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## INTRODUCTION

All new members of Twickenham Rowing Club sign to confirm that they have read and understood this document on completion of the TwRC membership application. Due to the nature of rowing there are a number of risks inherent in the sport. Whilst TwRC wants all members to enjoy the sport, it is very important not only for your own safety, but also those of other rowers and river users, that everyone is aware of and complies with, basic safety policies and protocols. TwRC has an appointed Club Rowing Safety Adviser who should be consulted if you have any questions about this document, any health or safety issue.

## ROWSAFE GUIDELINES

The Club fully supports and implements the Guidelines of British Rowing referred to as 'ROWSAFE' and has arrangements in place to ensure that it remains compliant with them. It is a condition of membership that all members will do likewise to the extent that the guidelines apply to them as individuals. The Committee would like to remind members that such compliance by individuals, is also a condition of membership of British Rowing. Club members should periodically access the ROWSAFE Guidelines, which are available from British Rowing their website <http://www.britishrowing.org/row-safe>. All rowers should read this document and ensure that they comply with it.

## SAFETY NOTICE BOARD & PHONE NUMBERS

The TwRC safety notice board is located in the cross alley from the Galley to the Ergo Room of the boathouse. Important safety information and announcements will be posted here as well as club policy updates. All members should review this board periodically. There is an emergency phone in the lobby along with a list of useful phone numbers. Emergency numbers are free to use.

## CLUB RULES

All members, rowers, scullers, coxswains, steers persons and coaches, as appropriate, using club or private boats from the boathouse must:

1. Comply with the TwRC rules and Club Values.
2. Familiarise themselves with the British Rowing '**RowSafe**' Guidelines and '**Tideway Code**'.
3. Take personal responsibility for the tidiness and hygiene of the Clubhouse, boating area and landing stage. This may require clearance of mud and protection from ice prior to an outing.
4. Be familiar with this Club Boating Safety Plan which includes some local navigation rules.



5. Be able to swim 50m in light clothing, tread water for 2 minutes and swim underwater for 5m, or they must wear a personal flotation device whilst on the water.
6. Be in good health<sup>1</sup>
7. Wear suitable clothing for the weather conditions.
8. Prior to the outing, check the Safety Board (Middle boat house door) for new hazards and water temperature. Where possible, notify someone you are going out, indicate your outing on the white-board and remember to remove the entry upon arrival back at the club.
9. Wear a life jacket at all times when coxing or using launches. Where the coxswain position is in the bow of a quad or four, do not wear an automatic water activated lifejacket.
10. Scullers and those in the bow seat should endeavour to wear high visibility clothing or at least, light colour clothing, if visibility is reduced, or if the outing is not in daylight.
11. All steerspersons and coxes boating, without coaching launch support, are advised to carry a mobile phone in a waterproof pouch, which can be provided by the club.
12. Ensure that a pre-boating risk assessment is undertaken. Coaches and crews boating in unsafe conditions may be cautioned by the club.
13. Ensure launches are properly equipped.
14. Check that boats are in good order, especially steering gear (see 'BOATS' below).
15. Boats returning to the club must always return from the downriver end of Eel Pie Island and proceed upstream to the landing area via the North Channel. Exceptions are permitted for safety reasons.
16. When leaving the landing area, look out for boats travelling downstream (to starboard of the channel) and do not underestimate the speed and resultant vector.
17. When lifting the boat out of the water it is significantly safer to lift it above heads then to shoulders. Avoid 'Hand-bagging' the boats backwards up the hard steps.
18. Crews should respect other crews who want to disembark from the water and not leave the boats on trestles on the hard unattended for prolonged periods.
19. Where an incident has occurred, Gather as much information as possible (Please see the on-line Incident Report for details) and notify the CRSA in order that a report can be initiated online at:  
<http://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org>.
20. Be courteous to other rowers, rivers users, fishermen, and members of the public. There is NO excuse for foul or abusive behaviour or language.
21. Watch out for canoeists and scullers, who are in vulnerable boats and avoid washing them down.

<sup>1</sup> Anyone who is in any doubt as their fitness to participate in rowing or sculling should consult their GP before taking part in any strenuous activity.



