

Maidenhead Rowing Club

Safety Plan and Safety Rules

Purpose

1. **Safety Plans** describe how members should act in particular circumstances in order to keep themselves and others safe.
2. **Safety Rules** specify the behaviours that the club requires of its members and any behaviours that it would find unacceptable.
3. **Club Emergency Response Plans** describe how the club will deal with emergencies and other incidents to minimise the harm that they would otherwise cause.

The Maidenhead Rowing Club Emergency Response Plan is a separate document

https://www.maidenheadrc.org.uk/images/SAFETY/Maidenhead_Rowing_Club_-_Emergency_Response_Plan_V6_17112020.pdf

This document covers elements of rowing safety specific to Maidenhead Rowing Club, and the Boutler's to Bray reach.

Please also refer to the British Rowing RowSafe online document, designed to help people participate in rowing without putting themselves and others at unacceptable risk.

It makes clear that everyone is expected to take care of their own safety and the safety of others.

<https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/>

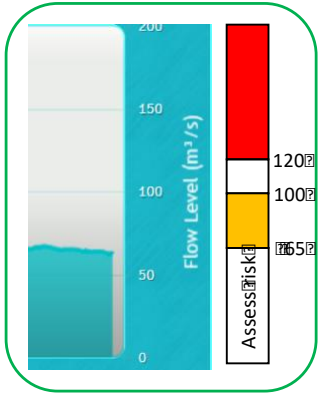
Document Control

| Version | Date | Detail of change |
|---------|---------------|--|
| V 1.0 | November 2020 | Original |
| V1.2 | January 2022 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Updating Links 2. Review and consolidation of launch information relating to Red/Amber status & Cold Water Rowing Rules 3. Addition of requirement for “no overtaking and no stopping” at Bray cut following Nov 2021 incident. 4. Reference to considering EA Thames River Conditions when undergoing risk assessment prior to boating. 5. Clarification of “solo land training” 6. Removal of Devizes Canoe Race as now forms a separate document/risk assessment. |
| V1.3 | November 2022 | 7. Added Lightening into risks. |
| V1.4 | December 2022 | 8. Removed “solo land training” Updated safety email address |
| V2.0 | December 2023 | Introduced Gold Standard rowing/coxing. Removed temperature restrictions. Updated night rowing |
| V2.1 | October 2024 | Update red/amber to no small boats |

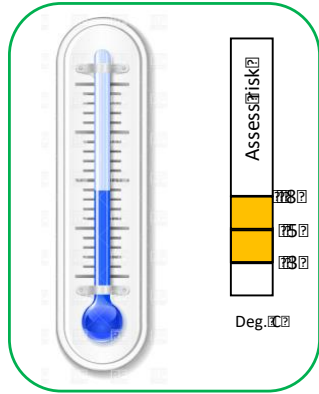
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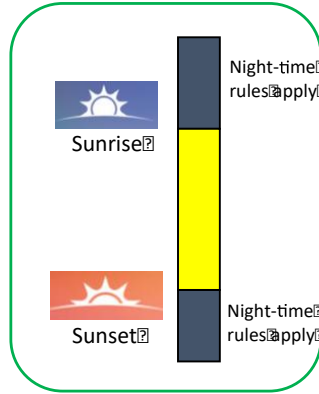
Maidenhead Rowing Club - Safe to Row dashboard



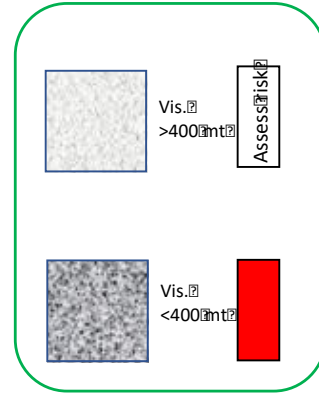
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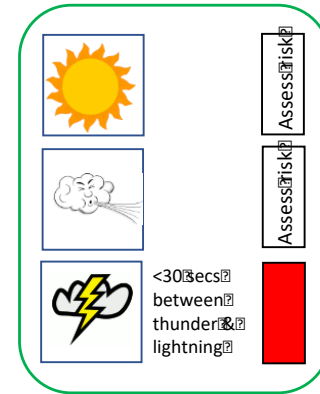
Water temperature



Visibility (Daylight)



Visibility (Fog/mist)



Weather

Everyone



- Take responsibility for your own safety and the safety of others affected by your activities
- Operate within your competence level
- Consider impacts of your health, injury, fitness, and wellbeing

Equipment



- Routinely check equipment before, and after, each use. Report any defects.
- Only use equipment that is in good condition.
- Check safety elements: bow balls; hatch covers; heel restraints; buoyancy

Abridged summary of the Safety Plan

These are the key safety issues that **all members** should be continually thinking about before and during any outing:

Ability

The river status board, night rowing and cold-water rowing rules detail who can row under what conditions and when additional supervision is required. These rules are set as a minimum level that members must obey. In addition, **members are required to do their own risk assessment before they go out and are expected to take further appropriate precautions as necessary.**

The risk assessment should consider the following:

1. The current and forecast weather and river conditions, including wind, rain, river flow speed, water temperature, fog, ice, lightning & EA Thames River Conditions.
2. The ability of the crew and cox to cope with the weather and river conditions in the boat type being used;
3. Other river traffic including other club, commercial and recreational boats that might be on the river and the ability of the crew to cope with this additional traffic.

Should the original risk assessment change during the outing, members should review their initial assessment and take the appropriate action.

Boat Condition

The crew is responsible for checking the condition of the boat before they go out. The check should include the following: hull integrity, steering, bow ball, heel restraints, hatch covers, rigger top and fixing nuts and slides all of which must be in place before going out.

Navigation & Avoiding Collisions

All boats must stay within the recognised main turning points on the river, that is upstream adjacent to the Boulders restaurant / bar and downstream halfway down the river channel approaching Bray lock where the blue danger sign is. Boats must not go outside these areas unless they are travelling through locks.

