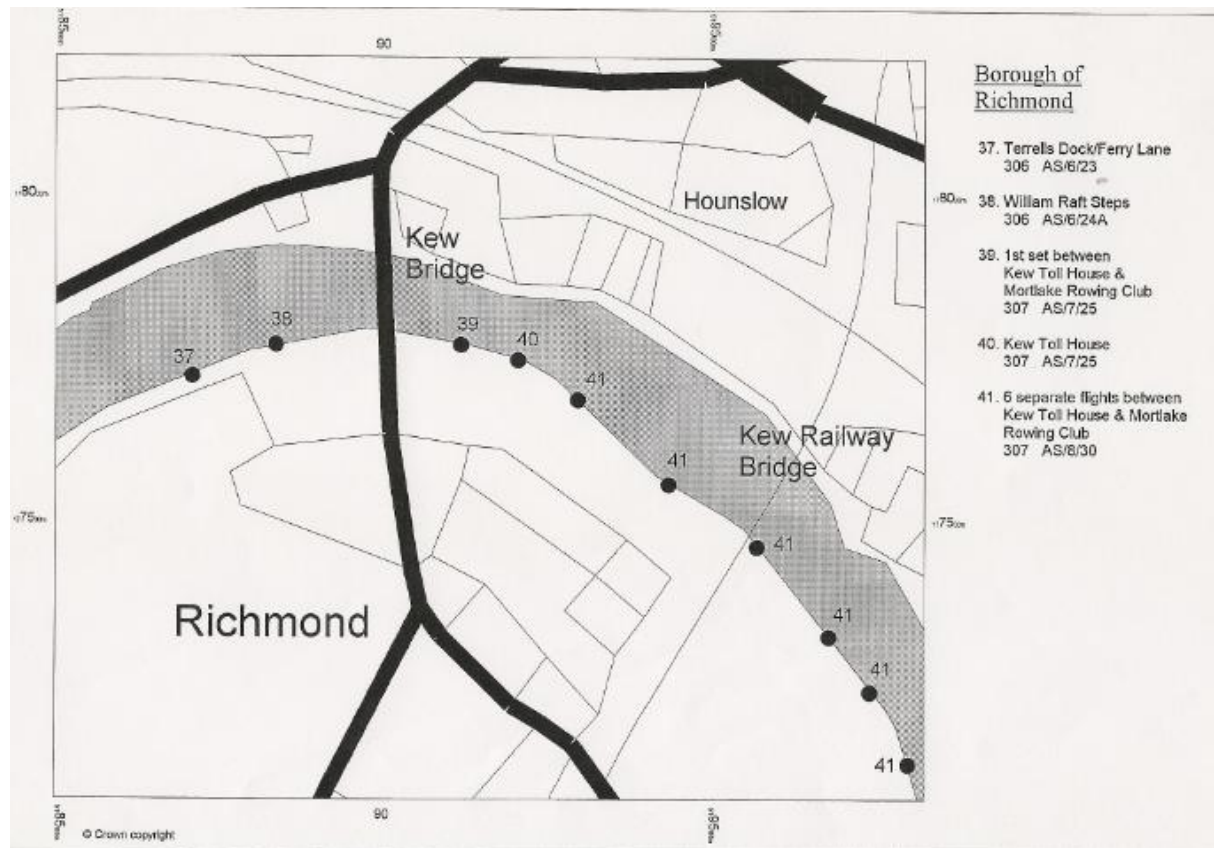
33. Opposite Isleworth Eyot (Lower) - good condition and access.

34. Church Ferry Stairs - good condition and access.



35. Drawbridge Steps (Kew Gardens) - reasonable condition, good access.

36. Riverside Avenue Stairs - good condition and access.



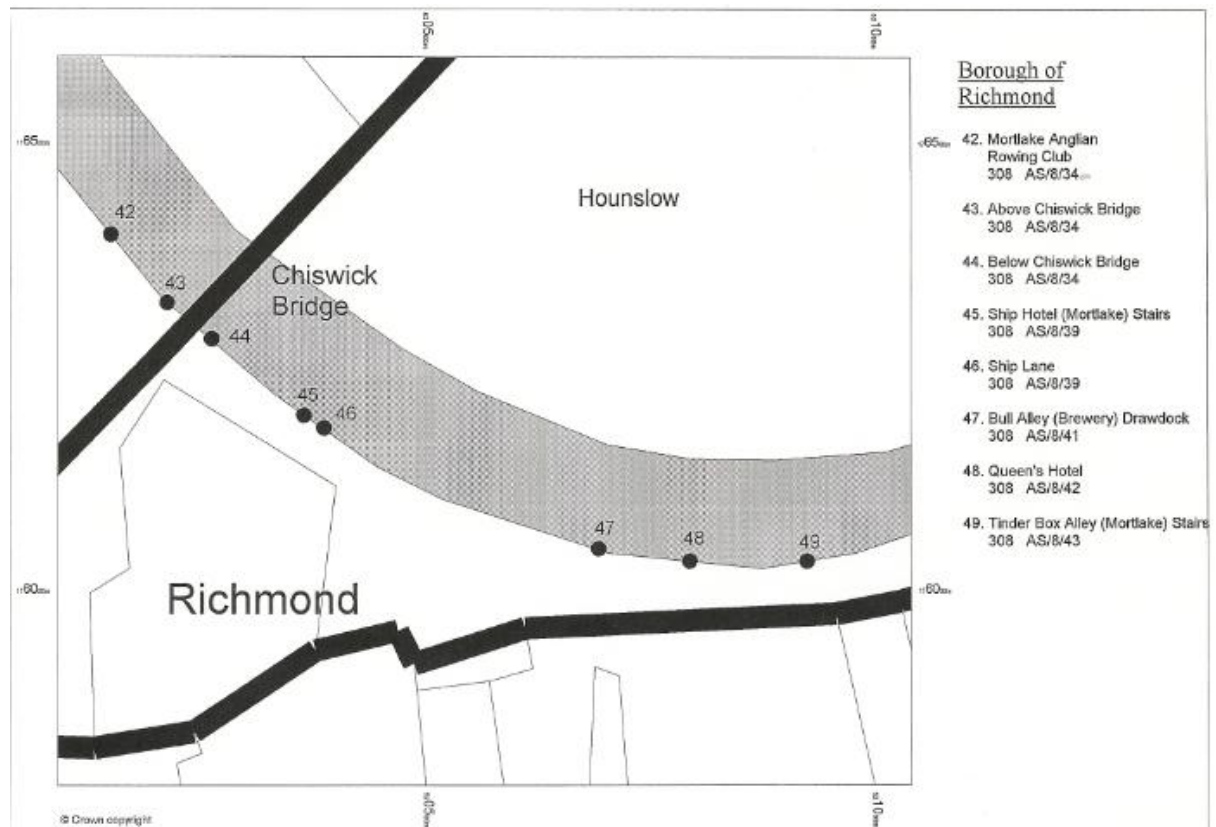
37. Terrells Dock / Ferry Lane - stairs - good condition and access.

38. William Raft Steps - good condition and access.

39. First set between Kew Toll House and Mortlake Rowing Club - good condition and access.

40. Kew Toll House – good condition and access.

41. Six separate flights between Kew Toll House and Mortlake Rowing Club – all good condition and access.



42. Mortlake Anglian Rowing Club - stairs - good condition and access.

43. Above Chiswick Bridge - stairs - good condition and access.

44. Below Chiswick Bridge - stairs - good condition and access.

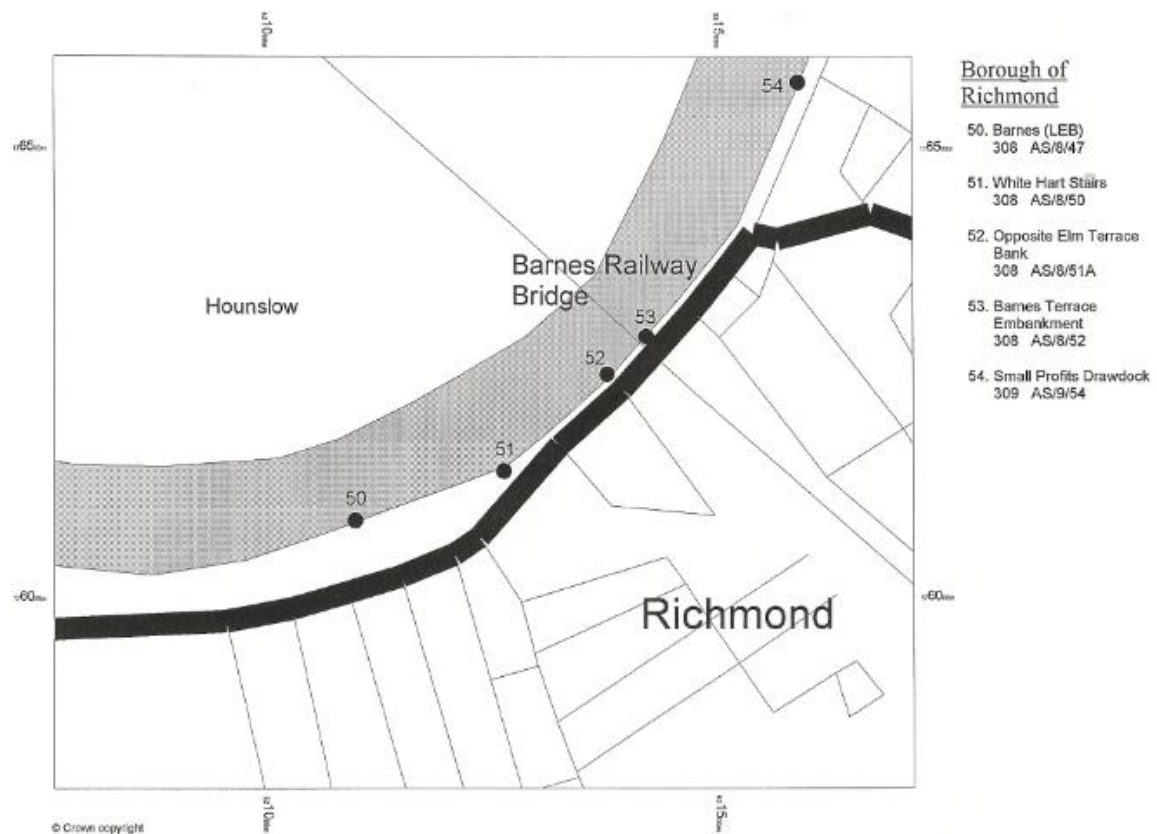
45. Ship Hotel Stairs - good condition and access.

46. Ship Lane - stairs - reasonable condition and access.

47. Bull Alley (Brewery) Drawdock - poor condition, access barred by wall and boards – chained and locked.

48. Queen's Hotel - stairs - poor condition, good access.

49. Tinder Box Alley - stairs - good condition and access.



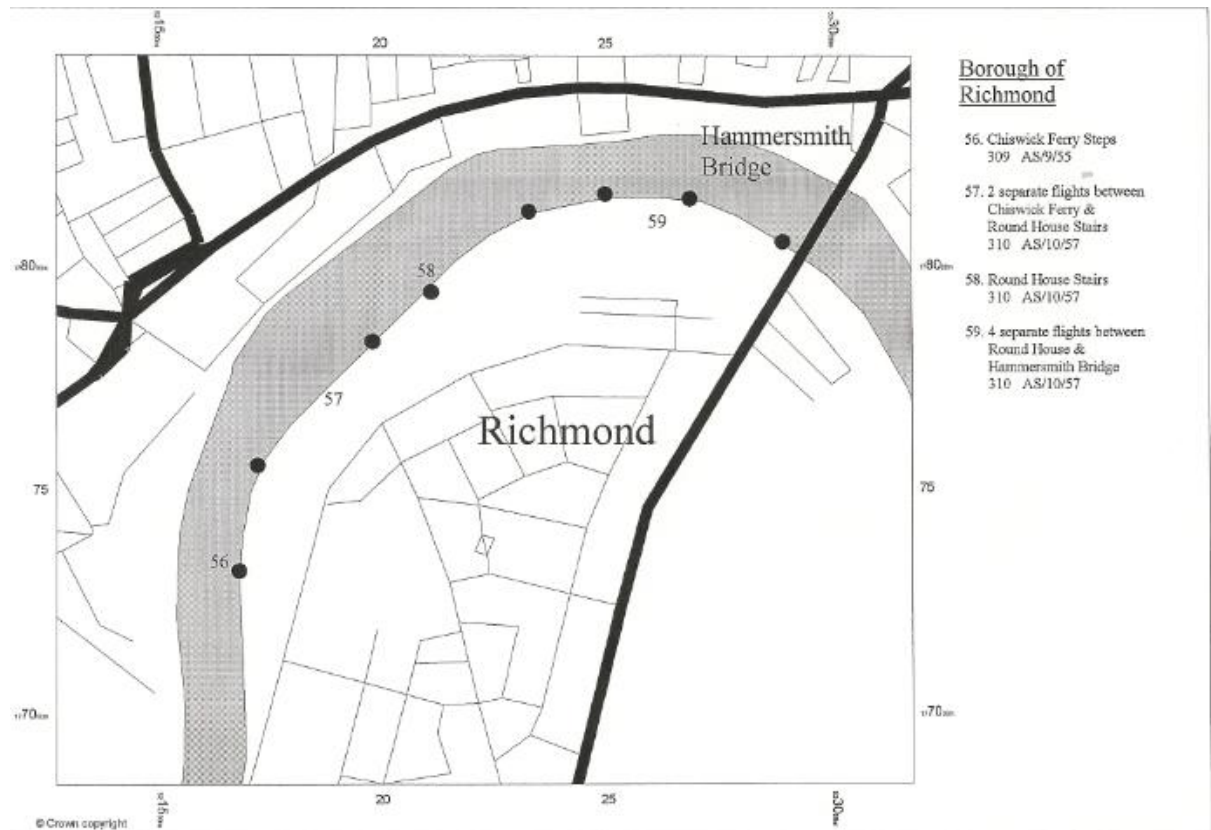
50. Barnes (LEB) - stairs - good condition, but rather overgrown and good access.