In addition, coaches and launch drivers must:

1. Educate and train crews in understanding and following the club 'Boating Safety Plan'. It is best to reiterate pertinent points prior to outings.
2. Familiarise themselves with the Guidelines on the safe use of coaching and safety launches contained in the RowSafe Guidelines.

***Members should challenge any other member who is seen to be non-compliant with this Plan, or with any specific RowSafe guidelines.***

## EQUIPMENT

### BOATS

The boatman will undertake periodic inspections of the Club's boats and other equipment and will arrange for necessary repair work to be carried out promptly. Notification of any unsafe, damaged or missing equipment should be made directly to the Boatman, the Captain(s) as soon as possible.

***Do not remove equipment from one boat to remedy a deficiency or damage in another.***

Before using any boat whether owned by the club, or privately, ensure that:

- A bow-ball is fitted securely and has no cracks or splits,
- Heel restraints are in good condition and not loose, or frayed, to allow the heels to come out of the shoe to enable safe exit from the boat in the event of capsizing,
- Hatch covers and bungs are correctly and securely fitted,
- Rudder cables are in good condition and move freely,
- Rigger nuts and top nuts are secure,
- Stretchers straight & secure,
- Rudders, skegs & fins are straight.

### FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

First Aid boxes are kept in the Club House, at the Club Entrance, in the Galley and in the boat house and the Tank Room. These are checked regularly and replenished as necessary. However, please note that they are provided for use in emergencies, and therefore should not be used casually, e.g. to replace blister plasters. Any use of first aid should be recorded as an incident, as any injury constitutes a reportable incident.



### LIFE JACKETS AND SAFETY KITS

Life Jackets are available in the Boat House. All coxswains, launch drivers and passengers are required to wear a lifejacket when on the water. Rowers that cannot meet the swimming competency standard set by British Rowing are also required to wear a lifejacket when in a boat. In 'front loader' boats only, manually inflated life jackets must be worn to allow easy and unrestricted escape from the boat. Before using a lifejacket make a visual check that the CO2 cylinder is undamaged and tight, the automatic inflation cartridge has not been fired, or the manual firing mechanism used. Ensure the manual activation cord is visible and can be easily used in an emergency. Safety kits are provided for launches in accordance with the British Rowing Water Safety Guidance.

### SAFETY ON THE WATER

#### BOATING POLICY

All TwRC members using club boats must comply with this boating policy. We also advise all users of private boats to comply with this policy. In exceptional circumstances the captain(s) or their delegate may give permission for crews to boat when this policy advises against it. All outings must be logged on the outing board. Check the River Status on-line and the status board at the entrance and the external central pillar of the Boathouse doors. The following steps describe how to use the boating policy table below:

1. Consider the following before boating: the stream conditions, light conditions, visibility and water temperature.
2. See the table below to see if the policy allows you to go afloat.



Before going out - check the 'Hogsmill' Gauge at <a href="https://www.gaugemap.co.uk/#!/Map/Summary/7535/2828">https://www.gaugemap.co.uk/#!/Map/Summary/7535/2828</a> .				
Stream Status	Flow Gauge Speed m <sup>3</sup> /s	Boat Type	Conditions	Downstream Restriction
Red	200-220	8's + Experienced Cox	Captains'/Rowing Manager permission, and a coaching boat. Excludes Novices and Juniors.	Turn at Glovers
Orange	180-200	Coxed Fours & Quads	Experienced steers person + Captains' /Rowing Manager permission.	Turn at Glovers
Orange	140-180	4 blade rule	experienced J17 & J18, with Captains' /Rowing Manager permission	Turn at Glovers
Yellow	100-140	4 blade rule + Singles	Singles with Captains' /Rowing Manager permission	Turn at Glovers
White	<100	All	Standard Conditions	None
Effect of Tides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the tide is ebbing and is still higher than half lock level (i.e. still falling within the period until approximately 1.5 hours after HW) the rates should be applied as 60m<sup>3</sup>/s faster than the Hogsmill Gauge reading.</li> <li>When the tide is flooding and the complete outing can be conducted within the two hours before HW, then a concession of 100m<sup>3</sup>/s taken from the above listed speeds, can be allowed.</li> </ul>				

Visibility	>180m	100m-180m	<100m
Notes:	If you cannot see the Western end of Eel Pie Island from the footbridge, the visibility is less than 180m. If you cannot see the club pontoon from the footbridge the visibility is less than 100m.		