All members must be familiar with the main danger areas on the river including islands, channel posts, narrows, sharp corners, bridges, shallows and deep-water bank areas where it is difficult to get out.

New members who are not familiar with the river need to be accompanied by a coach or in a boat with experienced crew members until they are competent to navigate safely by themselves.

At all times boats must obey the navigation rules of the river, keeping to the right hand side when looking in the direction of travel. Boats must be continually aware of where they are on the river and if off station then take immediate steps, stopping, if necessary, to get back into the correct navigation lane.

In particular boats travelling upstream navigating Bray Corner should be aware that there is a high risk of going wide and colliding with traffic coming downstream. Special attention is required on this corner. Boats travelling downstream should not cut the Bray Corner. No overtaking or stopping at entrance/exit to Bray corner. (Reference Incident / Collision Nov 2021). Boats travelling upstream and downstream need to be aware of their position on the river when navigating the entire length of the reach; but it is especially important at Bray Corner, and other potentially dangerous areas of the river.

The main areas of serious accidents and damage over the last fifty years have been Bray Corner, breaking boats across the channel marker outside the club, hitting Maidenhead bridge buttresses and getting stuck on Bray weir on which an eight was stuck in flood conditions. The one fatality in the club was due to an undisclosed epileptic, sculling alone.

Culture and Expectations

The analysis of reported incidents has shown that most harmful incidents associated with rowing are the result of at-risk behaviour. A positive safety culture can do more to ensure everyone's safety than the technical issues that many tend to focus on.

The safety culture of any organisation is formed from a combination of individual and group: beliefs; values; attitudes; perceptions; competencies; and patterns of behaviour. These determine the commitment to, and the style of, a club's approach to safety.

Clubs with a positive safety culture have: Communications founded on mutual trust; shared perceptions of the importance of safety; and Confidence in the effectiveness of their safety precautions.

Everyone is expected to:

4. Take responsibility for their own safety both on and off the water.
5. Ensure that their actions both on and off the water do not put others at risk.
6. Be aware of, and abide by, the Club Safety Rules.
7. Follow the guidance in the Club Safety Plans.
8. Report all incidents both within the club and to British Rowing.

The role of the Club Rowing Safety Adviser

Note that Club Rowing Safety Advisers are not responsible for rowing safety. It is the responsibility of the individuals and their clubs to ensure that people are not harmed by the club's activities.

Club officers are expected to ensure a positive safety culture and safe practice within the club; they are expected to:

9. Appoint a Club Rowing Safety Adviser(s), to lead and advise on promoting safe practice.
10. Support the Club Rowing Safety Adviser and take their advice into account.
11. Ensure that safety is a regular agenda item at meetings.

Club Rowing Safety Advisers are expected to:

12. Be familiar with the guidance provided in RowSafe.
13. Provide advice to the club committee and club leadership on all matters relating to safety as appropriate.
14. Ensure the completion of the annual safety audit for the club.
15. Undertake Safety Reviews of the club's activities and facilities.
16. Undertake inspections and audits if requested to do so by the club and provide feedback to the club committee.
17. Promote and monitor Incident Reporting within the club and the reporting of all incidents to British Rowing.
18. Periodically (perhaps annually) analyse the club's reported incidents to identify any common issues and trends and initiate action to address any opportunities for improvement.
19. Lead or facilitate Incident Investigations as necessary.
20. Have completed the Advanced Risk Assessment Training.
21. Lead or facilitate the completion and review of the club's Risk Assessment.
22. Use the Risk Assessment to identify required safety rules.
23. Work with the club committee and the leadership of the club to develop and maintain the club Safety Plan, Safety Rules and Emergency Response Plan.
24. Be willing to be a member of the Club Committee.
25. Attend local and regional safety meetings.
26. Work with the Regional Rowing Safety Adviser
27. Work with other water and land users on safety as required.

Induction guidelines

Use same checklist for juniors and adults, but tailor presentation to audience, and invite parent attendance (and appropriate participation).

1. Welcome - a little intro about the sport, the club and safety on the water.

2. Hazard perception (ask them for the list) - best done on the club balcony.

- 28. Emphasise stream/flow rate, wind, cold/rough water, other boats, equipment.
- 29. Explain how we address hazards - yellow/red boards, key navigation rules, EA Thames river conditions maps, night-time and cold water rowing rules, weather, safety launches, equipment safety checks, emergency procedures, incident reporting, supervision of junior crews, awareness of cruisers and other vessels, every river user's duty of care.
- 30. Mandatory safety checks - swim test, capsize drill (what to do if you fall in), importance of washing hands after outings (water-borne disease awareness)
- 31. Reminder that members are required to do their own risk assessment before they go out and are expected to take further appropriate precautions as necessary.

3. Boathouse tour - walk round and show first aid boxes, emergency exits etc.

4. Understanding equipment (demo) - participants should be able to name all parts of the boat and oar, understand buoyancy, identify all types of boat, know how to put boat on the water, and back on the rack (tied down) by the end. Check for understanding. Reinforce this learning through L2R & after.

5. How to row - basic sculling technique points (demo), correct grip and posture, paddling, backing-down, squaring, feathering, stopping, turning etc.

6. What to wear, and not to wear, and why (demo) - safety implications, appropriate kit for different weather conditions, recommendations for beginners (low cost and functional) and club crews for racing, parental responsibility

7. Coxing - explain this important role, its responsibilities, equipment used, personal flotation devices etc.

8. Progression through club from L2R into racing, different squads etc, how the club is run (key officers - Captain, Juniors Captain, Club RSA and Welfare Officer), regattas and head races, key events in the racing calendar, racing at the club, training of all types - how much, how often?