51. White Hart Stairs - good condition and access.

52. Opposite Elm Bank Gardens - stairs - good condition and access.

53. Barnes Terrace Embankment - stairs - good condition and access.

54. Small Profits Drawdock - good condition and access.

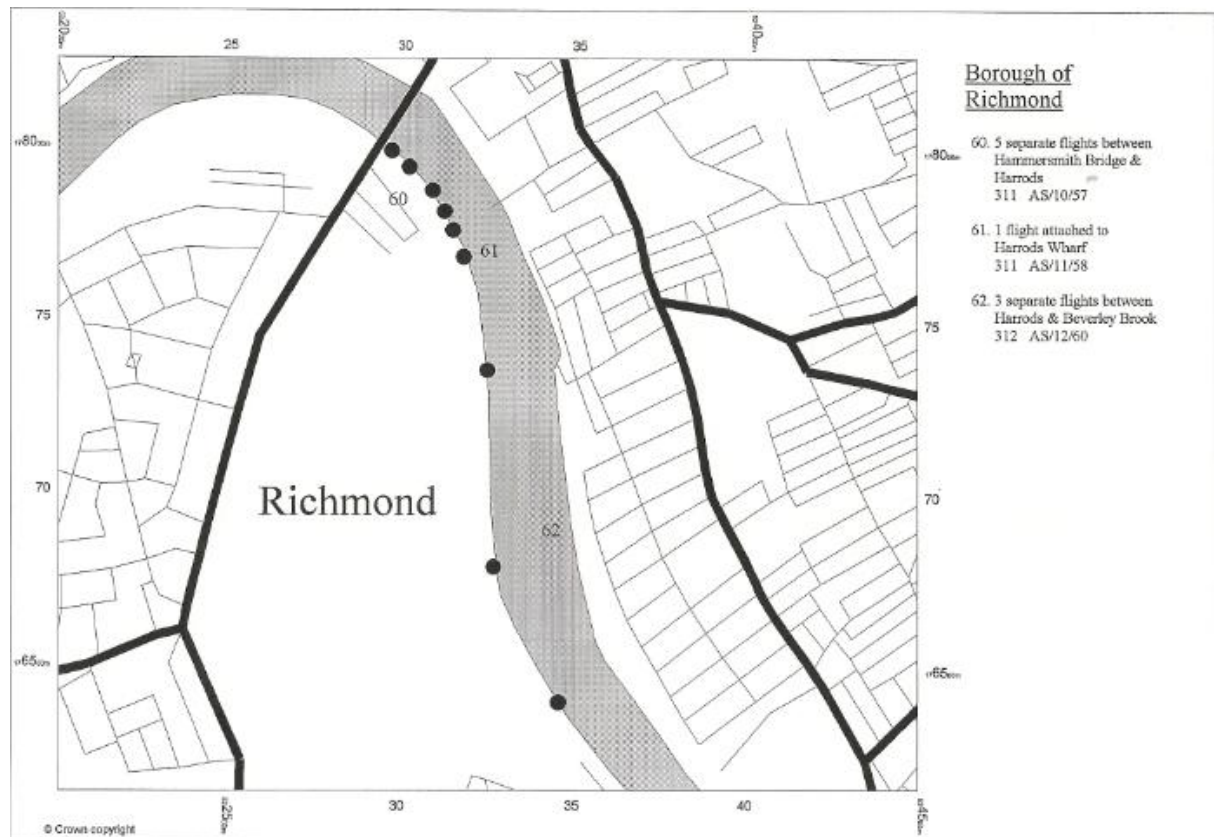


56. Chiswick Ferry Steps - good condition and access.

57. Two separate flights of stairs between Chiswick Ferry and Round House Stairs – both good condition and access.

58. Round House Stairs - good condition and access.

59. Four separate flights of stairs between Round House Stairs and Hammersmith Bridge – all good condition and access.

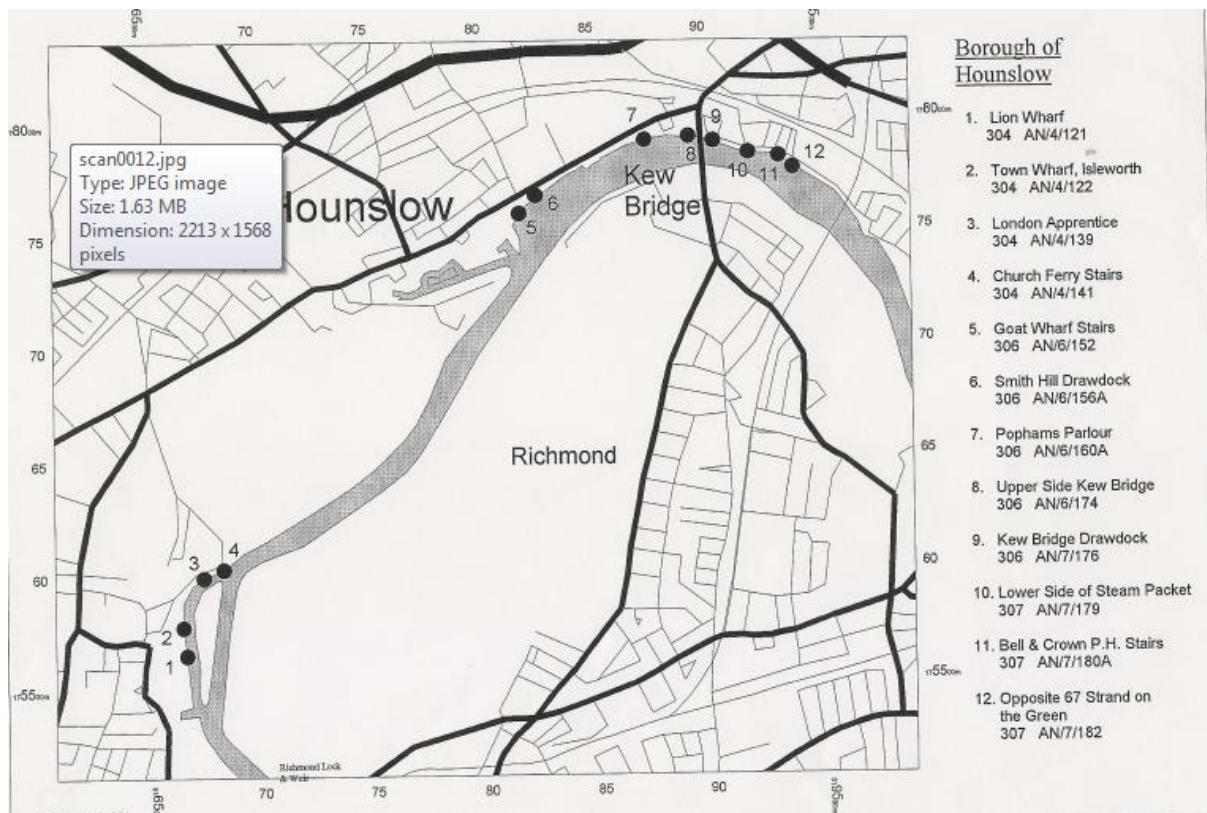


60. Four separate flights of stairs between Hammersmith Bridge and Harrods Wharf (although five shown on map) - all good condition and access.

61. One flight of stairs attached to Harrod's wharf - good condition and access.

62. Five separate flights between Harrod's Wharf and Beverley Brook - 5 located, not three as on map – second and third going downstream covered in vegetation. Others in reasonable condition but all, except the last, difficult to see from bank.

HOUNSLOW

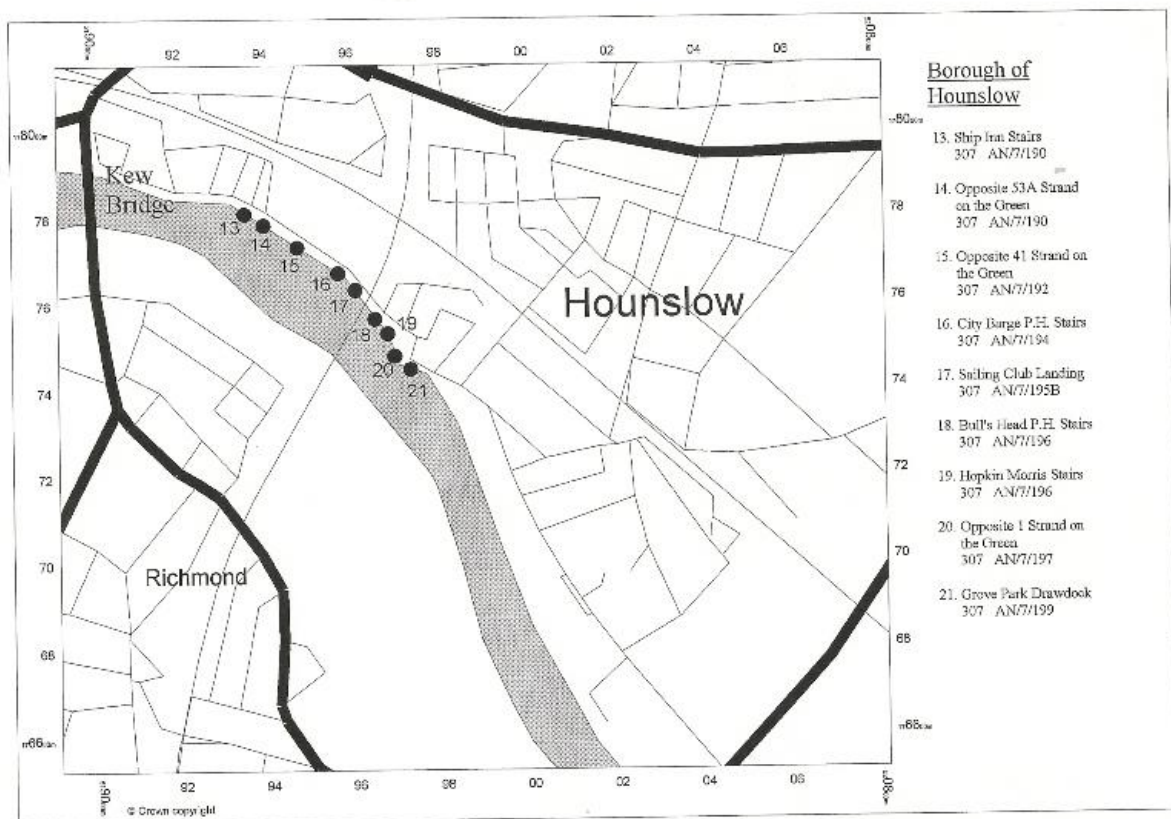


1. **Lion Wharf - good condition and access.**
2. **Town Wharf, Isleworth – good condition and access; also stairs – good condition, gate locked.**
3. **London Apprentice – drawdock – good condition and access.**
4. **Church Ferry Stairs – good condition and access.**
5. **Goat Wharf Stairs – good condition and access.**
6. **Smith Hill Drawdock – good condition and access.**
7. **Pophams Parlour – stairs – mainly good condition except bottom flight; good access.**
8. **Upper Side Kew Bridge – stairs – reasonable condition with good access.**
9. **Kew Bridge Drawdock – reasonable condition, good access.**

10. Lower Side of Steam Packet – stairs – good condition, reasonable access.

11. Bell & Crown PH Stairs – good condition and access.

12. Opposite 67 Strand-on-the-Green – stairs – good condition and access.



13. Ship Inn Stairs – reasonable condition, bottom wooden steps worn; good access.

14. Opposite 53A Strand-on-the-Green – stairs – good condition and access.

15. Opposite 41 Strand-on-the-Green – stairs – good condition and access.

16. City Barge PH Stairs – good condition and access.

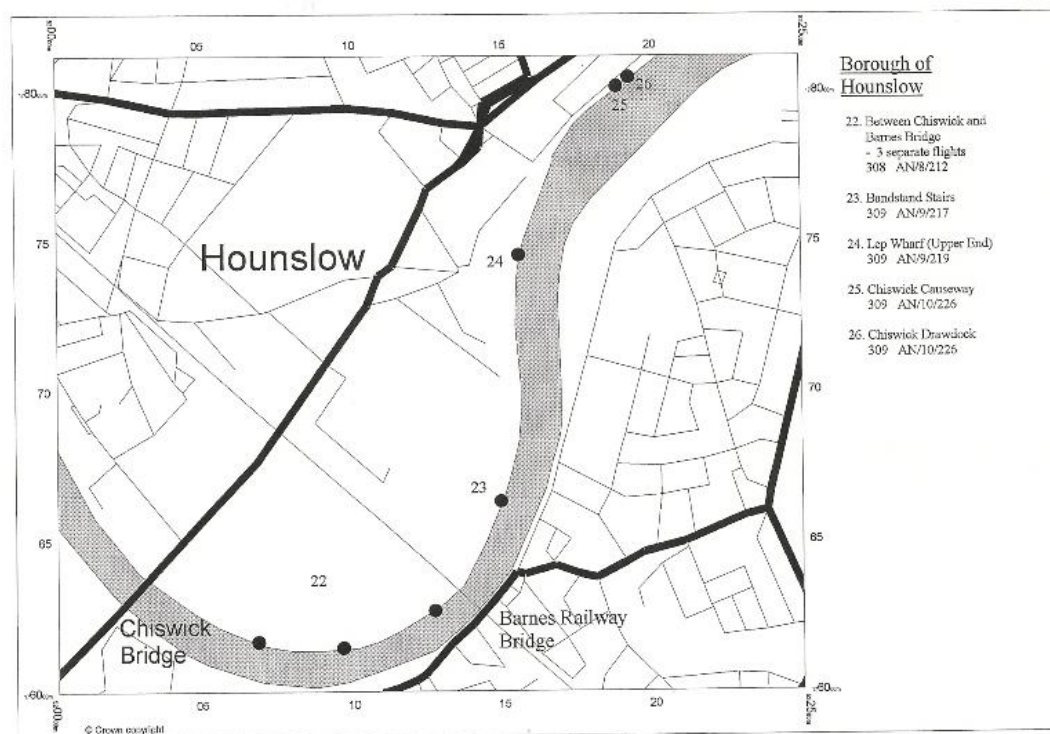
17. Sailing Club Landing – good condition and access.