### Survival Times in Cold Water Without Protective Clothing

Water Temperature		Loss of Dexterity with no protective clothing	Exhaustion or Unconsciousness	Expected Time of Survival
Degrees C	Degrees F			
0.3	32.5	Under 2 min.	Under 15 min.	Under 15 to 45 min.
0.3 to 4.5	32.5 - 40	Under 3 min.	15 to 30 min.	30 to 90 min.
4.5 to 10	40 - 50	Under 5 min.	30 to 60 min.	1 to 3 hrs.
10 to 15.5	50 - 60	10 to 15 min.	1 to 2 hrs.	1 to 6 hrs.
15.5 to 21	60 - 70	30 to 40 min.	2 to 7 hrs.	2 to 40 hrs.
21 to 26.5	70 - 80	1 to 2 hrs.	2 to 12 hrs.	3 hrs. to indefinite
Over 26.5	Over 80	2 to 12 hrs.	Indefinite	Indefinite



Important points to note are:

- When boating from the club, the boats moored immediately downstream present a significant hazard.
- The flow through Richmond Bridge and downstream past Coronation Island presents significantly more risk, since the river narrows at this part.
- Twickenham Road Bridge is marked indicating the main channel is through the middle arch and therefore many vessels navigating downstream give no room for rowing boats to pass when coming upstream between this arch and the first Island.
- The wind strength and direction should be taken into account particularly by novice and junior crews.
- If you're going out alone, make sure someone knows.
- If you are given permission to boat on red or orange status boards, it is advised that a launch accompanies the crew.
- Juniors must always be accompanied and remain visible from a safety launch. The Junior safety checklist items should be checked prior to juniors boating.
- Anyone going afloat in breach of the boating policy, without permission from the captain, or such delegate, may be subject to caution or even disciplinary action by the Club. In addition, crews should be aware that they may also incur personal liability in respect of any incident in which they are involved on the water.
- Richmond Lock: (Please see the extract from the Richmond Lock website below)

When the sluice gates are **down** and the weir **closed**, the following signals are in operation:

- By Day - 3 red discs in the form of an inverted triangle shown at each arch.
- By Night - An inverted triangle of 3 red lights at each arch.

In addition an illuminated sign on the upper end of lock entrance reads '**Weirs are closed please use Lock**'. The lock **must** be used in these circumstances.

An exclusion zone is established from the extremities of the Lock islands in a line across the river to the Middlesex shore. Mariners should not enter this Exclusion Zone whilst the weirs are in the lowered position or when they are being operated. Only when the weir gates are fully raised and the Closed Arch Signs have been removed is it permitted to navigate into the navigation exclusion zone and through Richmond Footbridge No. 2 or No. 3 arches.

Only those vessels manoeuvring on or to the Lock island berths, vessels engaged in emergency operations or smaller vessels wishing to utilise the boat rollers in No. 1 arch are exempt from this requirement.



For approximately 2 hours either side of high water the weir sluice gates are raised allowing free passage. At these times the following signal is displayed by day and night:

- 2 amber lights shown at each arch - weir open, free navigation.

## NIGHT BOATING

Rowing in the dark greatly increases risk. Scullers, coxwains & Steers-persons must be assessed for competency and approved by the club captain(s) before undertaking outings after dark. Avoid sculling alone after dark – it is best to be accompanied by another boat or a coaching launch. Where possible, carry a telephone in a water proof pouch. Let someone know that you are boating and your expected time of return. If there is any chance crews will be on the water in the hours of darkness or in poor visibility, check BEFORE GOING AFLOAT that boats and accompanying launches are fitted with the correct lights. Test lights using the cycle reflector on the brow from a reasonable distance off such as the centre pillar of the boathouse. If there is no reflection then check batteries or obtain a brighter light. Be aware that rechargeable lights often give no warning or dimming before losing all power. All rowing boats must carry a white flashing light on the bow and a fixed white light on the stern of the boat. Boats are to be visible through 360 degrees. DO NOT use red or green lights under any circumstances'. There are no exceptions to this – it is a Rowsafe requirement. Individuals failing to comply may be subject to disciplinary action.