9. What it costs - subscriptions (club and BR) and extras (regatta expenses, rowing kit and equipment)

10. Opportunities to volunteer and make new friends - pitch to parents!

River Status Board Settings

| Board Colour | Rowing Activity | Minimum Criteria |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Amber | No learn to row. All other boats must either be experienced competent regular coxless boats, have experienced coxes or be supervised by coaching launch. .. | Stream 65 to 99 m3/sec |
| Red/ Amber | All crews and all crew members and coxes must be Gold Standard. No small boats – only 4/8. Junior coaches have discretion to select crews with appropriate experience for J16/17/18. No small boats only 4/8. | Stream 100 to 119 m3/sec |
| | No rowing above the A4 road bridge permitted. | |
| | No Rowing | Stream > = 120 m3/sec. , Fog < 400m visibility (Clubhouse to Regatta Steps), lightning, storm, high winds or any other severe weather. Visible ice flows on the river. |

Even when rowing is permitted it is every member's responsibility to carry out their own risk assessment (considering any medical preconditions, particularly related to the heart) and decide whether it is safe to go out.

If in doubt, don't go out!

River Flow

Stream flow rates are as measured on the flow meter located at Bridge Gardens (immediately upstream of A4 road bridge Berks bank) which should be checked before outings when the river is flowing quickly.

Members can also check the Shoothill gaugemap site or the RiverApp, select United Kingdom, River Thames – Gauges – Maidenhead.

<https://www.gaugemap.co.uk/#!/Map/Summary/1132/1230>

However occasionally this site does not update – we need to be aware of that, checking the flow meter in Bridge Gardens is more accurate.

Example of Gauge Map:



Members must be aware that the flow can change rapidly during the day or even during an outing, as the EA open and close the sluice gates.

It is recommended to check the environmental agency site for river conditions indicating increasing or strong stream.

Example of EA River Conditions:

Henley to Teddington

| Reach | Current conditions |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Hambleden Lock to Hurley Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Hurley Lock to Temple Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Temple Lock to Marlow Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Marlow Lock to Cookham Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Cookham Lock to Boulters Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Boulters Lock to Bray Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Bray Lock to Boveney Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Boveney Lock to Romney Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Romney Lock to Old Windsor Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Old Windsor Lock to Bell Weir Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Bell Weir Lock to Penton Hook Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Penton Hook Lock to Chertsey Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |
| Chertsey Lock to Shepperton Lock | NO STREAM WARNINGS |

further notice.

Navigation markers

- When travelling upstream keep red obstruction marker buoys on your left and green buoys on your right.
- When travelling downstream, keep red buoys on your right and green buoys on your left.
- Single yellow marker buoys can be passed on either side.

In all cases, pass well clear of marker buoys, and take care. You should also be careful in the margins of the river and around bends, where river and weather conditions have resulted in shoals and tree debris collecting and some shallows forming.

Key

CAUTION STRONG STREAM
We advise users of all boats not to navigate because the strong flows make it difficult and dangerous.

CAUTION STREAM INCREASING
We advise users of all unpowered boats not to navigate and users of powered boats to find a safe mooring. This is because river flows are likely to strengthen and red boards could be displayed very soon and without warning.

CAUTION STREAM DECREASING
We advise users of all unpowered boats not to navigate and users of powered boats to navigate with caution.

<http://riverconditions.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

River Temperature

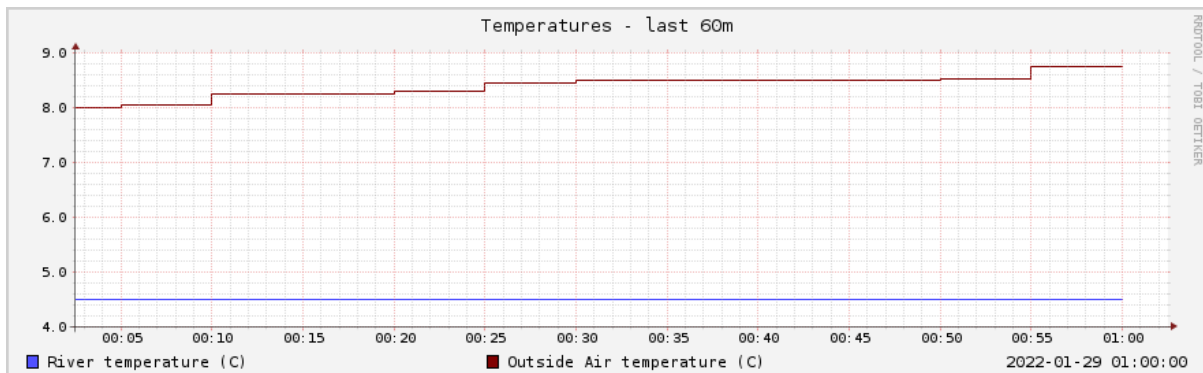
A useful website for temperature of the river is a link recorded at Shiplake, it is usually similar to the temperature at Maidenhead.

<https://dl1.findlays.net/show/temp/thames1>

Example of River Temp:

River temperature now: 4.5C

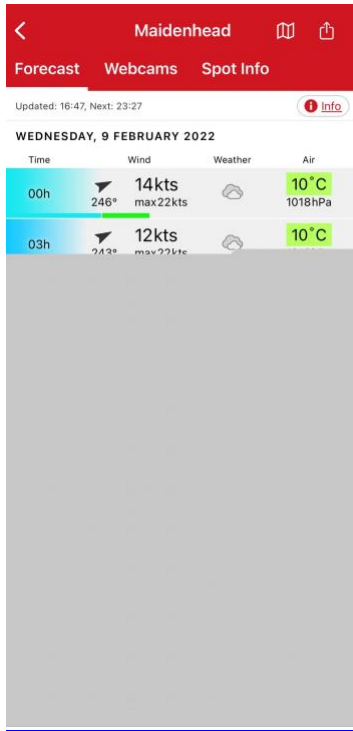
Air temperature now: 8.8C



Wind

In addition, there is a useful app for assessing the wind on our reach.

<https://www.windfinder.com/#3/49.5042/9.5421>



Lightning

In the event of Lightning rowers are particularly vulnerable as they are often in wide open spaces where they are the highest thing around.

Adopt the 30:30 rule on lighting – if the flash to bang is 30 seconds in length or less seek shelter as quickly as possible, water will transmit strikes from further away.

Stay in the place of shelter until 30min past the last clap of thunder.

Do not shelter beneath tall or isolated trees.