18. Bull's Head PH Stairs – top step broken, good access.

19. Hopkin Morris Stairs – good condition and access.

20. Opposite 1 Strand-on-the-Green – stairs – good condition and access.

21. Grove Park Drawdock – reasonable condition, good access.



22. Between Chiswick and Barnes Bridges – three flights stairs – good condition and access.

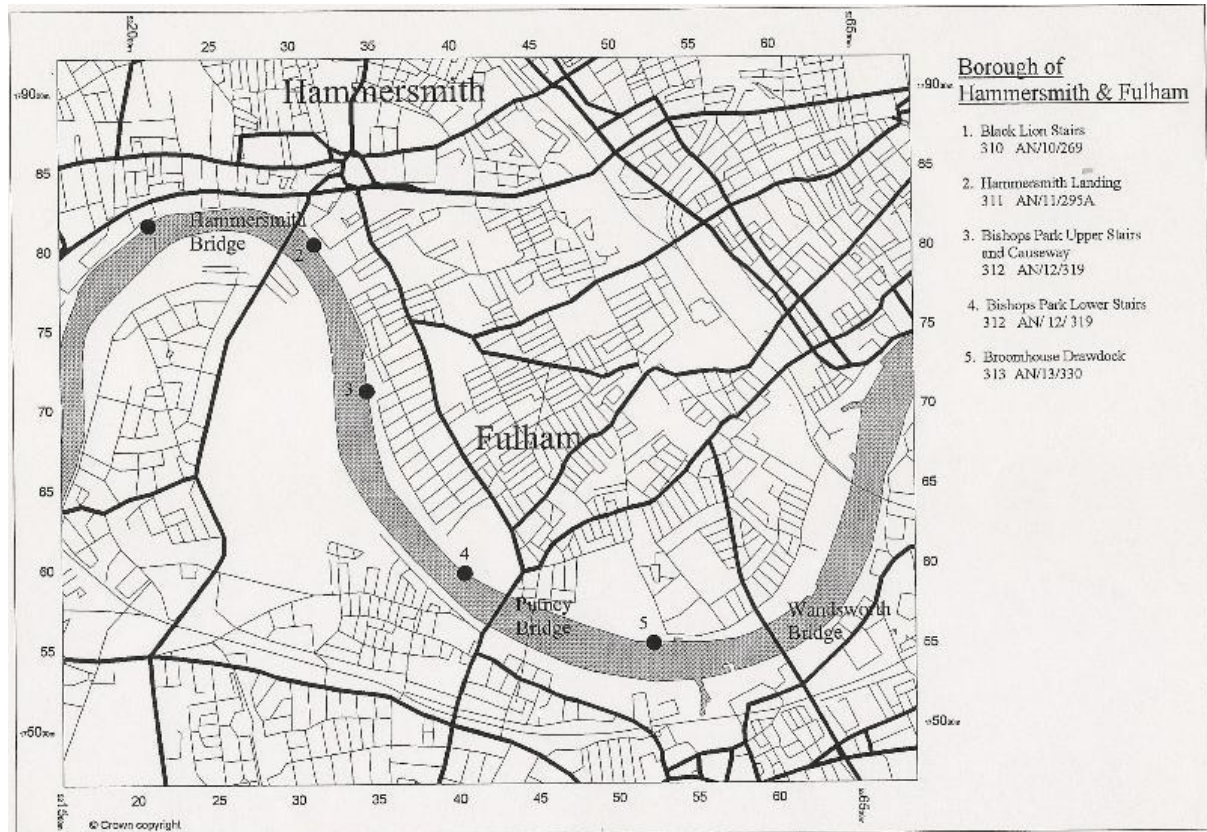
23. Bandstand Stairs – reasonable condition, gate locked.

24. Lep Wharf (Upper End) – stairs – good condition and access with low fence at top.

25. Chiswick Causeway – good condition and access.

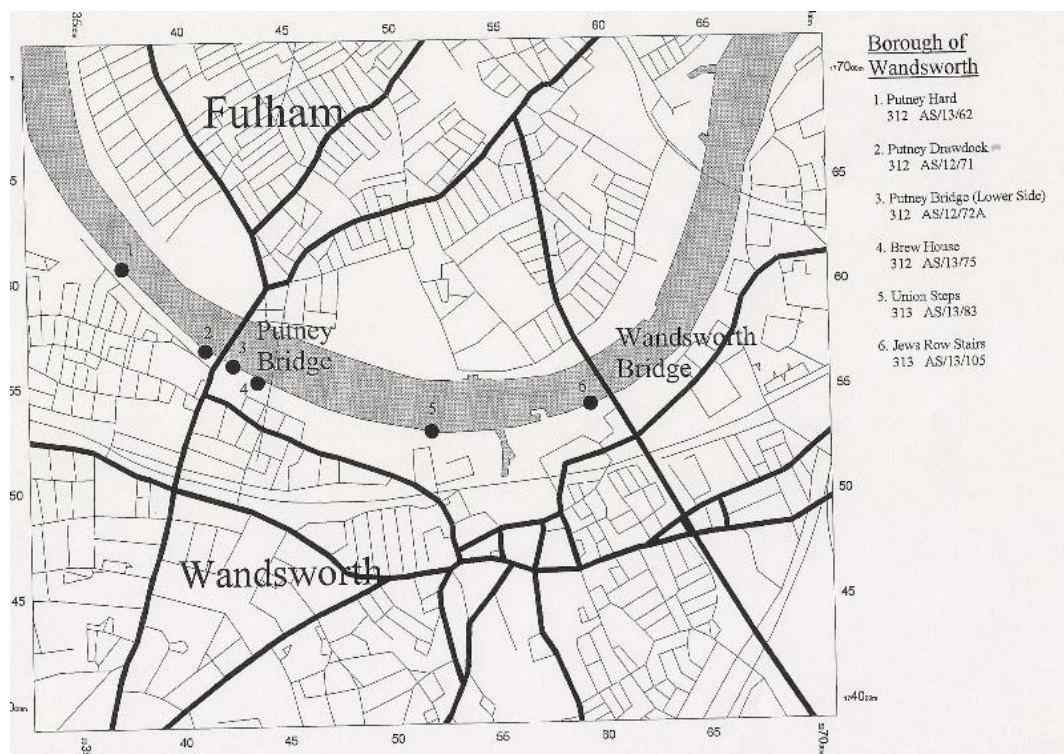
26. Chiswick Drawdock – reasonable condition but overgrown, good access.

HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

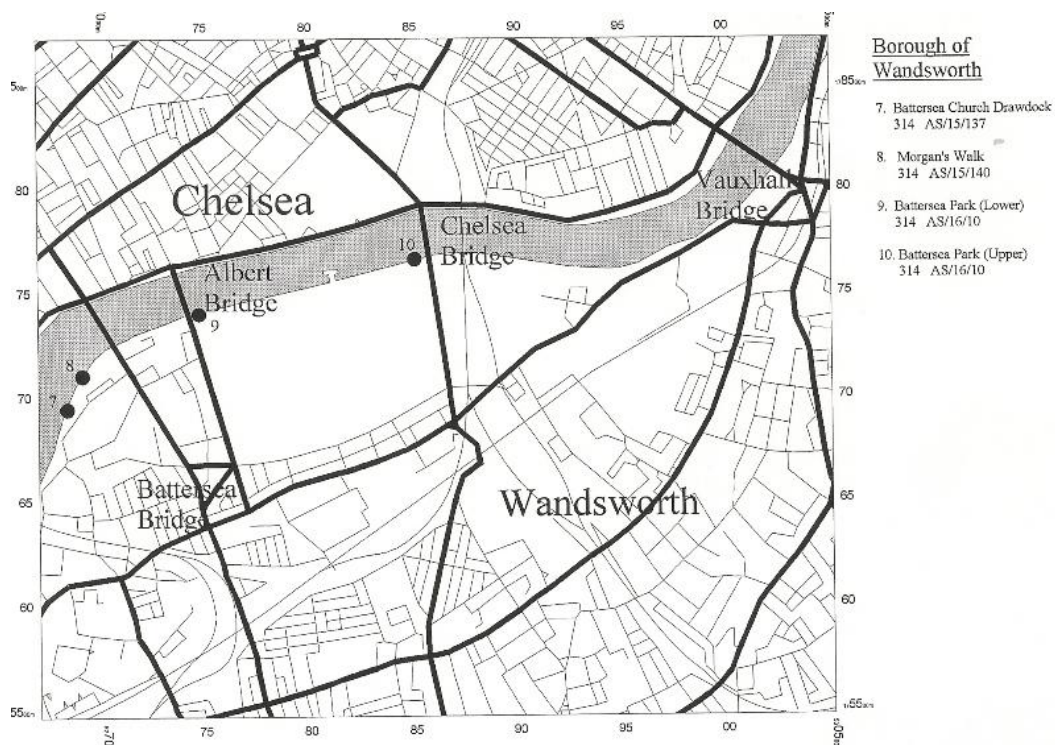


1. **Black Lion Stairs – good condition and access.**
2. **Hammersmith Landing – reasonable condition and good access.**
3. **Bishop’s Park Upper Stairs and Causeway – good condition, gate locked.**
4. **Bishop’s Park Lower Stairs – reasonable condition, step broken and gate locked.**
5. **Broomhouse Drawdock – reasonable condition, gate locked but pedestrian access possible - leads to gateway to Hurlingham Yacht Club’s pontoon.**

WANDSWORTH



1. Putney Hard – good condition and access.
2. Putney Drawdock – good condition and access.
3. Putney Bridge (Lower Side) – stairs – good condition and access.
4. Brew House – slipway has been renewed but steepened, good condition and access.
5. Union Stairs – reasonable condition, steep step from last step to path, low gate locked.
6. Jew's Row Stairs – reasonable condition, low fence with locked gate at top in grounds of Ship PH. Cable fixed across front.



7. Battersea Church Drawdock – good condition and access.

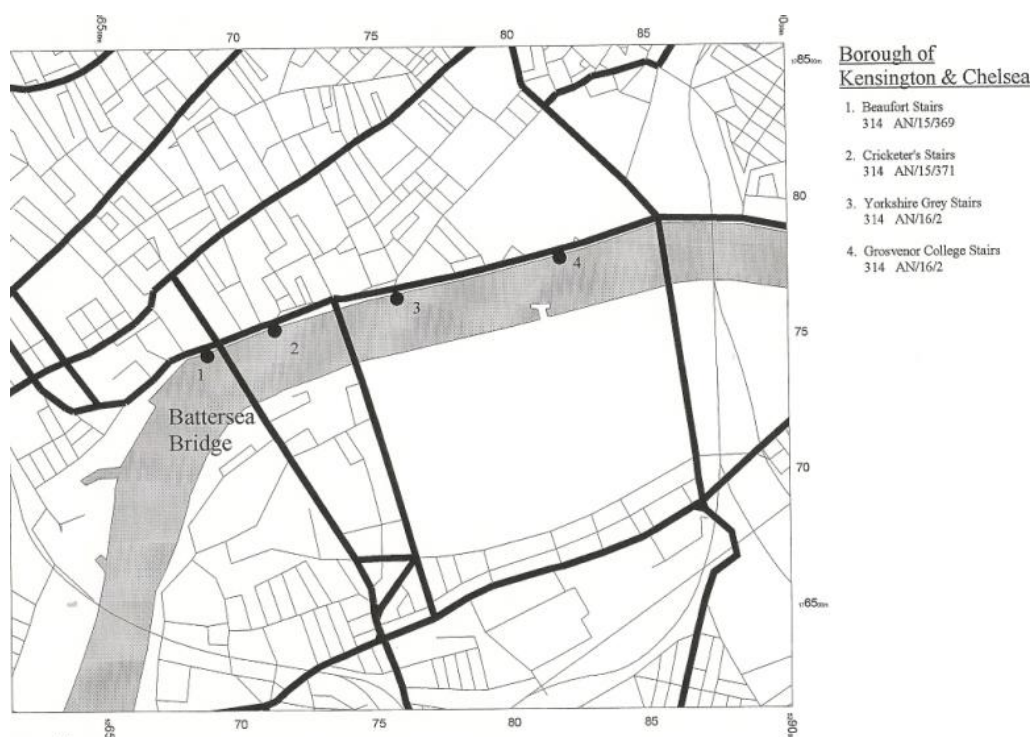
8. Morgan's Walk – stairs – good condition and access.

NB – Immediately downstream of Battersea Bridge are stairs – good condition and access.

