

HEXHAM ROWING CLUB

SAFETY/BOATING PLAN

The Club fully supports and implements the A.R.A Water Safety Code. The Club Safety Adviser will take all possible steps to ensure that the Club remains compliant with the Code and both he/she and the Committee will encourage all members to do likewise.

The Committee would like to remind members that there is also a responsibility of each individual to be familiar with and uphold the Safety Code at all times, and indeed this is a condition of membership of the A.R.A. through the registration scheme (copies of the Code are available from A.R.A. H.Q.).

ALL members should directly challenge any member or water user who is seen to be non-compliant with the Code.

The Club Safety Adviser will undertake periodic safety inspections/audits of the Club's fleet and buildings, and will arrange for necessary repair/rectification work to be carried out promptly. Whilst not required to do so, the Club Safety Advisor may inspect any private boats stored on Club premises - the responsibility of ensuring such boats comply with the Safety Code rests firmly with the owner. Any found to be non-compliant will be reported to the owner - failure to rectify the fault within a reasonable time will result in the Committee requesting that boat to be removed from the boathouse and/or not launched from the Club's landings.

All members should similarly report any unsafe, damaged or missing equipment to the Vice-Captain (Boats) or Safety Advisor a.s.a.p. so that it may be remedied - a REPAIRS BOOK is located on the notice board in the entrance lobby, and is regularly checked by the aforementioned officer(s).

DO NOT REMOVE EQUIPMENT FROM ONE BOAT TO REMEDY A DEFICIENCY OR DAMAGE IN ANOTHER!!

This causes more problems long-term than it solves short term.....

A SAFETY/ACCIDENT book is kept in the entrance lobby and is brought to every Committee meeting. ALL accidents on the water, whether involving personal injury or damage to equipment or not, should be noted in the book. Give as much detail as you can in your report - this will be needed if a report has to go to the A.R.A. Regional Safety Advisor and/or the insurers - when, where, how, types of boats, clubs involved, weather conditions, any injury/damage, medical treatment received, etc.

Members are reminded that the Committee will not hesitate to take disciplinary action against any members who act in an irresponsible or unsafe manner on the water, whether in Club boats OR their own.

SPECIFIC SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR THE RIVER TYNE, BOATING FROM HEXHAM R.C. AT TYNE GREEN.

At Club training sessions, the Captain, Vice-Captain, Safety Advisor, Duty Coach, any senior committee member present, or in their absence, the most senior member present, should make a decision if the river conditions are suitable for rowing.

Individual crews/scullers boating on their own must make their own decision based on the criteria set out below.

The answers could be either:

YES (all boats/experience) or

YES (but certain boat types/experienced crews not permitted) or

NO (unrowable for any crews)

This decision will be FINAL and WITHOUT APPEAL. Remember - if in doubt - don't go out! The decision should be written on the safety board next to the changing rooms so that all members, including those who arrive later, will know. Any person boating against this decision does so at their own risk and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Committee.

The possible conditions are listed according to the nature of the hazard. No such list can be exhaustive, or cover every eventuality, but they should provide a clear framework with which to judge if the conditions are suitable for boating. Bear in mind that our river conditions/weather can change rapidly - crews must be prepared to abandon an outing at any time if the conditions deteriorate once they are on the water.

REMEMBER: IF IN DOUBT - DON'T GO OUT!!!

BOATS

All boats must be checked for the presence, and security, of bow-balls, heel restraints and hatch covers. They are essential for the safety of all on the river.

If there are significant waves that might break over the saxboards, Centaur and Heather Ann are not to be used because they have insufficient buoyancy to support their crews when swamped. In winter the danger is greater because immersion of the torso in cold water accelerates the onset of hypothermia.

STREAM

If the stream appears to be fast flowing, and/or there are significant floating objects moving down the river (tree trunks, dead livestock, etc.), crews should seriously consider not boating. You should be able to make progress against the stream without rowing at firm pressure and be able to spin the boat without moving a significant distance along the river; if this is not possible, you should not go out.

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TEMPERATURE

Crews are reminded that, especially during the winter months, the risk of hypothermia from wearing insufficient clothing or with inexperienced crews not moving vigorously enough to generate sufficient body heat, is a **REAL DANGER**. Ensure that you are all wearing several thin layers of appropriate clothing, preferably with a waterproof garment on top. Coxes, especially, should be well protected, including hats and gloves (preferably waterproof).

EXPERIENCE

NO beginners' crews may go out unaccompanied **AT ANY TIME**. A coach must ALWAYS accompany them.

ALL coaches of beginners should hold an A.R.A. coaching qualification.

Novice/inexperienced coxes should not cox inexperienced crews; ensure that novice crews have an experienced and competent cox and that novice coxes are trained in an experienced and competent crew.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

The river at Tyne Green is fairly sheltered. The prevailing wind comes from the south-west. If the wind is strong from this direction, conditions can become difficult at the top of the reach, near the island; be prepared to turn below the island in these conditions. Novices should not go out in very strong winds.

ROWING AT NIGHT OR AFTER DARK

This can be dangerous. If you must go out at night, make sure that you carry appropriate lights on the boat so you can clearly be seen by other boats/crews. Single scullers should preferably not go out at night unaccompanied. Novice or inexperienced coxes should not cox crews at night. Beginner crews should preferably not go out after dark; if unavoidable, a coach MUST accompany them.

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NAVIGATION

The navigation rules for the River Tyne generally state that boats should pass 'port to port', or 'strokeside to strokeside' in rowing terms. Boats travelling west (upstream) should be on the North side of the river and boats travelling east (downstream) should be on the South side (Hexham R.C. boathouse side). Be aware that beginners under instruction are frequently boating close to the South side; leave them plenty of space. Coaches of beginners should ensure that they give adequate warning of their presence to other crews.

RACE TRAINING

Crews doing 'pieces' while training for races should be given precedence. This does not absolve those crews from ensuring that their course is safe; steering is an important part of race-craft and should be practised!

WARNING OF DANGER

Everyone is responsible for warning crews that are in danger of that danger. The normal method of warning is to shout "**AHEAD SCULLER**" or "**AHEAD FOUR**" etc. Even if the boat type is wrong, it is still better to shout some warning.

HEXHAM ROWING CLUB

BOATING SAFETY CHECKLIST

IF YOU ANSWER ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS AS SHOWN, DON'T GO OUT!!

REMEMBER: IF IN DOUBT - DON'T GO OUT!!!

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| 1. Is the crew dressed appropriately for the weather conditions? | NO |
| 2. Is your cox appropriately dressed for the weather conditions? | NO |
| 3. If boating at night, have you fitted a set of working lights? | NO |
| 4. Is the stream too fast? | YES |
| 5. Is the air and/or water temperature too low? | YES |
| 6. Is there a significant wind-chill factor? | YES |
| 7. Beginners - do you have a coach with you? | NO |
| 8. Is the bow-ball securely attached to your boat? | NO |
| 9. Are all the heel-restraints correctly attached? | NO |
| 10. Are all the hatch covers secure and sealed? | NO |
| 11. Is your boat sufficiently buoyant for the water conditions e.g. waves? | NO |

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(Club Safety Adviser)

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Approved and adopted by the Hexham RC Committee on 03/07/02