<http://www.rospa.com/leisure-safety/advice/lightning/>

River Status Board

The Captain, Safety Advisors and Senior Coaches have the authority to change the River Status Board outside the Boathouse.

It should be noted that the river status board is changed manually and requires the authorised person to change it. Club members should take responsibility to check the flow rate online before going afloat.

The criteria for the above board settings are the minimum requirements, if those authorized to change the boards feel that further restrictions are required to stay safe, they may change the board accordingly and/or request specific crews do not go out.

Any member found blatantly disregarding the river status board and going out when it is indicated that they shouldn't, will be referred to the committee who will consider disciplinary action where appropriate.

Even when rowing is permitted it is every member's responsibility to carry out their own risk assessment and decide whether it is safe to go out.

Coaches and crew members have the final decision as to whether to go out.

Cold Water Rowing

Immersion in cold water represents a particular risk. This may occur when a boat capsizes, is swamped, or a participant falls into the water from a launch or pontoon.

Sudden unexpected immersion presents four stages of drowning risk*:

| | | Predominant risk | Approx. timings |
|---------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Stage 1 | Initial immersion | Cold water shock | 0-3 minutes |
| Stage 2 | Short term immersion | Swim failure | 3-15 minutes |
| Stage 3 | Long term immersion | Hypothermia | 15-30+ minutes |
| Stage 4 | Post rescue | Collapse | Hours after rescue |

If you do fall into cold water, you will immediately gasp for breath and hyperventilate; this increases the possibility that you will breathe in water and may mean you cannot hold your breath. Just one large aspiration of water can severely affect your ability to breathe. Hyperventilation can also cause dizziness, confusion and panic. Your heart rate increases rapidly, and your blood pressure increases, potentially leading to cardiac arrest.

32. Stay with your boat if you capsize,
33. Try not to panic (the gasping for breath will start to lessen with time)
34. Get your body out of (and ideally off) the water as quickly as possible; know where you will get out of the river (see Reach map)
35. Seek medical attention in the treatment of moderate or severe hypothermia.

<https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Safety-Alert-Cold-Water-Kills-1.pdf>

1. **NO rowing is permitted** when there is visible ice flowing on the river,

Launch cover requirements (juniors)

Where the need for launch supervision is required, the following launch cover is required:

A launch, preferably a RS-CAT, driven by a RYA or club approved launch driver, **capable of undertaking a rescue**, will patrol the river.

Advice for Cold Water immersion treatment

Immersion in cold water represents a particular risk. This may occur when a boat capsizes, is swamped, or a participant falls into the water from a launch or pontoon.

This guidance note accompanies the [MRC Cold Water Rowing Rules](#) and is intended to support all members in the recognition and basic treatment/first aid approach to hypothermia.

Accidental hypothermia in adults

(Literature review current to: Oct 2016)

Mild hypothermia is characterised by fast breathing/feeling of breathlessness, fast pulse rate, initial hyperventilation, unsteadiness, slurred speech, impaired judgment, **shivering**, and "cold diuresis" – an urge to urinate.

Moderate hypothermia is characterised by reduction in pulse rate, shallow/slow breathing, central nervous system depression (confusion and sleepiness) and **loss of shivering**.

Passive external rewarming is the treatment of choice for **mild hypothermia**. After wet clothing is removed, the person is covered with blankets or other types of insulation. Room temperature should be maintained at approximately 28°C (82°F), if possible (e.g. using a warm fan). Tepid/warm shower is suitable, but **NOT hot**. Similarly, warm drinks are OK, but **NOT hot**.

Active external rewarming is the treatment for **moderate hypothermia**, or mild hypothermia that does not respond to passive external rewarming. It is also used as an adjunct in severe hypothermia (in which circumstance the casualty should be under direct medical care). It consists of some combination of warm blankets, radiant heat, or forced warm air applied directly to the skin. Rewarming of the trunk should be undertaken **BEFORE** the extremities to minimize the risk of further core temperature drop, low blood pressure and potentially dangerous blood metabolic change.

Anything more than mild hypothermia (as described above) would mandate a 999 call. If any casualty with mild hypothermia does not respond to passive external re-warming, dial 999.

Please also refer to British Rowing 'Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia'

<https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/201110-RowSafe2020.pdf> - page=95

Night Time & Low-Light Rowing Rules

Rowing or sculling in the dark or in poor visibility **is not encouraged**; those going out should consider whether their outing is **necessary or prudent**.

In addition to the published River Status Rules and normal navigation rules, those going out at night must adhere to the following Night Time Rowing Rules:

Night Time rules apply to any crews out after sunset, or before sunrise.

Restrictions:

1. Only **Gold Standard crews with Captain's permission** allowed to row/scull at night. They will only exceptionally be permitted after the Pair's Head (~mid October).
2. **Session risk assessments** should ensure that the river conditions are safe, that the river is not congested, and that crews of significantly different speeds are not on the water concurrently.
 1. **Small boats (1x, 2x/2-/2+)** subject to Captain/Squad Captain approval.
 2. **No Night Time** rowing/sculling permitted above A4 road-bridge.

Visibility & communications requirements:

3. At all times in poor visibility (e.g. after sunset and early morning) craft shall be fitted (using non-marking tape) with club-approved **non-flashing white lights** showing fore and aft and visible through 360 degrees (i.e. not on the riggers), as required by COLREG Rule 25 (COLREG Rule 25).
4. **Bow-person** (including single scullers) **MUST wear a bright (high-visibility) top** during low visibility outings. This is strongly advised for all crewmembers.
5. Each boat should carry a **mobile phone or 2-way radio** in a waterproof container, with club phone number and that of the launch driver/s.

Safety cover:

1. **During winter months (November to March inclusive)** A RS-CAT launch driven by a RYA or club approved launch driver, capable of undertaking a rescue and with second crewmember for the duration of the outing.
2. The launch driver needs to be approved for Night safety cover by the club launch trainers.
3. Blue coaching launches may be used in addition to (not instead of) the RS CAT launch.
4. All launches must have **navigation lights that work and are switched on**. Launch drivers are reminded to carry a mobile phone pre-loaded with emergency numbers, and a club-provided high-powered torch, in addition to standard launch equipment.