9. Battersea Park (Upper) – stairs – reasonable condition, overgrown at top, gate locked.

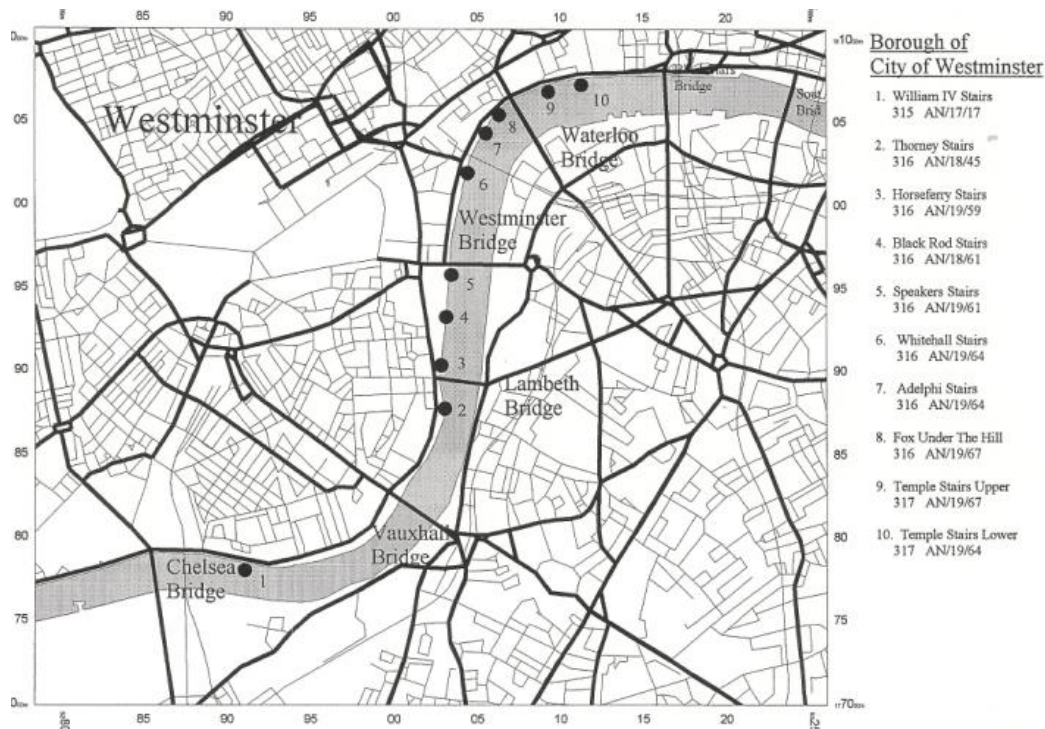
10. Battersea Park (Lower) – stairs – reasonable condition, top access blocked by fence.

KENSINGTON & CHELSEA



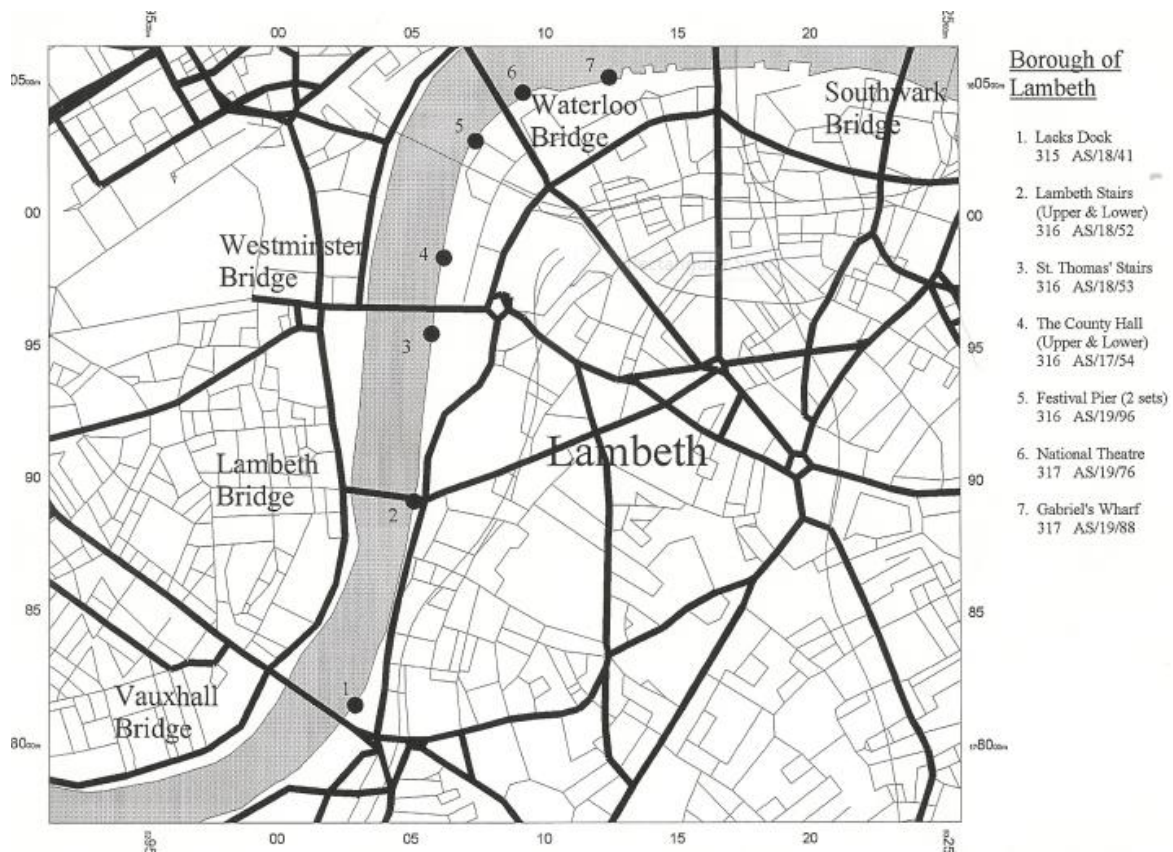
- 1. Beaufort Stairs - good condition and access from path, but houseboats and mooring ropes across bottom of stairs.**
- 2. Cricketers' Stairs – good condition and access.**
- 3. Yorkshire Grey Stairs – good condition and access, with low, but scalable fence at top.**
- 4. Grosvenor College Stairs – as above.**

CITY OF WESTMINSTER



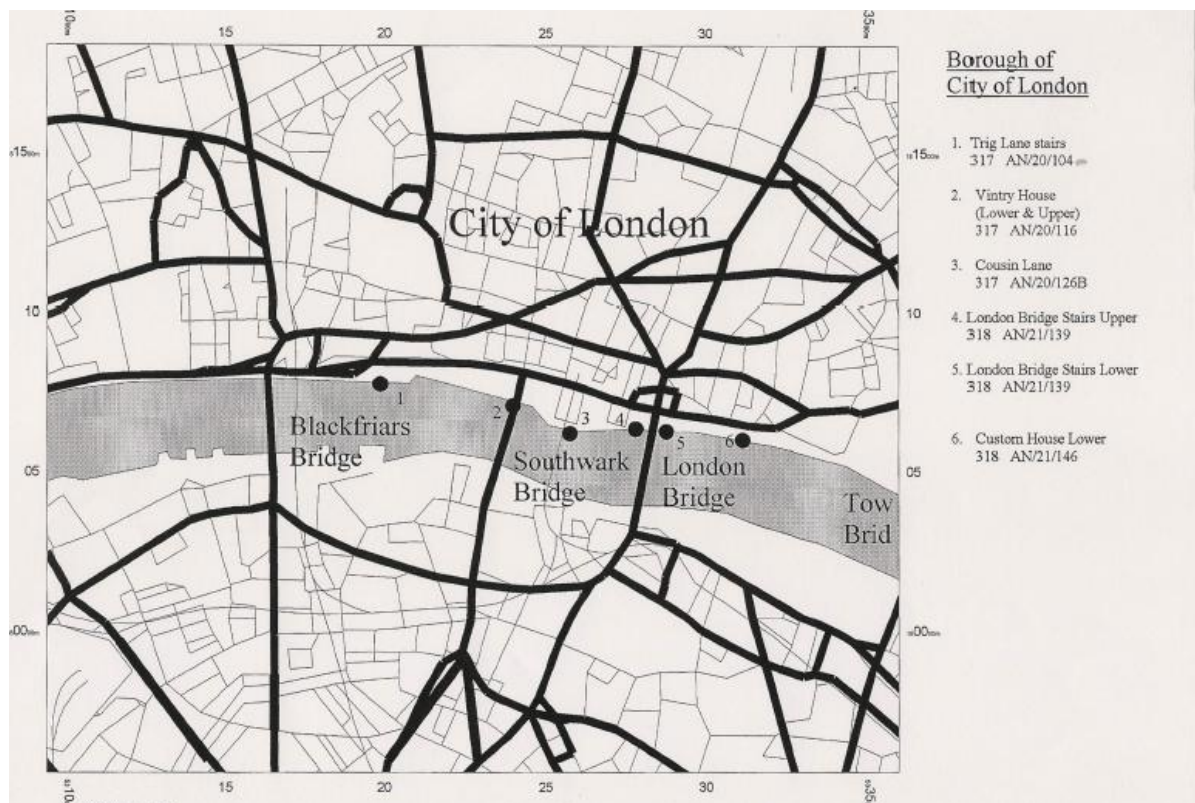
1. William IV Stairs – poor condition, good access.
2. Thorney Stairs – good condition and access.
3. Horseferry Stairs – no trace.
4. Black Rod Stairs – condition not visible, access only into Palace of Westminster.
5. Speaker's Stairs – good condition, access only into Palace of Westminster.
6. Whitehall Stairs – 2 sets both in good condition, but gates locked.
7. Adelphi Stairs – 2 sets, good condition and access.
8. Fox Under the Hill – stairs removed.
9. Temple Stairs Upper – opposite HQS Wellington are 2 sets of stairs, upstream set good condition and access, downstream set dismantled.
10. Temple Stairs Lower – downstream of King's Reach Memorial there is a dismantled set of stairs, then a set near Submariners' Memorial, good condition and access.

LAMBETH



1. Lacks Dock – drawdock in good condition with good access.
2. Lambeth Stairs (Upper & Lower) – no trace. Could be where LFB pier is now. There are steps alongside Lambeth Pier (upstream) – steps in reasonable condition, handrails missing in places, gate opens.
3. St Thomas' Stairs (2 sets) – upstream has some loose steps, gate locked; downstream gate opens – steps in reasonable condition.
4. The County Hall (Upper & Lower) – stairs – good condition, both gates locked.
5. Festival Pier (2 sets) – stairs – both in good condition, gates locked.
6. National Theatre – stairs – good condition, gates locked.
7. Gabriel's Wharf – stairs – good condition and access.

CITY OF LONDON



1. Trig Lane Stairs – reasonable condition (with bottom wooden flight showing signs of wear) good access.
2. Vintry House (Lower & Upper) – both sets of stairs stop at riverside walkway, no access to river.

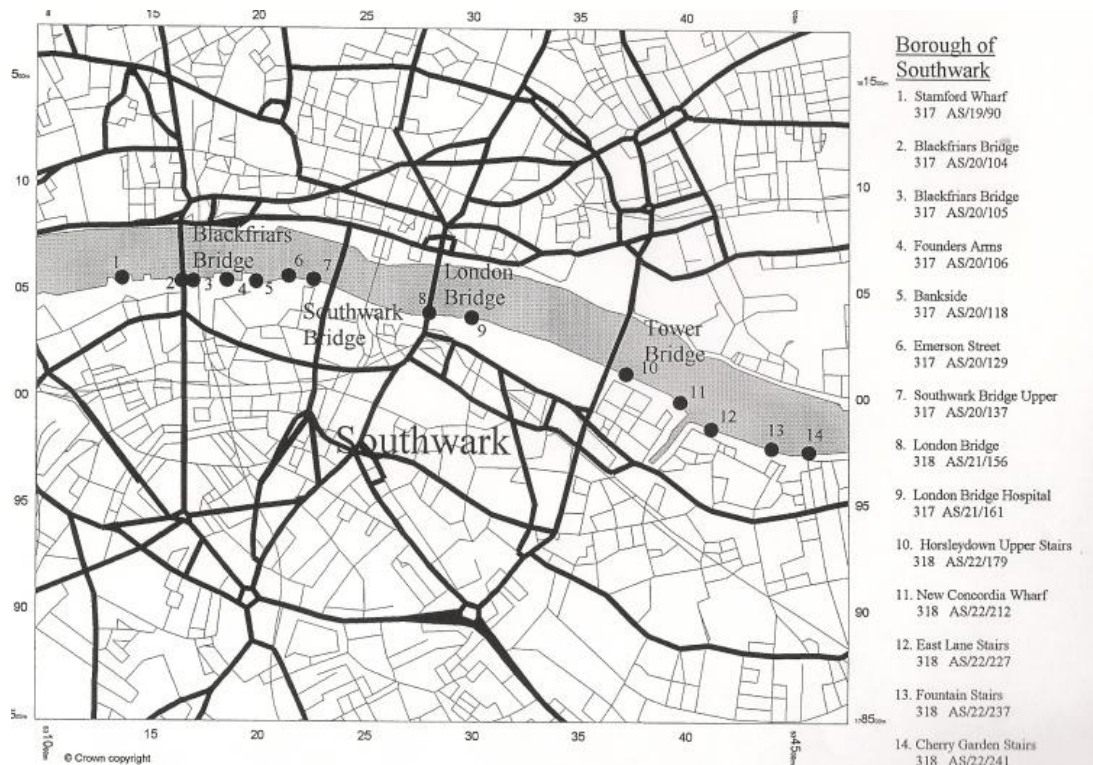
NB – New stone stairs with metal lower flights outside Vintner’s Hall.

3. Cousin Lane – stairs at end of Cousin Lane (upstream of Cannon Street Railway Bridge) - good condition and access.

NB – Downstream of railway bridge there are stone stairs leading from All Hallows Lane but only a metal ladder goes down river wall.