## EXPERIENCE

Before going afloat all crews and coxes must check the boating policy against the current conditions and ensure they have sufficient experience to cope with the prevailing conditions of weather and stream. No beginners crews should go afloat unaccompanied AT ANY TIME. They should ALWAYS be accompanied by a coach, preferably in a launch. Novice or inexperienced coxes should not be put in charge of inexperienced crews, except under the direct supervision of a coach. No crew should be coxed by a novice or inexperienced coxswain at night.

## WEATHER AND TEMPERATURE

No crew will be allowed to boat if they do not have sufficient experience to cope with the current weather conditions. Bear in mind also, that the weather can change rapidly – be prepared to abandon an outing at any time if the conditions (e.g. due to poor visibility or lightning) deteriorate once you are on the water. All rowers and scullers are reminded that, especially during the winter months, the risk of hypothermia from wearing insufficient clothing or, with inexperienced crews, from not moving vigorously enough to generate sufficient body heat is a REAL DANGER. As a precaution, ensure that you wear several thin layers of appropriate clothing,



preferably with a waterproof garment on top. Coxes, especially, should be well protected, including with hats and gloves (preferably waterproof) but should not wear Wellington boots in a boat. All rowers and scullers are reminded that, especially during the summer months, or when away on training camp, there is a risk of sunburn, sunstroke and even heat exhaustion. Athletes should keep well hydrated and protected from the sun by using sun cream, wearing suitable clothing and a cap.

## STREAM CONDITIONS

All crews should check the boating policy against the current weather conditions before deciding if it is safe to boat.

***Remember: If in doubt – do not go out!***

Where river conditions change rapidly – be prepared to abandon an outing at any time if the conditions deteriorate once you are on the water.

## CAPSIZING PROCEDURE

If you swamp or capsize HOLD ON TO YOUR BOAT, which has enough buoyancy to support you. Climb onto the hull and paddle it, or if close to the bank tow it towards the bank whilst swimming.

Once at the bank right your boat, empty the water and, if you can, get back in.

If no help is available, or if the boat is damaged, beach it securely and seek help.

Only if there is real danger of your boat going over, or under a weir and taking you with it, should you abandon the boat and swim to the bank.

## INCIDENT REPORTING

Any incidents or 'near incidents' that you are involved in either on or off the water must be reported to a club committee member. When in a crew boat the incident should be reported by the steersperson or coxswain. Designated members are to report incidents to British Rowing, where there is an on-line Incident Reporting Tool. The website can be accessed from the British Rowing home page (<http://www.britishrowing.org>). This enables the Safety Advisor to monitor all incidents and to identify and discuss actions required at committee meetings to minimise the risk of them occurring again. Examples of incident types you need to report:

- Capsizing or falling out of a boat through; inexperience, contact with another rowing boat, contact with an object, equipment or boat failure.
- Collision through contact with static object, moving object, navigation issue, poor visibility or lighting.
- Swamping through large wash, collision with another rowing boat, collision with an object,



- Health related issues, such as strains due to manual handling, respiratory, hypothermia, heat stress, water-borne disease.
- Equipment failure: boat buoyancy, riggers, gates, seats/feet, steering equipment, bow ball, blades/sculls, safety/coaching/rescue launch, PFD's, throw lines, racking.
- Land training due to; weight training, circuit training, running, cycling, indoor rowing, slips/trips.
- Behaviour: vandalism/violence.
- Trailer towing: failure of equipment, driving issue, incorrect or improper stowage, falling from a height.
- Accidents or near misses at Rowing Camp.

Examples of 'near incidents' you need to report:

- Sudden need for evasive action to be taken to avoid a collision,
- A boat is flouting navigation rules,
- A boat not displaying the required lights at night.
- A crew has boated in high risk conditions.
- A dangerous situation existed



## RIVER NAVIGATION

### NAVIGATION MAP

This navigation map is also available on the Boat House Door. Please study it to remind yourself of the navigation guidelines and accident black spots before boating.