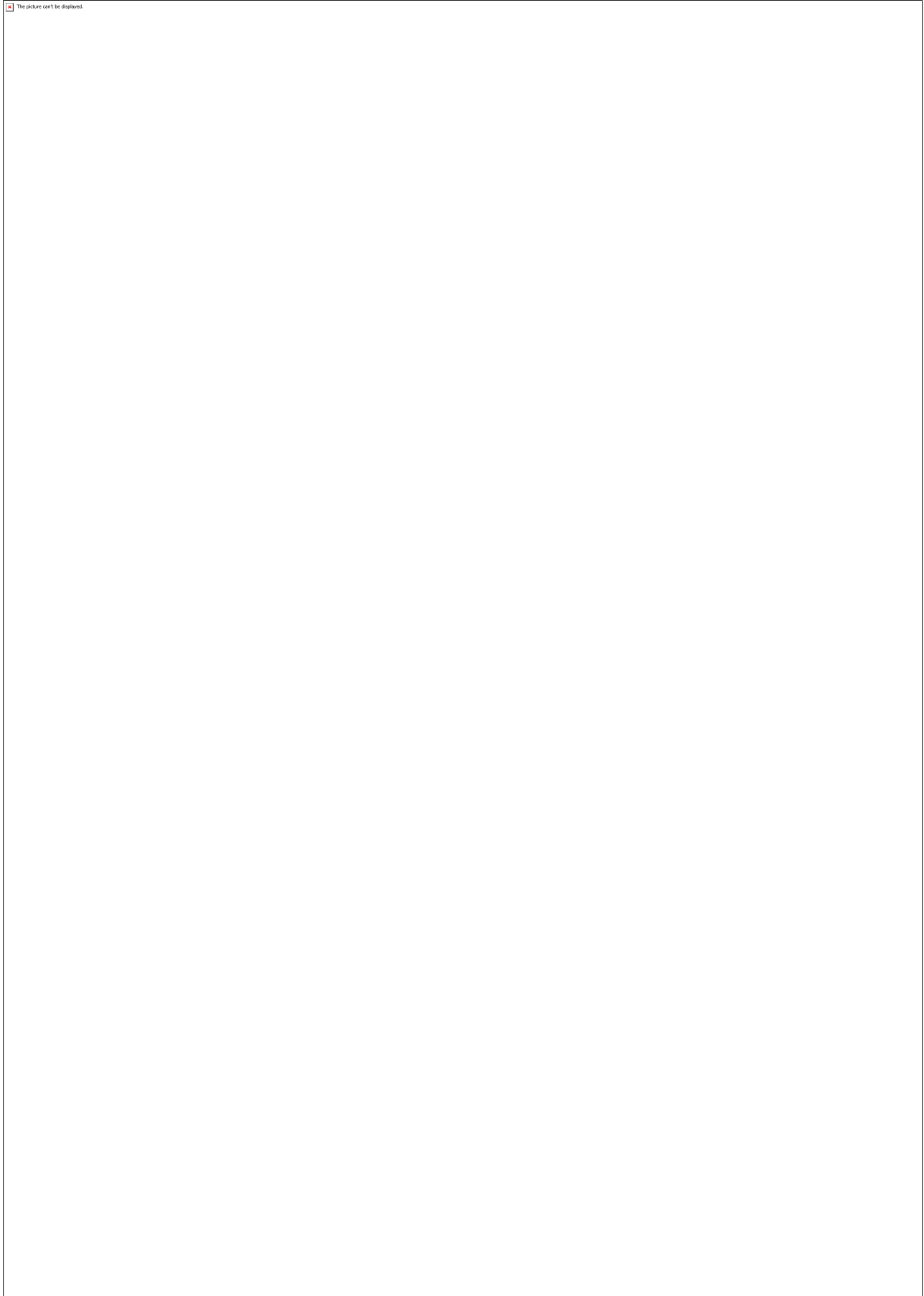
5. All launch drivers must carry a 2 way radio with another radio either in another launch/ with someone in the boathouse or with a crew on the river.
6. All crews need to advise the night safety cover (launch driver) of their outing plans and crew members. They will need to be flexible and fit in with other crews and the launch cover. Safety takes priority over outing plans.

Notwithstanding these rules, the Club Captain or Rowing Safety Advisor can suspend rowing/sculling based upon their risk assessment.

Any member/crew disregarding these rules, or going out when they are not permitted, will be referred to the committee who will consider banning them from rowing at the club.

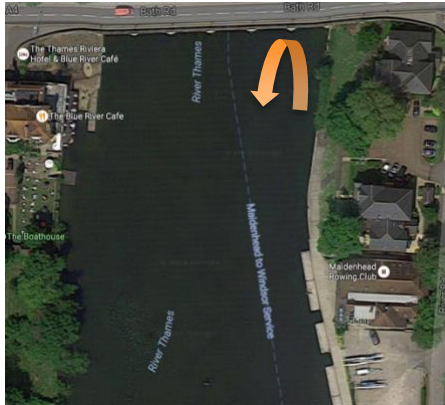
**Even when rowing is permitted, it is every member's responsibility to carry out their own risk assessment and decide whether it is safe to go out.
If in doubt, don't go out!**

Navigation map of Boulter's to Bray reach



Approved Turning Points

Circulation on the reach at Maidenhead involves **keeping to the right hand bank and spinning anticlockwise** against the Buckinghamshire bank (the clubhouse side of the river).



1. Immediately Downstream of the A4 road bridge

Crews leaving the club and proceeding downstream should spin just before the A4 Bridge. Approach the second pillar of the bridge (Club side); line the nose of the boat to this pillar, check for vessels upstream of the bridge, then turn. The stream should assist you to turn quickly and end them up on the correct side of the river, but with enough room to be out of the way if a boat was to come through the bridge from upstream.

