

The London Light Freight River Trial: Making the case for deliveries using the Thames

Project video: <https://youtu.be/GRr03Qn-gEQ>

[Cross River Partnership](#) (CRP), a non-profit and impartial partnership organisation, is excited to have launched the **London Light Freight River Trial; London's first daily, multi-supplier, river freight trial along the Thames**. This forms part of the Defra-funded [Clean Air Logistics for London](#) project.

CRP has been working with the Port of London Authority, Lyreco UK & Ireland, Speedy Services, Thames Clippers Logistics, Grid Smarter Cities and Pedal Me to deliver the trial, which officially began on Monday 27th of February. **The trial serves the next day delivery market and also incorporates return deliveries, highlighting how the river can enable fast, efficient and consistent deliveries in a more sustainable way.**

The trial is being delivered in two phases, both leaving from Dartford International Ferry Terminal and taking approximately 1 hour to reach Bankside Pier. **Phase 1**, which was completed on 10th March, called at Bankside pier only, whilst **Phase 2**, calls at both Trinity Buoy Wharf and Bankside pier.

For both phases, **Cargo Bikes and Electric vehicles are being used to deliver goods from the piers to their final destinations**. At Bankside Pier, this is being supported by the new dynamic loading bays which form part of the [Kerb Dock project](#) looking at the viabilities of unloading/loading activities near pier locations.

The trial is also the first river freight trial to incorporate return deliveries with returns being picked up at each pier location in addition to goods being unloaded. Return deliveries are then transported to Dartford International Ferry Terminal on the vessel the following day, helping to improve efficiency and sustainability.

Bringing goods into central London via the Thames is proven to emit less than half of the carbon of road transport, improving local air quality and congestion. [CRP's previous river freight trial](#) found that the using the river for freight resulted in a 78% saving in NOx and an 88% saving in CO² in comparison to traditional road-based delivery methods.

The trial also fits seamlessly into Lyreco UK & Irelands philosophy of positively effecting the communities and areas in which they serve. By taking part in the trial, it has taken one of their delivery vehicles off the road, to helping to contribute to reducing the London's air pollution and congestion.

CRP is unlocking potential and transforming space across the logistics sector in London, to deliver solutions that make London fairer, greener and safer. The London Light Freight River Trial supports CRP's vision to make London a better place to live, work and visit.

Sean Collins, CEO, Thames Clippers Logistics said *"It is becoming increasingly slow, difficult and expensive for businesses to move their products into central London. We have long believed in the untapped potential for the Thames to offer a fast and reliable route into the heart of the city, with the added benefit of removing commercial vehicles from the highly congested London roads. We have 24 years of experience in providing high-speed river transportation across London for commuters and visitors using the Thames, so we are excited and committed to delivering a rapid, sustainable logistics solution to meet the future needs of our Capital."*

Fiona Coull, Programme Manager, Cross River Partnership, said *"It has been brilliant to work with so many partners on the London Light Freight River Trial to get more freight into central London by river rather than by road. Incorporating return deliveries even further highlights how effective the river can be for just-in-time deliveries, as well as the opportunity it provides to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint and improve congestion and air quality."*

Andrew Bryers, Head of Sustainability, Lyreco UK & Ireland, said *"It's great that Lyreco are part of this trial in partnership with many other organisations supporting this project. Although Lyreco are moving to phasing in our electric fleet, which we have already done in London, this is only a steppingstone to reducing our emissions. We need to look at ways of getting vehicles off the roads, especially in city centres, which also leads to air pollution. Being part of this trial shows that Lyreco are leading the way in alternative distribution solutions to reduce our global impact and keeping our high delivery standards with customers."*

James Trimmer, Planning and Development Director at Port of London Authority, said *"With our newly acquired wharf at Dartford playing a pivotal role, this latest trial underlines our Thames Vision 2050 commitment to ensuring that the river plays a transformational role in making the Port of London a world-leading, Net Zero trading hub."*

Olivier Rousseau, CEO, Pedal Me, said *"We are delighted to have been engaged by Lyreco on the London Light Freight River Trial and hope that our work in both delivering a last-mile solution from Bankside Pier, and contributions to Pier Safe Working Practices lead to a greater utilisation of river freight."*

Aaron Powell, Fleet Director at Speedy said *"Around 4 months ago we contacted Thames Clipper Logistics with the idea of this trial, and I am extremely happy to see the idea come to fruition today. Speedy are delighted to be part of this fantastic trial, which is another industry first for Speedy. We are pleased to be able to take vehicles off the roads of Central London and begin to move our tools and plant into the City in a more sustainable way."*

Speedy were the first company in our sector to sign up to the globally recognised Science Based Targets (SBTi's) in the drive towards net-zero. Our low carbon fleet and logistics plan will play a key role in delivering on the targets we've set ourselves in becoming a net-zero business by 2040, ten years ahead of the Government's target of 2050."