### LEAVING THE LANDING AREA

When carrying either the boat or blades to the landing area check the surface for slip hazards such as mud or ice. It is best to boat with the bows pointing into the direction of flow. Check for other river traffic before leaving the landing area. If intending to go downstream (towards Richmond Lock), initially go upstream until beyond the upstream end of Eel Pie Island so that traffic coming upstream can be seen prior to crossing to the centre and turning to pass down the Surrey side (the opposite side to the boathouse) of the Island. Boats travelling upstream from the club towards Teddington Lock can pass either side of Eel Pie Island, However when going downstream, TwRC boats should pass the Island on the Surrey side of the river. At Richmond Bridge, going downstream the Surrey side or middle arches should be used. Boats travelling downstream can edge towards the centre of the river to keep in the faster stream but care must be taken at all times. Before turning at any time, always check for boats coming in the opposite direction and wait until they are clear before the manoeuvre.

### DANGER AREAS

Particular danger areas on the TwRC stretch are:

- Immediately upon leaving the boating area (due to the hazard of moored boats immediately downstream),
- Swan Island where proximity of moored boats may significantly delay access to a place of rectification after a capsized.
- Richmond Bridge Arches when the river status is at 'Yellow' or 'Red' boards (Therefore turn at the Canoe Club).
- Going upstream from the middle arch of Twickenham Road Bridge when reaching the Island before 'Corporation' Island, when downstream traffic is manoeuvring to go through the middle of the middle arch.
- The Moored boats at Hammerton's Ferry, may significantly delay access to safety to rectify capsized.
- Cutting across the river at bends, seeking the shortest route, significantly raises the risk of collision.

### RETURNING TO THE LANDING AREA

All boats should approach the landing area with caution and inexperienced crews should stem the direction of water. Therefore when the tide is flooding, the circulation pattern is to come upriver to the Barmy Arms and then turn to head downstream before coming into the landing area. If you have any doubts or questions about any issue arising from the Plan and procedures outlined, please ask the Captain, Rowing Manager, Vice-Captain or the Club Rowing Safety Adviser.



## LAND TRAINING

### RUNNING

Running in the dark on roads in the area (either as part of organised fitness training in the winter months or as an individual) can be potentially dangerous.

- Wear reflective or light coloured clothing.
- Run facing oncoming traffic.
- Run in company.
- Watch for slippery conditions due to ice or wet leaves.
- Select a route which has street lighting and pavements/walkways and is clear of traffic.
- Do not go into Richmond or Bushy Park at night during the Deer rutting season or when the deer are calving.

### WEIGHT TRAINING

- Do not train alone.
- Do not lift weights unsupervised.
- Before commencing a set of lifts ensure the collars are secured tightly on the bar.
- Be mindful at all times and give adequate space to other people training around you.
- Put weights away after use. If you are the last to use the weights room, put all weights away. Stack mats neatly after wiping these down. Cleaning materials are provided.
- Keep emergency escapes routes clear at all times.

## OTHER SAFETY ISSUES

### TIDINESS AND HYGIENE

Take pride in all areas of the club. You take pride in rowing and rowing for the club and want to do your best on the water in races - extend this ethos to care of the Club House. Be aware of personal hygiene and looking after the club, boating area and landing area. When land training, ensure that you are cleaning up sweat, wiping down machines, throwing emptying packaging, bottles, sweet wrappers, tissues, etc. away in the bins provided. Don't leave it to the cleaner or other members to pick up after you. Don't leave mugs, plates, and cutlery anything lying around the club house.



### WEIL'S DISEASE (LEPTOSPIROSIS)

As rowers, be aware that this dangerous disease can be caught from contaminated river water and you are advised to familiarise yourself with the symptoms which start around 10 days following infection with the bacterium. Symptoms are headache, fever, chills, severe muscle aches and tenderness, redness of the eyes, loss of appetite, vomiting and sometimes a skin rash. During winter months, flu-like symptoms are more likely and so might be wrongly ignored.

[The Committee Twickenham Rowing Club Boating Safety Plan Rev 02 October 2021]