Do not block this congested part of the river; if boats are awaiting a coaching launch, please move to

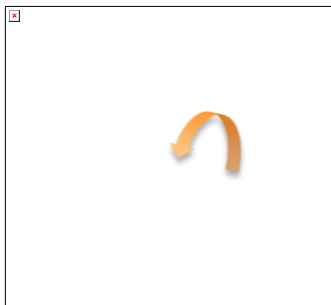
the rest point downstream of the Sounding Arch (or upstream of the A4 road bridge if heading to Boulters).



2. Opposite of Headpile Eyot (Bray)

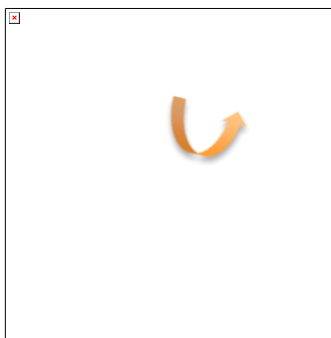
Unless proceeding through Bray lock, crews must spin opposite Headpile Eyot (just downstream of the Waterside Inn) and well before the weir! When the river is green crews should turn at the blue sign warning of the weir (opposite the small once-was-white bridge on the Bucks bank). In fast stream

conditions crews should turn at the start of the Eyot. Always spin and face upstream before drinks, adjustments etc.



3. Boulters Lock

Crews using the full length of the reach should spin just in front of Boulters Restaurant/bar before the Danger sign and on the Bucks side of the river, leaving the channel clear for boats approaching and leaving the lock. Please remember that the club's Safety Plan restricts rowing above Maidenhead Bridge to experienced crews when river conditions are hazardous.



4. Upstream of the Sounding Arch

This secondary turning point is only to be used by downstream crews returning to the clubhouse from Boulters. Move into the embayment on Guard's Club Island and check for vessels in both directions before turning. Be aware that as this area is quite narrow the stream can be faster here than at the other turning points.

It is a judgement call when heading upstream whether to spin here or at the A4 depending upon levels of congestion in the narrow area opposite the club.

Never turn upstream of an obstacle such as the channel post, or another boat!

The above are the recommended turning points - however club members are able to turn wherever it is safe to do so – be aware of obstacles, wind, flow and on coming boats.

Incident reporting

All incidents should be reported using the British Rowing online reporting system (<https://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org/>)

6. It is important to report incidents as:
7. We can all learn from others where situations have led to an incident and hopefully not put ourselves in similar situations
8. Clubs can use their reports to identify areas of safety needing attention in their location
9. Regional Rowing Safety Advisers are able to offer advice and help clubs develop their safe practice
10. Statistics gathered are important to counter knee jerk reactions to situations. For example 'all rowers should wear lifejackets like canoeists and yachtsmen!'
11. Only where essential will the reports form the basis of evidence for the Club officers or the Regional Council (not the respective safety advisers) to take action if deemed appropriate. There are obvious cases of antisocial behaviour/swearing etc that might require action as well as less obvious cases where reckless actions put lives at risk would fit into this category.

The CRSA maintains a log of club incidents, which is kept confidential amongst Safety Committee and Club Committee.

“Safety Alert” issued by BR are circulated to Members where appropriate. In addition Safety learnings from incidents are shared with Members via email or Fit Club

Land training – Cardio and Conditioning suites

12. Use of facilities and equipment at your own risk.
13. Don't exercise if you're feeling unwell.
14. Don't use the equipment unless you have been trained or are supervised by a qualified coach.
15. Juniors always need coach supervision.
16. Follow the RowSafe rules (land training) - see www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/
17. Only use personal headphones/ear buds - no one wants to listen to your choice of tracks.
18. No food or drink (except water)
19. Keep the room clean and tidy - replace all weights after use.
20. Wipe down machines, bars and benches both before and after use.
21. Proper fitness attire – no muddy shoes.

22. Warm up before starting training and stretch thoroughly when the exercise is complete.

23. When heavy lifting in the weights room, a spotter or second person should be present.
24. Always use good lifting technique.
25. Load and unload bars evenly – use bar collars.
26. Don't drop weights - control the lifts at all times, use spotters when using heavy weights.

27. Report problems with equipment to the Boat Manager at repairs@maidenhead.org.uk
28. Report any incidents to the Safety Advisers at safety@maidenheadrc.org.uk

First Aid

There are two main first aid kits housed in orange plastic cases –

Boathouse: one located on wall brackets against the back wall of the ground floor of the boathouse, above the workbench near to the fire exit door.

Kitchen: The other is located in the kitchen on the first floor, on the shelf above the wash hand basin.

Six other small first aid kits are stored in the launch safety bags located on the ground floor of the boat house, next to the singles racks, in the first bay against the wall of the beer cellar.

The Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located on the wall inside the front entrance door above fire alarm panel.

A list of Club First Aiders is maintained and posted on the club noticeboard.

Launches

Club launches are the first level of response to undertake on-water rescue

The first response options are the three catamarans RS Cat 1,2 & 3 with their rescue ladders and they must be resourced with both an RYA/Club qualified driver to helm the launch and also a crew member to effect the rescue.

The blue coaching launches have very limited manoeuvrability and capacity and should only be used as a very last option.

Launch drivers shall check safety kit bag contents, and PFD condition prior to each outing. Each launch requires a paddle, safety bag, fuel tank, and anchor bucket.

A list of club launch drivers is maintained and found on the launch page of the MRC website.

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

Safety aids, such as PFDs, throw lines and emergency blankets, can save lives. It is essential that they are readily available and maintained in good condition, and that everyone knows how to use them correctly.

Posters of how to wear the PFD correctly is found above the PFD racks

Members must wear a PFD when coxing, in a launch or when required by the club or a coach. Coxes in bow-loader boats must wear a manual inflation PFD.

PFD's must not be worn under any other garment.

PFDs must be checked before use and ensure that it is weight-appropriate and fitted correctly.

Any safety equipment that is damaged, missing or deployed within the club should be reported to the safety advisors or to safety@maidenheadrc.org.uk

PFDs are checked for leaks, damage and gas cylinder integrity at regular intervals and service annually with results recorded, any deficiencies rectified, and unserviceable equipment removed from use.