4. London Bridge Stairs Upper – reasonable condition, top gate locked.
5. London Bridge Stairs Lower – good condition and access.
6. Custom House Lower – stairs – good condition and access.

SOUTHWARK

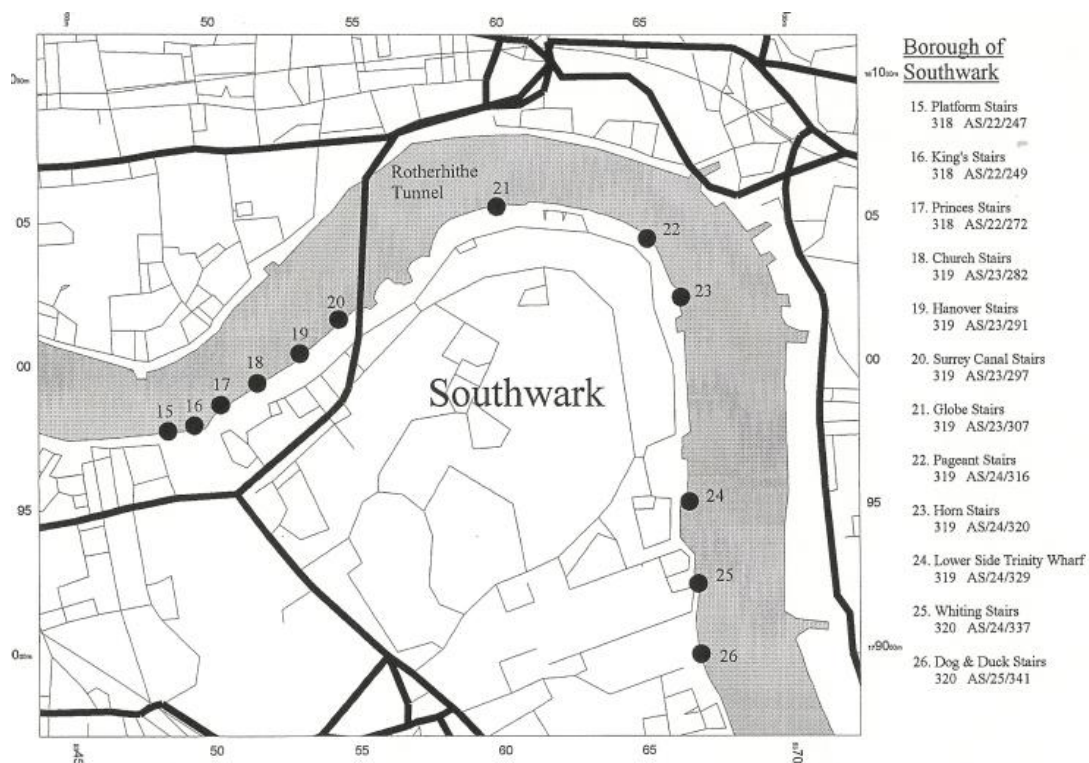


- 1. Stamford Wharf - stairs good condition and access.**
- 2. Blackfriars Bridge upstream - stairs good condition and access.**
- 3. Blackfriars Bridge downstream - stairs good condition and access.**
- 4. Founders' Arms - stairs good condition and access.**
- 5. Bankside –stairs good condition and access.**
- 6. Emerson Street - stairs good condition and access.**
- 7. Southwark Bridge Upper - stairs in reasonable condition, gate locked.**
- 8. London Bridge - stairs good condition, top gate locked.**
- 9. London Bridge Hospital - stairs in good condition, top low gate locked.**
- 10. Horsleydown Upper Stairs - stairs good condition and access.**
- 11. New Concordia Wharf - wooden stairs, good condition, gate locked.**

12. East Lane Stairs - good condition, high gate locked.

13. Fountain Stairs - good condition and access.

14. Cherry Garden Stairs - good condition and access.



15. Platform Stairs - bottom tier, steps missing, dangerous abrupt drop, extension to Angel pub gives narrow passage.

16. King's Stairs - good condition and access.

17. Prince's Stairs - good condition and access.

18. Church Stairs - good condition, gate locked, at high water blocked by Mayflower pub jetty.

19. Hanover Stairs - good condition and access.

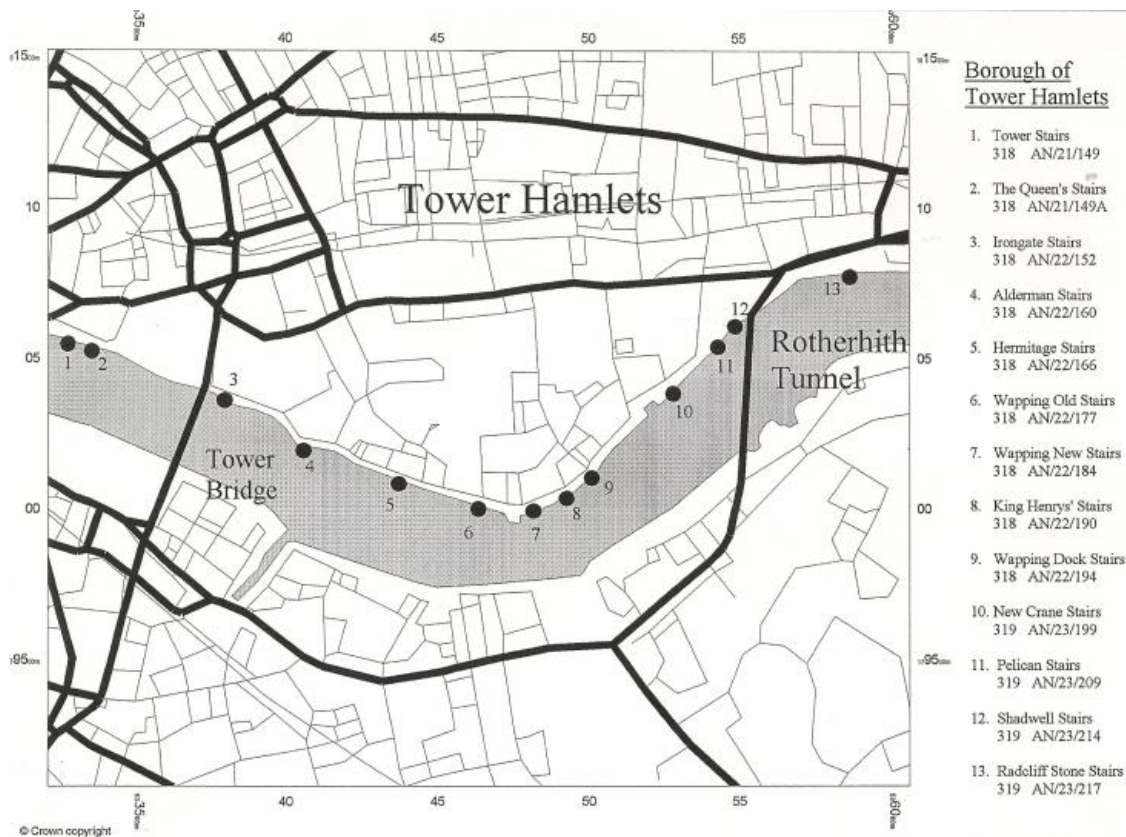
20. Surrey Canal Stairs - good condition, heavy iron gate but access possible, also from side over low fence.

21. Globe Stairs - good condition and access.

22. Pageant Stairs - good condition and access.

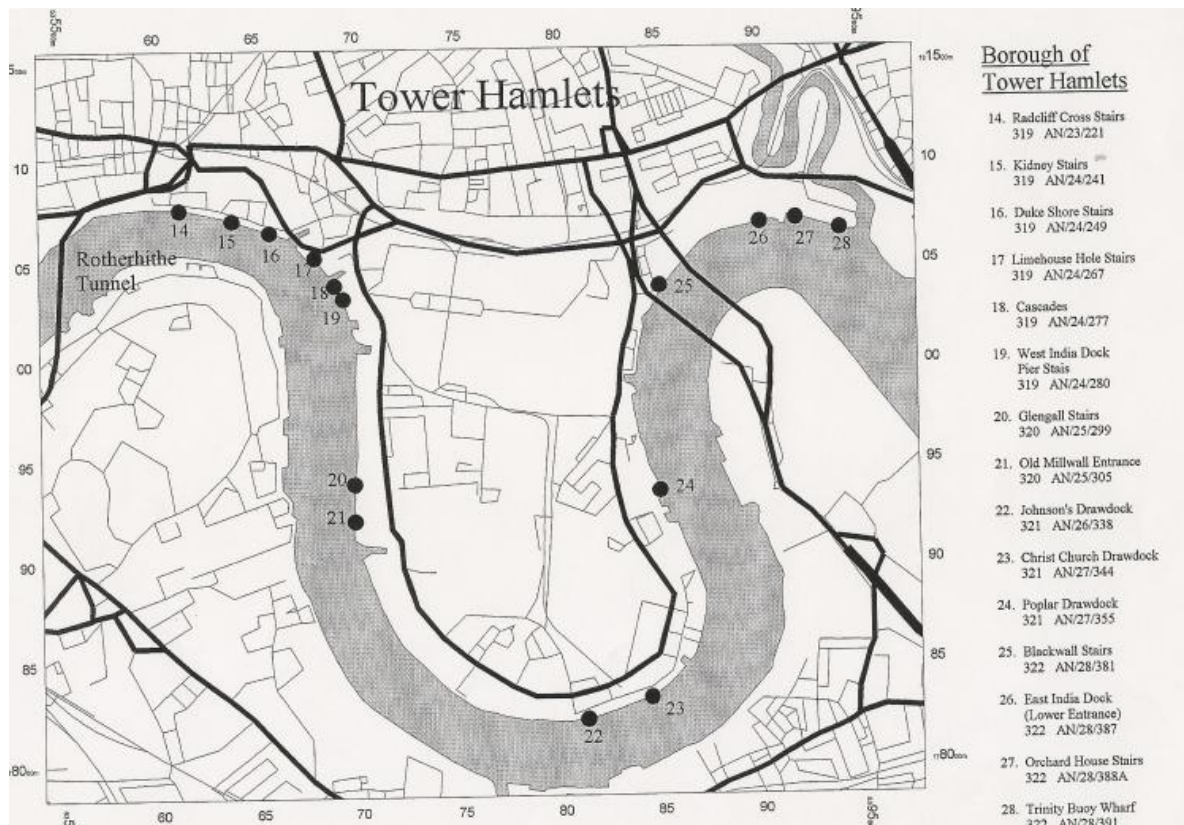
- 23. Horn Stairs - reasonable condition, good access.**
- 24. Lower Side Trinity Wharf - stairs, good condition and access.**
- 25. Whiting Stairs - good condition and access.**
- 26. Dog & Duck Stairs - good condition and access.**

TOWER HAMLETS



1. **Tower Stairs** - partly covered by Tower Pier, reasonable condition, gate locked, restricted access from River,
 2. **The Queen's Stairs** - good condition, top and bottom gates locked.
 3. **Irongate Stairs** - no trace, unless they are the gated stone stairs under Tower Bridge.
 4. **Alderman Stairs** - good condition and access.
 5. **Hermitage Stairs** - old stairs have gone, new stairs end abruptly, no bottom flight.
 6. **Wapping Old Stairs** - good condition and access.
 7. **Wapping New Stairs** - reasonable condition, gate difficult to open, iron ladder at bottom.
- NB.** Next downstream are Wapping Police Stairs - good condition and access, although causeway goes through Marine Support Unit's area.
8. **King Henry's Stairs** - covered by part of private Wapping Pier (Wood's River Services) condition unknown, gate locked.

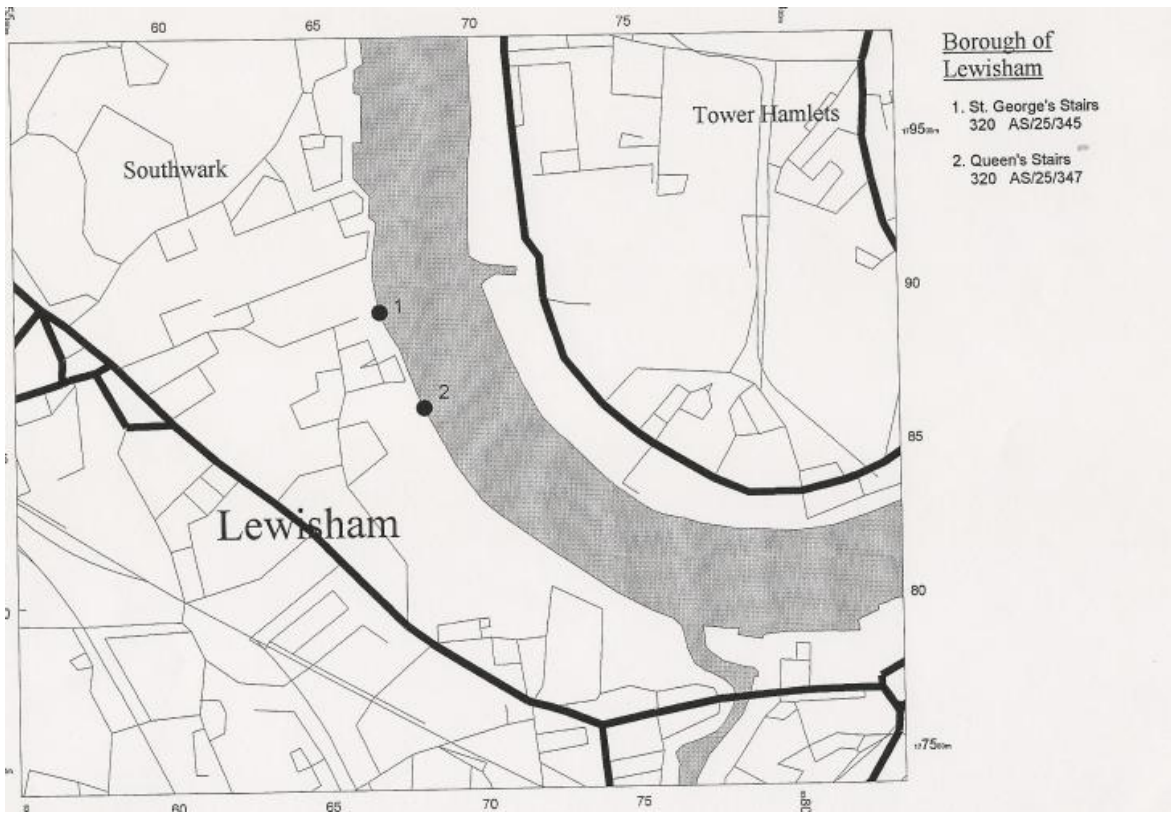
9. Wapping Dock Stairs - poor condition, bottom wooden flight broken, fenced off at top.
10. New Crane Stairs - good condition and access.
11. Pelican Stairs - good condition and access.
12. Shadwell Stairs - good condition, gate locked, part of Shadwell Boat Project.
13. Ratcliff Stone Stairs - good condition, light low fence at top.