Please see other CRP river and logistics related reports and guidance:

- [Light Freight: Design Solutions for Thames Freight Infrastructure](#)
- [Walking Freight Feasibility Study](#)
- [River Freight Monitoring: Butler's Wharf and Dartford Pier](#)
- [Getting Started with River Freight: A Guide for Businesses](#)
- [CRP's Connect 4 Series, Session 4 – Sustainable Cities: Reinventing the River](#)
- [River Freight Pilot Case Study: Summer 2022](#)
- [Rail Freight in London: Feasibility Study](#)
- [Towards Vision Zero](#)
- [The Lived Experience of our Streets: A People First Vision for London's Streets](#)

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Cross River Partnership

[Cross River Partnership](#) (CRP) is a partnership delivering environmental, economic and community-focused projects. We support public, private and voluntary organisations to address creatively challenges around Air Quality, Transport, Placemaking and Wellbeing.

Clean Air Logistics for London

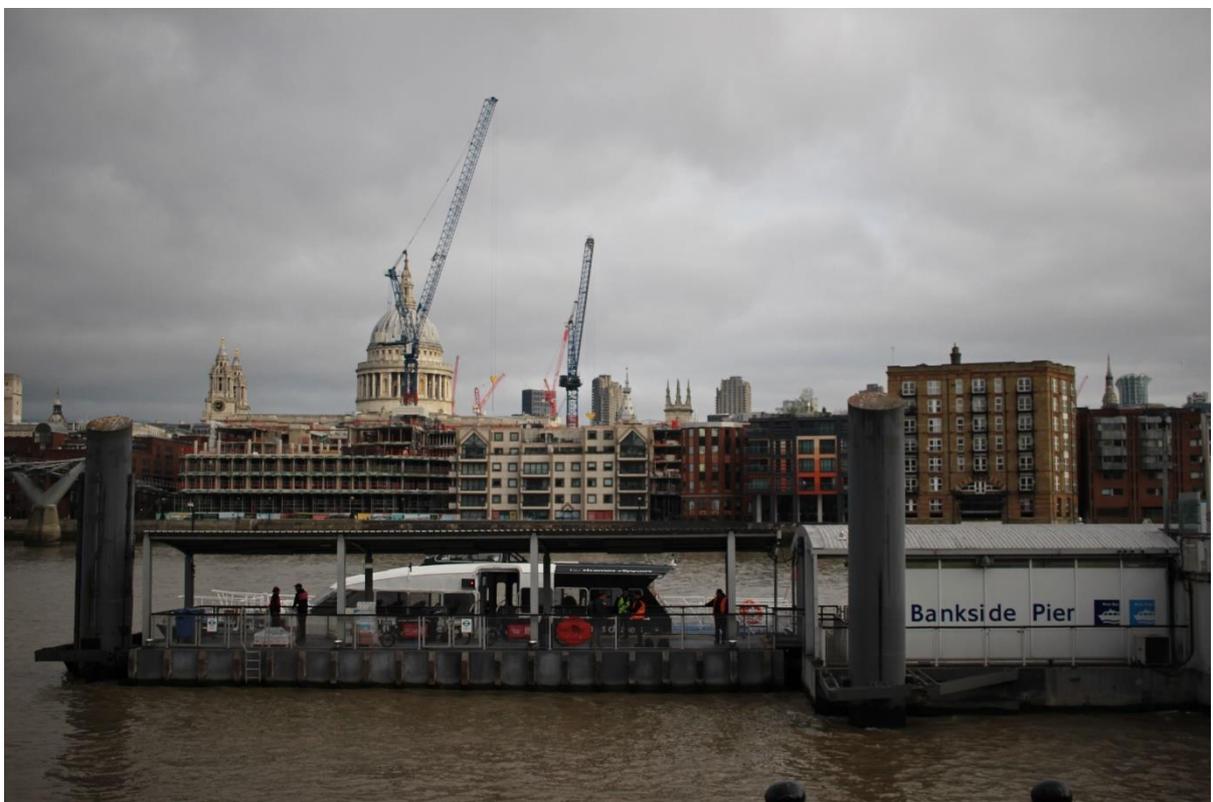
Clean Air Logistics for London (CALL) is a [Defra](#)-funded project led by [Westminster City Council](#) in collaboration with 10 project partners. The project aims to move more freight into London via river rather than road, supported by zero emission delivery methods in Central London.

Port of London Authority

The [Port of London Authority](#) oversees the tidal Thames, home to the UK's largest port and busiest inland waterway. Thames Vision 2050 envisions 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.

Thames Clippers Logistics

[Thames Clippers Logistics](#) specialises in high-speed light freight services on the river Thames. With 24 years' experience providing a fast and reliable service across London, we are committed to delivering a rapid, sustainable logistics solution to meet the future needs of our city. River freight in London is a proven viable solution to removing commercial vehicles from the city's roads.



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