Adaptive Rowing Safety Plan and Rules

Adaptive rowing is for people with disabilities who participate in the sport of rowing. Anyone can get involved in rowing, regardless of physical disability, sensory or learning impairment. Adaptive Rowing means that equipment and training can be modified (adapted) to meet the rowers' individual needs and abilities as closely as possible.

Adaptive rowers will abide by the Maidenhead Rowing Club Safety Plan and Rules, with adaptations, recognizing there may be additional risk factors to mitigate.

Refer to British Rowing Adaptive rowing guides

Adaptive rowers will:

29. Provide the club with relevant information about their disability that may affect their own safety and the safety of others and any known "warning signs".
30. Complete British Rowing's 'Pre-Activity Health Questionnaire' for Adaptive Rowing and make this information available to the club on a need to know basis.
31. Operate within their capabilities. Seek additional medical advice when appropriate.
32. Provide the club with emergency contact details and information about actions to be taken in event of a medical emergency.
33. Ensure that any medicines that are needed are carried, and that the people who are in a position to do so know how to find them and administer them.
34. Check that equipment is safe for use and report any defects. Demonstrate safe release of straps before each outing.

Adaptive Coaches and/or Rowing Safety Advisor will:

35. Conduct session risk assessment (to include accessing, launching and recovering boats), jointly with adaptive rowers.
36. Provide advice on any issues associated that may affect safety, particularly when rowing, or refer them to their medical professional as appropriate.
37. Ensure that coaches and others supporting adaptive rowers know what to do in an emergency and have access to emergency contact details for adaptive rowers.
38. Be familiar with procedures for managing incidents. Be aware that some adaptive rowers will have compromised sitting balance and the risk of capsizing is heightened.
39. Check equipment is appropriate and safe when adaptations are made.
40. Check correct fitting of pontoon floats (when used) before each outing.
41. Maintain effective communication with rowers with a sensory impairment (visual, hearing) who may require additional support using radio and/or signage as appropriate.
42. Ensure Event (e.g. regatta) Risk Assessments include risks for participating

adaptive rowers

Safety Rules adaptations:

43. No adaptive rowing when water temperature is lower than 8°C, unless specifically risk assessed for individual athlete.
44. Risk assess flow and meteorological conditions.
45. Launch to cover all outings, unless risk assessment determines adaptive rower can safely self-rescue and is accompanied in a 2/3/4/8 by experienced and competent rowers.
46. Launches to stay within 50m of adaptive boats.
47. Session risk assessment to determine if more than one launch is required (e.g. for multiple boats), and/or additional crewmembers required.

Capsize and Recovery procedure:

48. Release the rower.
49. Get the head above water, if release is prevented (e.g. by straps) until extraction is effected (carry a safety knife to cut straps if necessary).
50. Recover rower to launch, or bank, as appropriate.
51. Remove pontoon floats before up-righting boat.

Even when rowing is permitted, it is every member's responsibility to carry out their own risk assessment and decide whether it is safe to go out.
If in doubt, don't go out!

Leptospirosis/Weil's Disease

Weil's Disease, also known as Leptospirosis, is rare in Britain with around 40 - 50 cases reported each year, however the disease does kill one or two people every year. It is carried by water organisms, so those taking part in water sports can be at risk.

In the early stages Leptospirosis can be mistaken for flu but can develop into jaundice, kidney and liver failure.

While the risk of contracting the disease from recreational water is very small, British Rowing is taking a precautionary approach and reiterating its advice that the serious nature of the disease means that rowers must be aware of the dangers and should take simple, routine precautions to reduce the risk of infection.

The most likely place for Leptospirosis to be found is in stagnant water, water that is adjacent to farmland and any water where rodents are common.

What are the symptoms?

Typically, symptoms develop between 7 – 14 days after infection, although in rare cases the incubation can be as short as 2 – 3 days or as long as 30 days. Some cases may be asymptomatic, some may present with a flu-like illness with severe headache, chills, muscle aches and vomiting.

Many of the symptoms of Leptospirosis are the same as for other diseases and diagnosis is based on clinical suspicion followed by a blood test. There is a specialist reference laboratory for the disease that doctors can consult.

Ways to avoid contracting Weil's Disease

52. Wash or shower after rowing
53. Cover minor cuts and scratches with waterproof plasters before getting in your boat
54. Clean open wounds, such as blisters or calf abrasions with an anti-bacterial substance
55. Wear trainers or boots to avoid cutting your feet before getting in your boat

What to do if you think you have symptoms?

56. Early diagnosis and treatment is important
57. If you develop flu-like symptoms after rowing go to your GP and say that you are a rower
58. Leptospirosis is treated with antibiotics which should be administered early in the course of the disease

Further guidance

59. NHS Direct

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Leptospirosis/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

60. Section 5.3 of Row Safe: a guide to good practice in rowing.

61. <http://www.britishrowing.org/news/2010/october/26/leptospirosisweils-disease>

Risk Assessments

Hazard identification and risk assessment are the basis for planning to maintain and improve safety. These provide events with the ability to understand the ways in which harm can be caused and to minimise both the probability of that harm occurring and the severity of harm should it occur. It puts events in control of their risks. The Risk Assessment only adds value when the actions that it identifies as being needed are completed.

Risk Assessments will be completed for club events, including: Regattas; Junior Regattas; Scratch Regattas; Explore Regattas; Adaptive events; Corporate teambuilding events; Time trials; Training camps.

Maidenhead Risk Assessments are available on the club website.

The British Rowing Risk Assessment template will be used, which is based on the following risk management principles:

1. Identify hazard (e.g. rough water), which may cause a hazardous event (e.g. capsized or swamping), which may result in harm (e.g. rower suffers from cold shock).
2. Identify barriers to reduce probability of the hazard causing a hazardous event (e.g. use more sheltered course), and the actions required to maintain the barriers (e.g. Chief Umpire and Regatta Safety Adviser make decision).
3. Identify controls to reduce the severity of harm (e.g. provide safety launches equipped with thermal blankets) and the actions to maintain controls (e.g. maintain launches and first aid packs).