14. Ratcliff Cross Stairs - good condition and access.
15. Kidney Stairs - rear of The Grapes, wooden steps.
16. Duke Shore Stairs - good condition, no access , gate locked.
17. Limehouse Hole Stairs - new stone stairs on site of Aberdeen Wharf.
18. Cascades - stairs - good condition and access.
19. West India Dock Stairs - removed, only remains of railings.

- 20. Glengall Stairs - good condition and access.**
- 21. Old Millwall Entrance - good condition and access.**
- 22. Johnson's Drawdock - good condition and access.**
- 23. Christchurch Drawdock - aka Newcastle Drawdock – good condition and access.**
- 24. Poplar Drawdock - good condition and access.**
- 25. Blackwall Stairs - no trace, but likely site is part of waste transfer station.**
- 26. East India Dock Stairs - good condition and access, part of nature reserve that closes at night.**
- 27. Orchard House Stairs - no trace.**
- 28. Trinity Buoy Wharf - stairs - good condition and access**

LEWISHAM



- 1. St. George's Stairs – good condition and access.**
- 2. Queen's Stairs – good condition but gate locked.**

NB – Also known as Drake's Steps.

GREENWICH



1. Upper Watergate Stairs – good condition and access.

2. Lower Watergate Drawdock – no trace.

NB - There is a drawdock upstream of and part of the Ahoy Centre – good condition, gate locked.

3. Billingsgate Dock Stairs – no trace. Possible confusion as there was a dock of this name downstream at Greenwich.

4. Hoy Stairs (Deptford Creek) – no trace.

5. Garden Stairs – good condition, gate locked.

NB – Site of Billingsgate Dock is just upstream with short set of stairs – good access, gate locked.

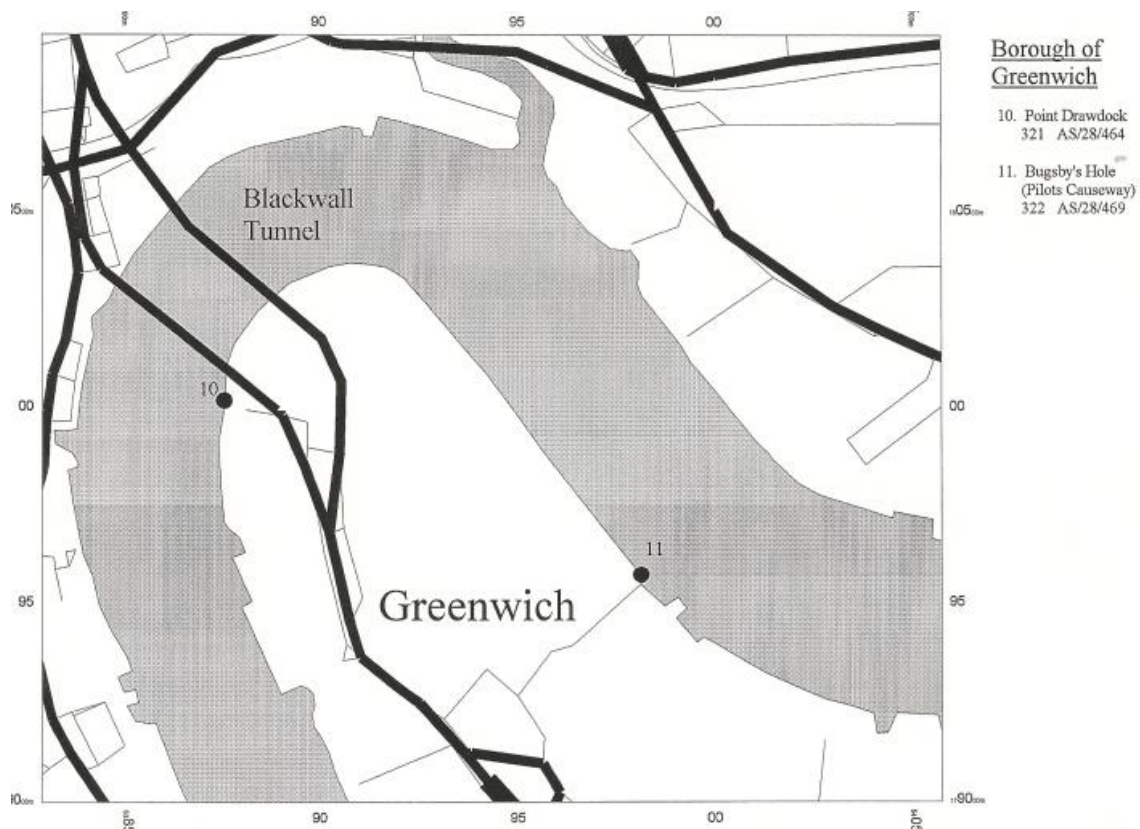
6. Queen's Steps aka Watergate Stairs - two sets, good condition and access; some cracked steps in upstream set.

7. Lower Royal Naval College - stairs, good condition and access; some cracked steps.

8. High Bridge Drawdock - good condition, gate locked.

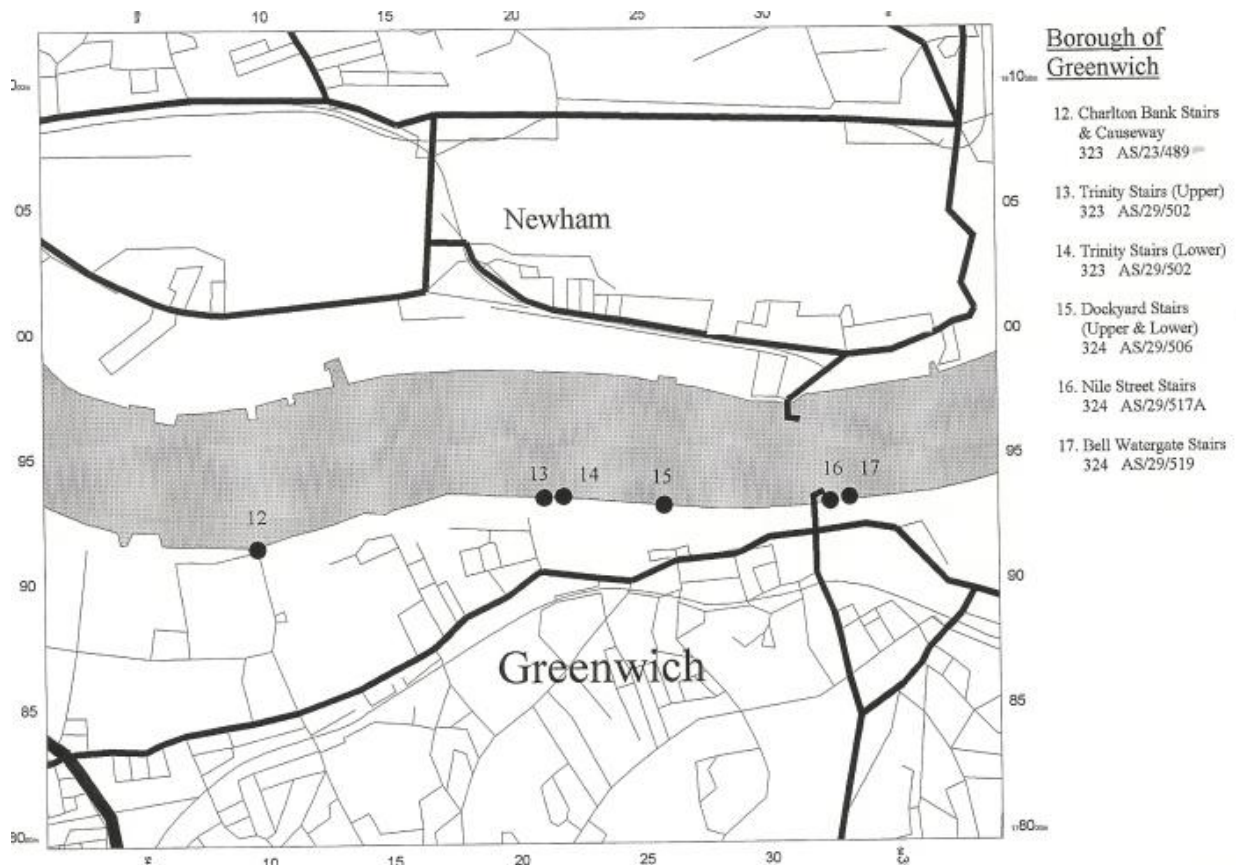
9. Enderby's Wharf Stairs aka Ferry Steps - good condition, locked gate but low and accessible.

NB - Missing on map upstream are Golden Lane Stairs, near Power Station, good condition and access.



10. Point Drawdock - poor condition, good access.

11. Bugsby's Hole (Pilots Causeway) - concrete causeway leading to jetty, good condition, locked, part of boat club.



12. Charlton Bank Stairs & Causeway - good condition and access.

NB - Five steps and short, narrow causeway.

NB - Downstream of Barrier, Warspite Road, are stairs and causeway - good condition and access, some broken stones.

13. Trinity Stairs (Upper) - good condition, handrails missing. High gate locked.

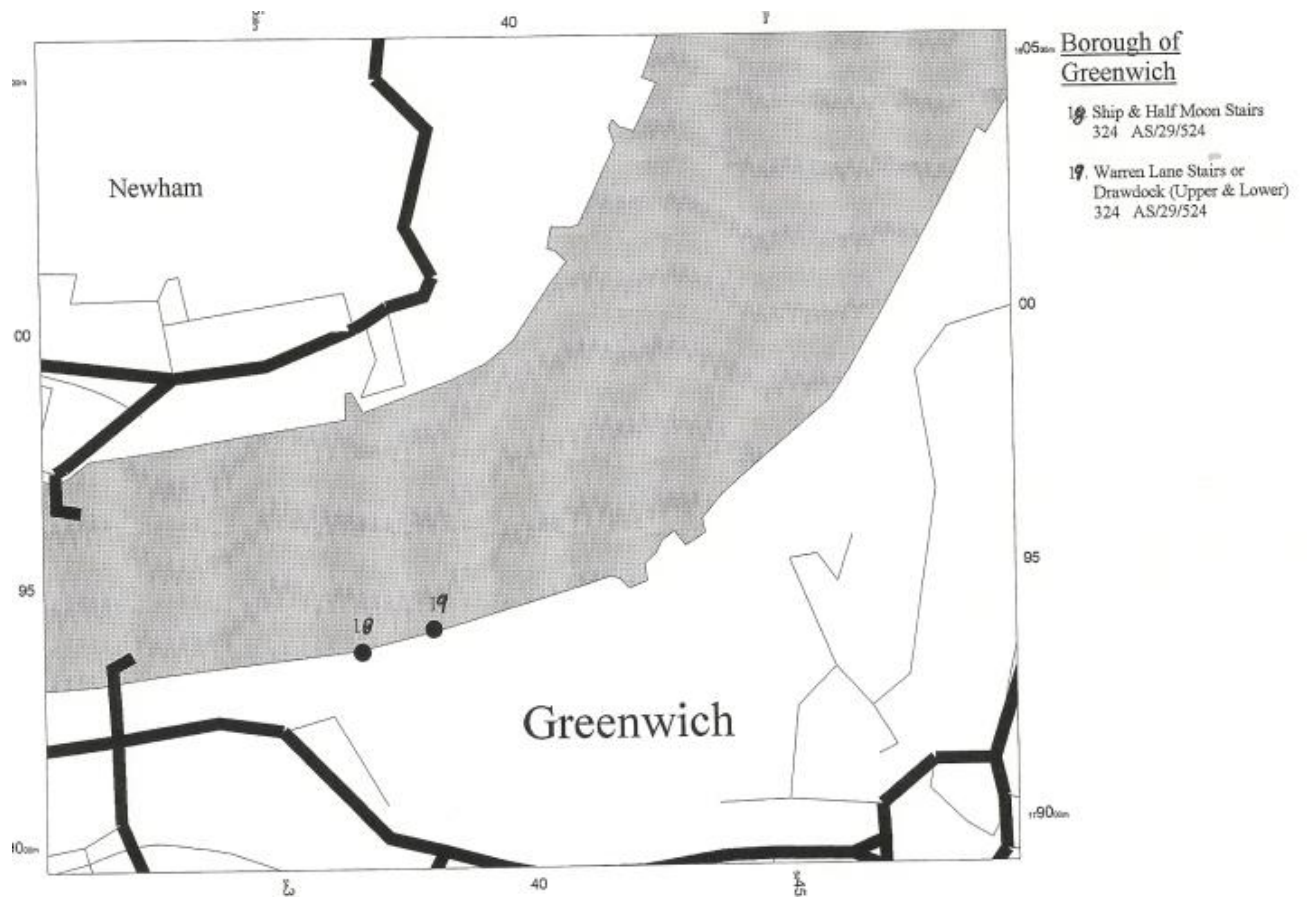
14. Trinity Stairs (Lower) - as above.

15. Dockyard Stairs (Upper & Lower) - no trace.

NB - There are two landing slips from old Dockyard, latterly used by Cubows barge builders/repairers.

16. Nile Street Stairs - good condition and access.

17. Bell Watergate Stairs - good condition and access.

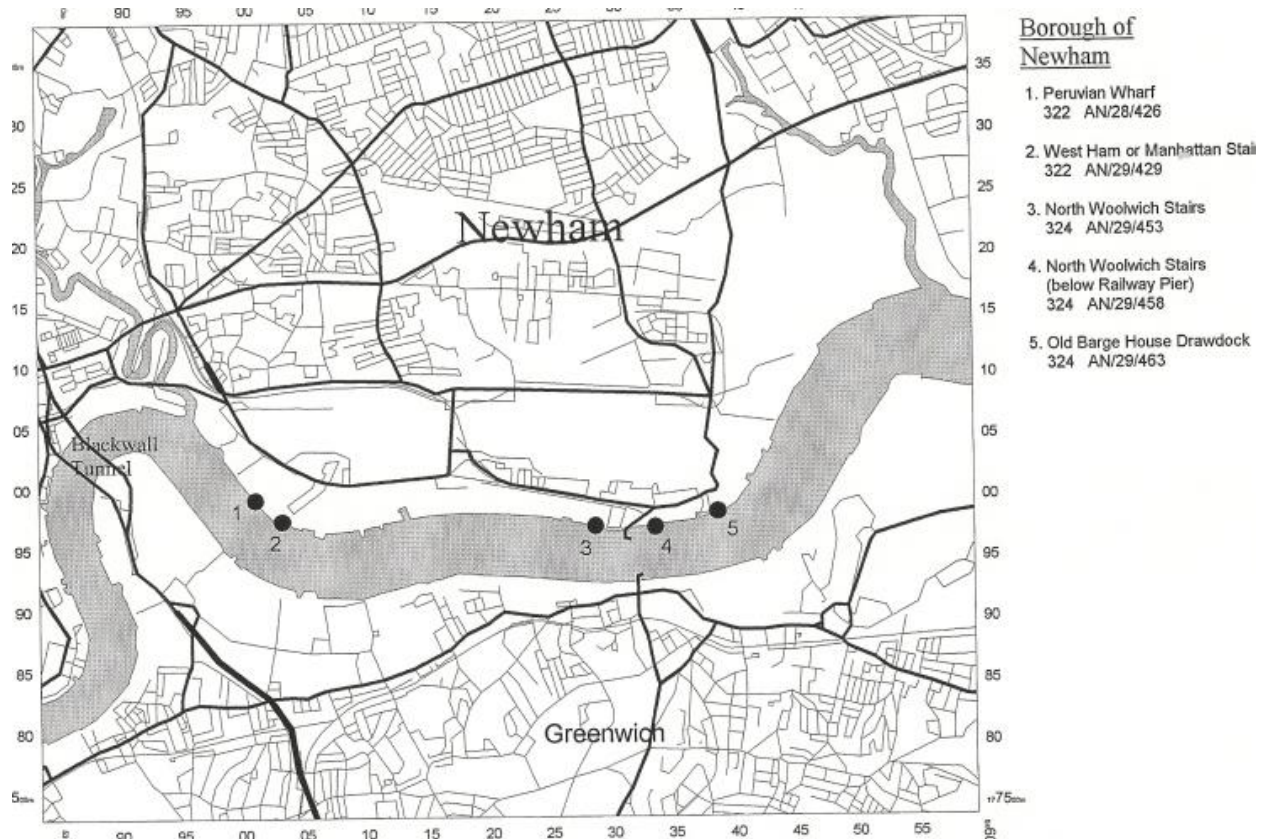


18. Warren Lane Stairs or Drawdock (Upper & Lower) - stairs under Woolwich Pier, reasonable condition, no access. No drawdock seen.

19. Ship & Half Moon Stairs - reasonable condition, good access, some handrails missing.

NB - These two stairs have been wrongly identified on the map.

NEWHAM

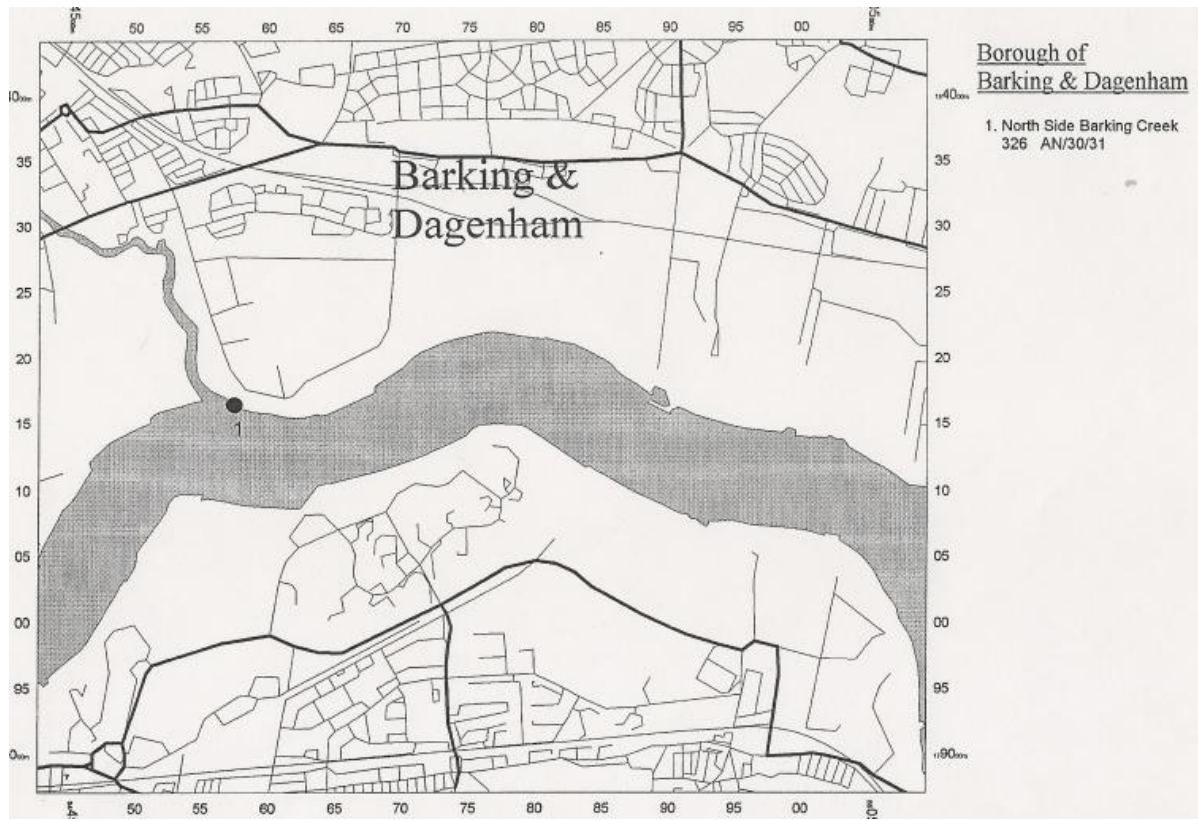


1. **Peruvian Wharf** - from the river stairs appear to be in poor condition, access on shore not seen as on private site.
2. **West Ham or Manhattan Stairs** - from the river stairs appear to be in poor condition, access on shore not seen, as on private site.
3. **North Woolwich Stairs** - upstream of Ferry - good condition and access.
4. **North Woolwich Stairs** - downstream of Ferry, below former Railway Pier - good condition and access.
5. **Old Barge House Drawdock** - good condition and access.

NB

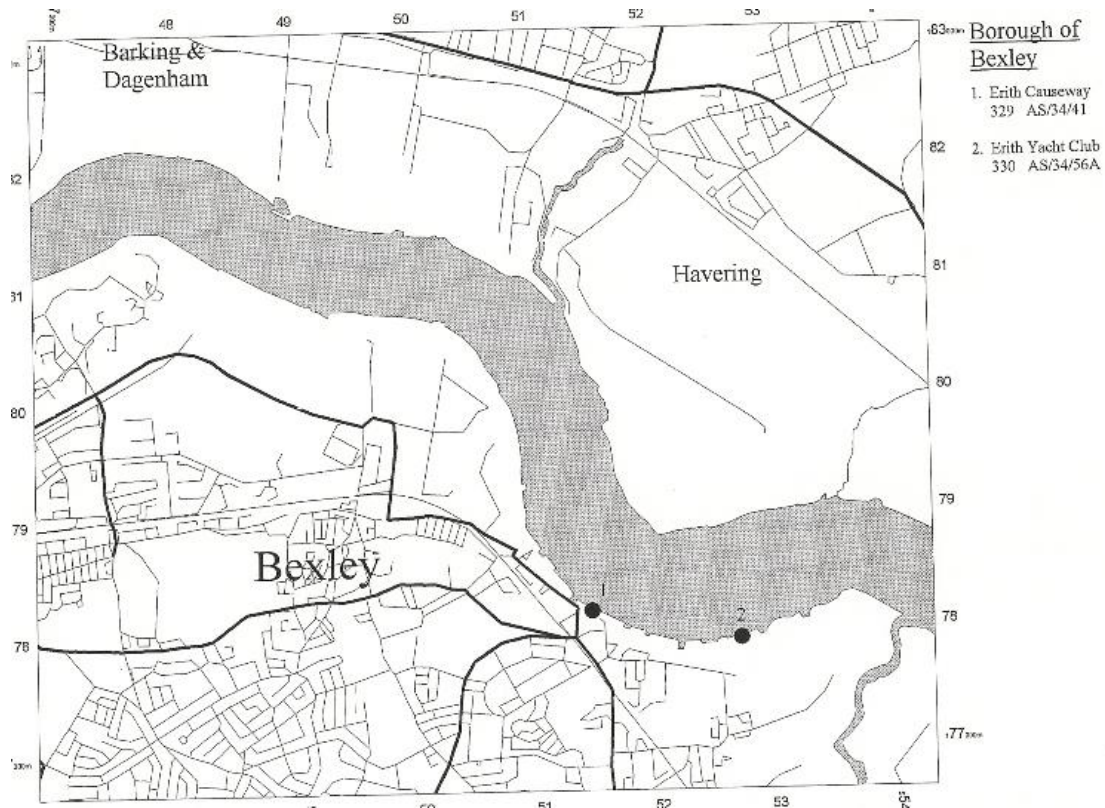
- a) There is another drawdock upstream of 5 – good condition with walkway but road access is barred by flood wall.
- b) Several sets of steps have been put over the flood wall in front of the Gallions Point development. Gates are locked but easily scalable with access to foreshore.

BARKING & DAGENHAM



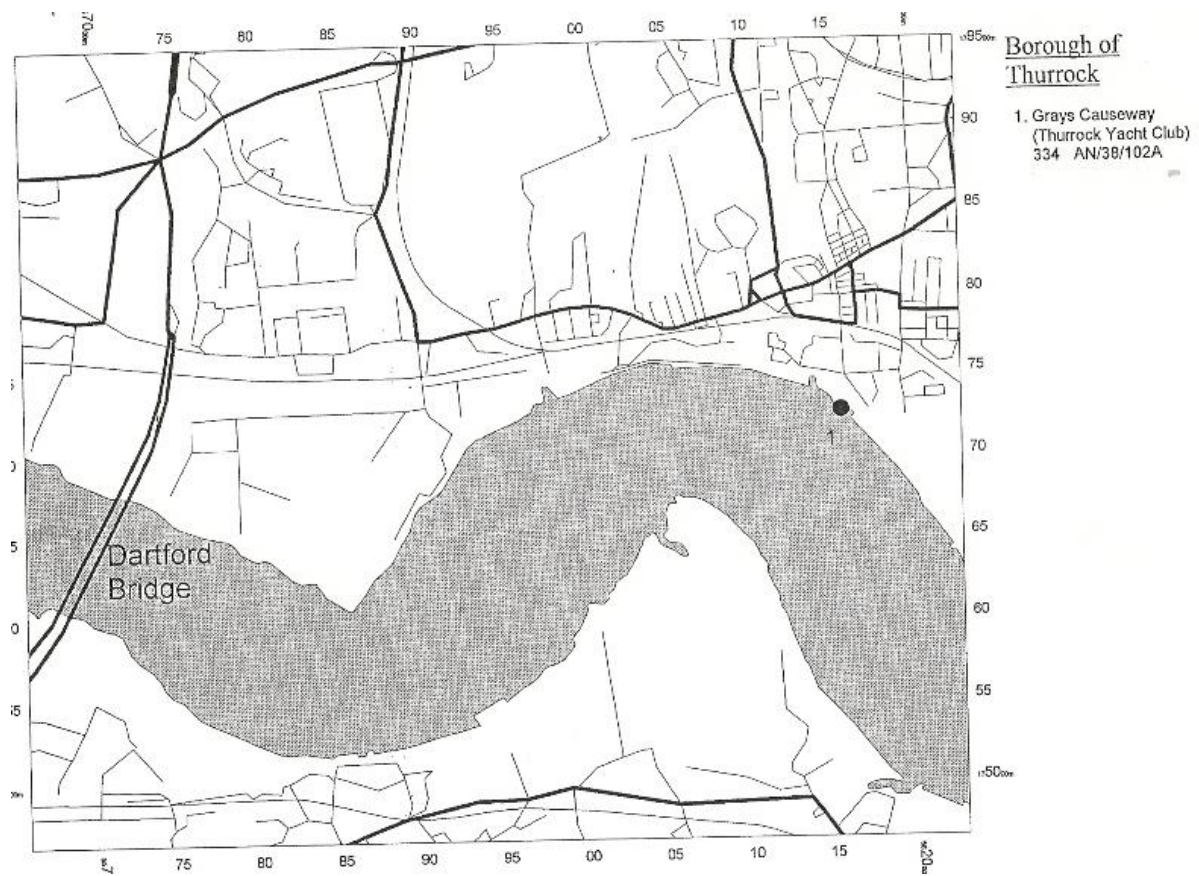
1. North side of Barking Creek – good condition and access.