The level of risk is calculated by multiplying the **probability** of the incident occurring by the **severity** of harm, using the British Rowing matrix.

| | | People | Assets | Probability | | | | |
|----------|---|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| | | | | A | B | C | D | E |
| | | | | Highly improbable (has not been known to happen in rowing) | Improbable (has been known to happen in rowing) | Possible (could happen to about 1% of the participants every 10 events) | Probable (could happen to about 1% of the participants per event) | Highly probable (could happen to about 10% of the participants per event) |
| Severity | 1 | Slight injury or health effect (Requires little or no treatment; no need to take time off rowing or training) | Minor damage to equipment (<£100) | Low | Low | Low | Low | Moderate |
| | 2 | Minor injury or health effect (Requires First Aid or rest; potentially a few days off rowing or training) | Damage repair costs low (£500) | Low | Low | Low | Moderate | Substantial |
| | 3 | Moderate injury or health effect (Requires treatment beyond simple First Aid; potentially a week or so off rowing or training) | High damage repair costs (>£1000) | Low | Low | Moderate | Substantial | Intolerable |
| | 4 | Major injury or health effect (Requires hospital treatment for more than one day; potentially a few weeks off rowing or training) | Very high damage repair costs (loss of boat, 3rd party damage) | Low | Moderate | Substantial | Intolerable | Intolerable |
| | 5 | Fatality or Life Threatening Injury or Health Effect (could end a rowing career or cause hospitalisation for a few months) | Major damage & major costs (loss of several boats, high 3rd party damage) | Moderate | Substantial | Intolerable | Intolerable | Intolerable |
| | | Low | An acceptable level of risk. No additional barriers/controls are required. Start or continue the activity but check that the current barriers/controls remain effective. | | | | | |
| | | Moderate | An acceptable level of risk that should be reviewed. Implement additional barriers/controls to reduce the risk if the opportunity arises. Start or continue the activity with care. | | | | | |
| | | Substantial | An unacceptable level of risk. Improve the barriers/controls and allocate resources to reduce the risk. Do not start or continue the activity until the risk has been reduced. | | | | | |
| | | Intolerable | An unacceptable level of risk. Improve the barriers/controls and allocate resources to reduce the risk. Do not start or continue the activity until the risk has been reduced. Prohibit the activity if it is not possible to reduce the risk. | | | | | |

Regatta Safety

Each regatta shall have a Safety Plan, Rules and Emergency Response plan. This will be based on the event risk assessment, which is reviewed and updated prior to each event.

A desktop talk-through the risks, barriers and controls will be conducted prior to each event.

Safety on Dorney Lake – guidance for coached and coach-less Crews

1. No stream to worry about on the lake, but the major hazard is the wind: the lake follows a NW to SE direction from Start to Finish, and there is excellent weather information available on the Met Office or BBC Weather apps. The wind usually blows across the lake from SW or NE. It can blow inexperienced crews on to the bank, or out of their lanes. Crews can also get into difficulties in the corners at the Start. Steersmen and coxes must be alert and know where the wind is coming from.
 2. Congestion is the other major hazard with so many crews afloat for head races and at weekends when the river is on red boards. You must be familiar with the circulation pattern (map posted on the side of the boathouse), use the correct pontoons (outbound pontoons closest to the Return Lake, inbound pontoons closest to the Car Park), and show consideration to other crews.
 3. Other crews may not be as considerate and can get in the way. They will not always alert you to their presence. There is a limit to how many crews a coach can look out for, and a parent on a bike can provide a coach with an extra pair of eyes. The smaller the number of crews to supervise the better on a crowded lake, and it is wise to plan training to keep them close together. Keeping your crews (and others) safe always comes first - before coaching.
1. Dorney Lake is fed from a spring and is 2-3o C colder than the river. In the event of capsize, crews must get out of this water fast – it is safest to swim to the nearest bank using the boat as a float, and walk out of the lake,.
 2. Leave your boat and run back to the boathouse may be the quickest way to get back in the warm. There are hot showers in the changing rooms (up the stairs by reception), and crews should always bring a towel and change of kit because there are many ways that they can get soaked to the skin. Scullers in particular must know what to do in the event of a capsize before they boat.
 3. Coaches are expected to carry a throw-bag. You should learn how to use one, and practice regularly. Even if you think that you are pretty useless, there may be someone to help you who can do better.
 4. There is a big yellow rescue boat, but it can take some time to get to a capsize so it is best to find quicker ways to get out of cold water. Do not wait for the rescue boat. It may at least give you a lift back to the boathouse.
 5. You are training away from home so re-familiarise yourself regularly with all the relevant RowSafe's guidance on Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters, Weather &

Environment, and Immersion in Cold Water:

6. In case of emergencies, make sure that you always have the following numbers saved in your mobile phone:

Dorney Lake reception 01753 832756 Dorney Lake rescue boat 07961 994442 Wexham Hospital A&E 01753 634018

Appendix: Questions to consider when going on the water: ,

1. How competent am I/my crew in the following and do I have approval to use the equipment I am planning to use:

1. Rowing/sculling in a crew boat
2. Sculling in a single
3. Steering a coxless crew boat
4. Coxing a crew boat
5. Coaching
6. Launch driving
7. Safety boat driving

2. Do I know what the flow and where to check it and do I know what the different restrictions are between green, amber (>65 m/s), red/amber (>100ms but < = 120 ms) and red (> = 120 ms).

3. Do I know what the current water temperature is.
<https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Safety-Alert-Cold-Water-Kills-1.pdf>

4. Have I referred to and considered EA Thames River Conditions status re increasing or strong stream <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-current-river-conditions#current-river-conditions-updated-11-january-2024>

5. Do I know what the definition of 'night time rowing' ? Do I understand the night time rowing rules?

6. Do I understand the restrictions around visibility?

7. Do I understand the restrictions around severe weather and electrical storms. Do I know what our definition on an electrical storm is?

8. Have I completed my own risk assessment taking into account all of the conditions?

9. If in doubt don't go out.