BEXLEY



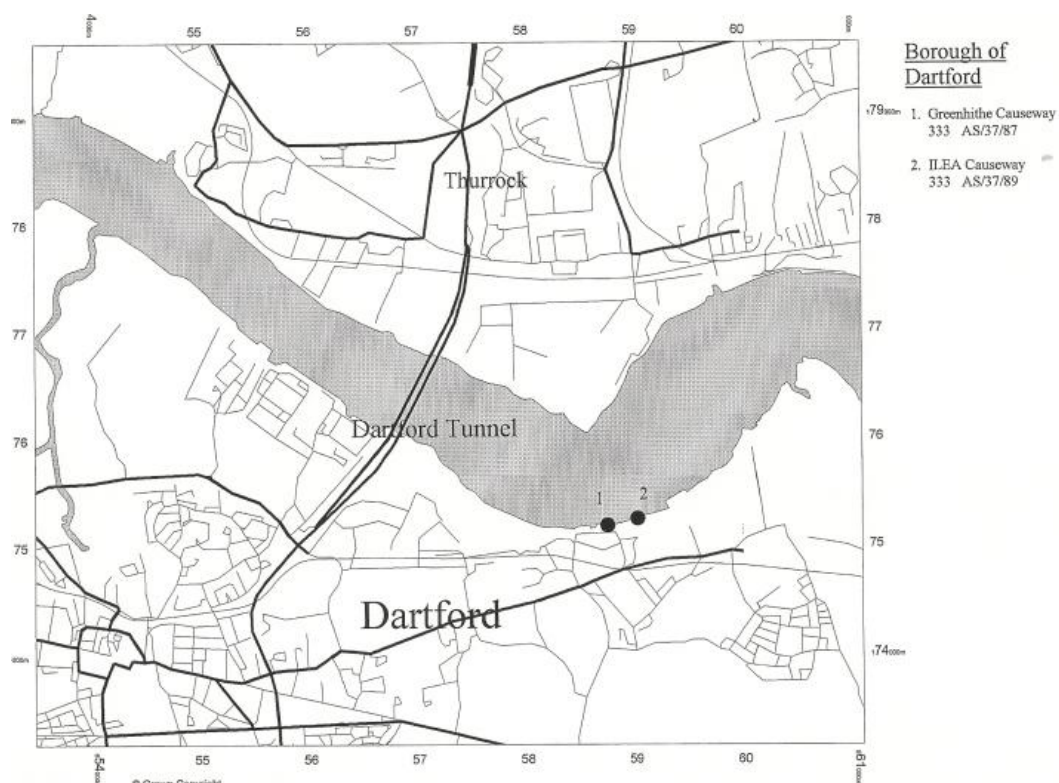
- 1. Erith Causeway – good condition and access.**
- 2. Erith Yacht Club – causeway- good condition and access.**

THURROCK



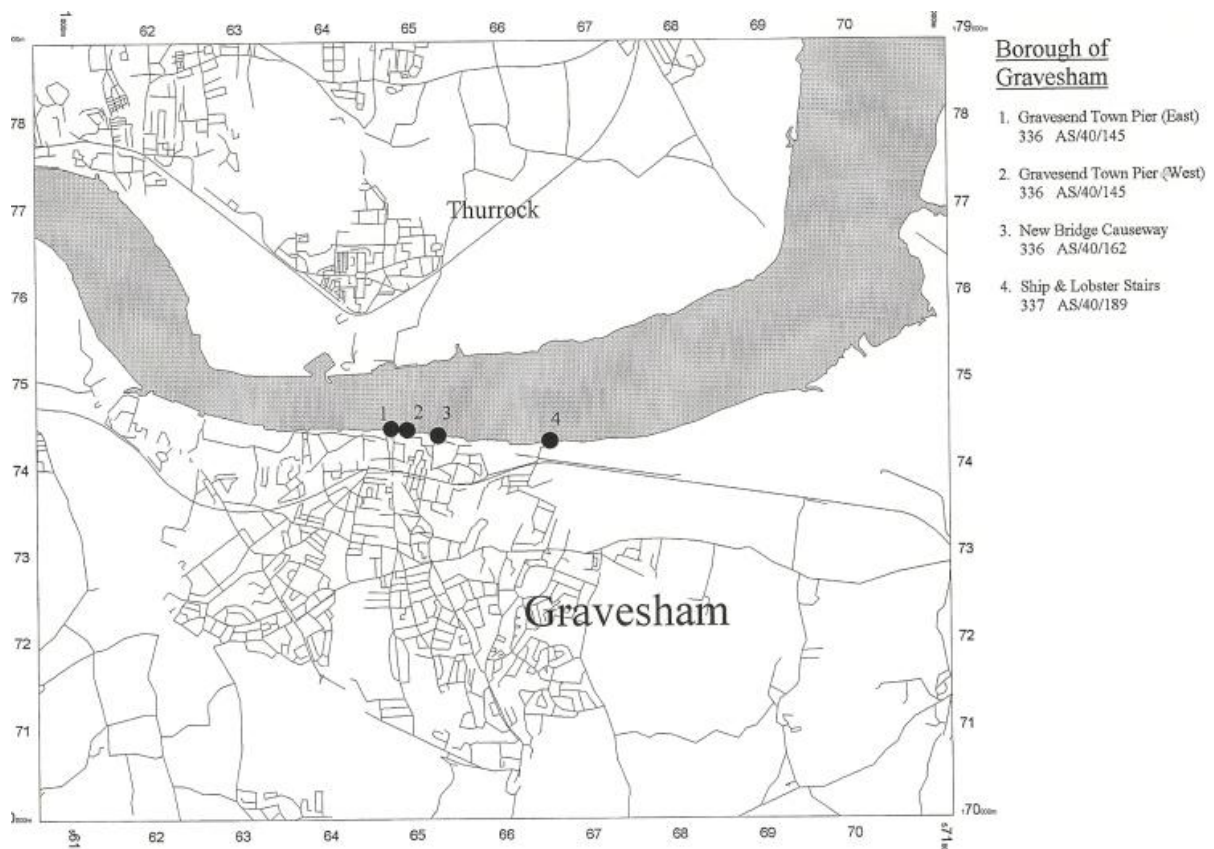
- 1. Grays Causeway (Thurrock Yacht Club) – good condition and access.**

DARTFORD



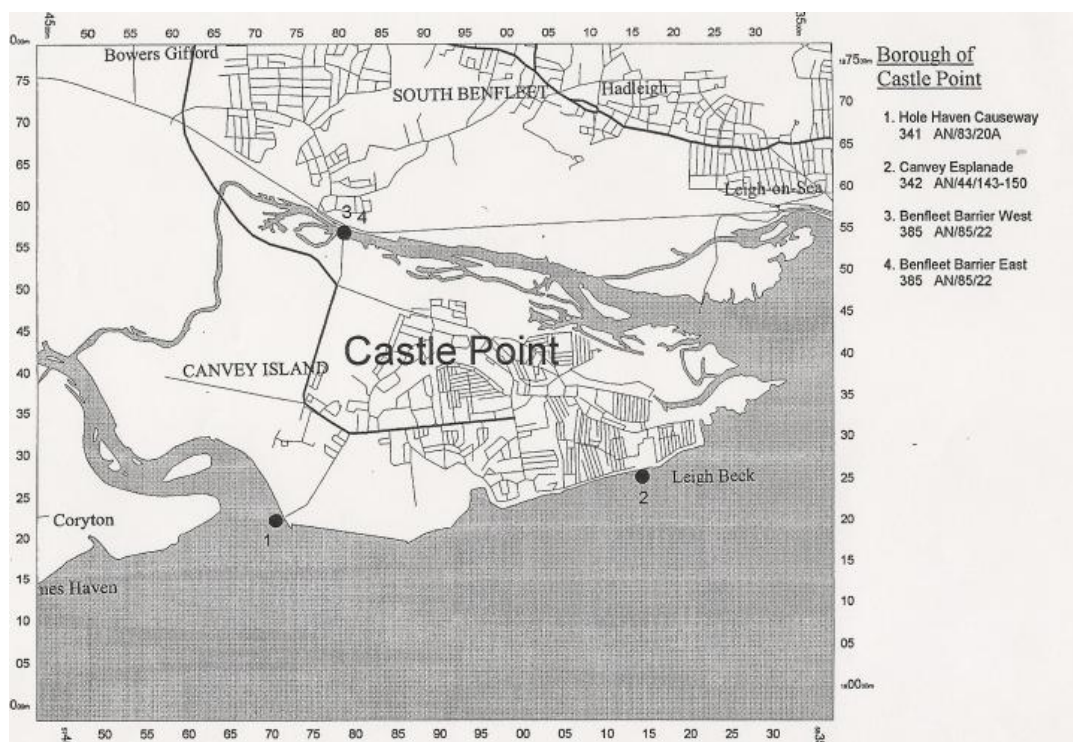
1. Greenhithe Causeway – good condition and access.
NB – Also stairs just upstream – good condition and access.
2. ILEA Causeway – no trace.

GRAVESHAM



1. **Gravesend Town Pier (East)** – stairs in poor condition but Pier is currently being restored.
2. **Gravesend Town Pier (West)** – as above.
3. **New Bridge Causeway** – good condition and access.
4. **Ship & Lobster Stairs** – no trace – steel ladder on wall opposite pub.

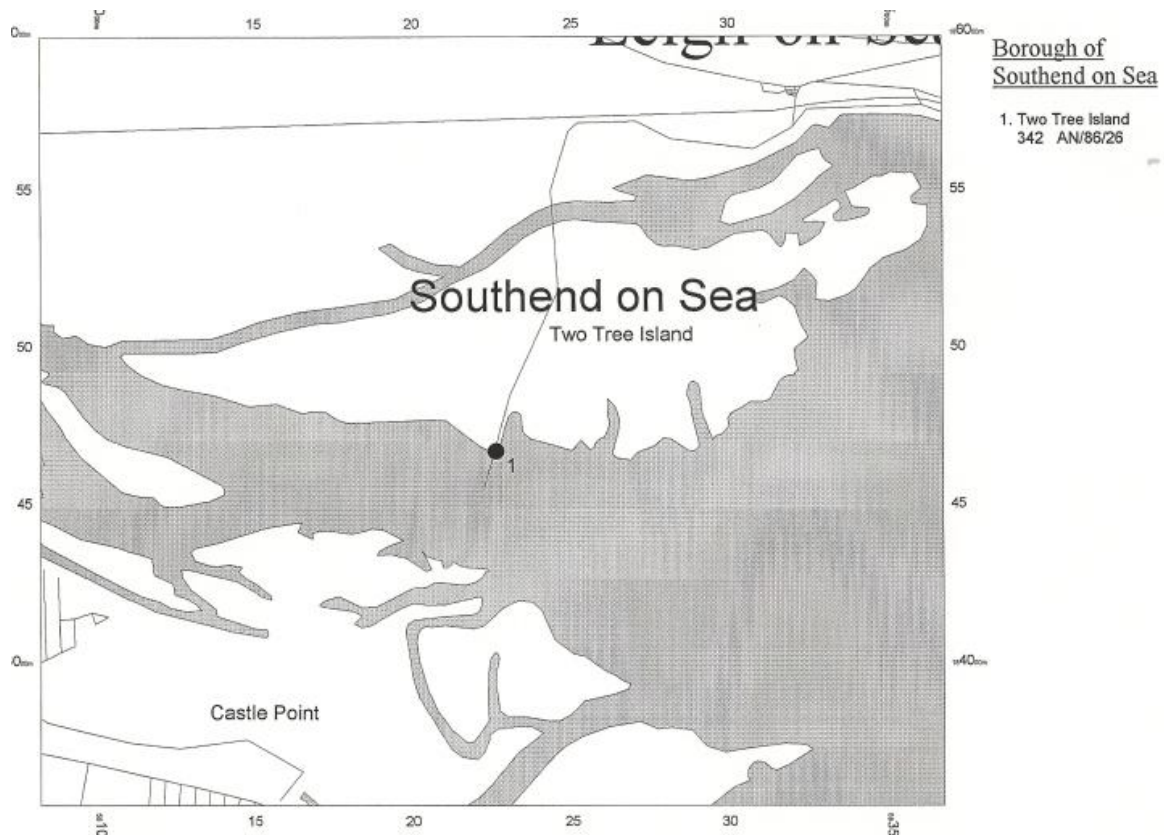
CASTLE POINT



CANVEY ISLAND

1. Hole Haven Causeway – good condition and access.
2. Canvey Esplanade – slipway in good condition, low gate locked – key with Chapman Sands Sailing Club.
3. Benfleet Barrier West – slipway in good condition – pedestrian access but vehicle access through boatyard gate.
4. Benfleet Barrier East – two slipways, one above and one below Barrier – both good condition and access.

SOUTHEND ON SEA



TWO TREE ISLAND

1. Causeway – good condition and access.