

Lower Thames Rowing Club

Health & Safety Policy

LTRC Committee Safety Statement

It is a duty of all members of Lower Thames Rowing Club to observe the rules of the club.

They are designed to safeguard us, our equipment and other members of the public from our activities.

We have two broad elements to consider:-

1. To operate the club within the LTRC Safety Policy and Safety Rules, and the safety code ("**RowSafe: a Guide to Good Practice in Rowing**") of British Rowing (formerly the ARA), the controlling body of rowing nationally, to which we are affiliated.

As a member of the Club, you have a responsibility to be aware of the **RowSafe** contents and to operate within the Club Safety Policy such as to minimise risk to our own members, our equipment and other users of our Home waters.

2. This includes, amongst other things, these key issues:
 - a) Inspection of equipment (report any damage) prior to and after an outing
 - b) Safe handling of equipment to minimise risk to equipment and third parties
 - c) Be aware of the water conditions and the advisability of rowing.
 - i. In adverse conditions
 - ii. In changeable conditions
 - iii. The capabilities of crew members
 - d) Take the appropriate equipment with you, listed in Risk assessment /Check sheet.
 - e) Appropriate clothing for the conditions.
 - f) Be aware of other users of the water at all times and observe rules relating to them.
 - g) Cleaning and inspection of equipment after boating (report any damage)
 - h) Take extreme care in the safe stowage of all equipment after use. If we take care of it ,it ultimately last longer.
 - i) Proper and effective use of the Club's Safety rules.
 - j) Report any incident or near incident to boat or personnel using the Incident log book and report directly to the Safety Advisor.

We are but caretakers of a facility shared by others to use in the future. If we abuse it they may not have the privilege.

Signed: the LTRC Committee

LTRC Safety Policy

Safety Advisor

The Lower Thames Rowing Club has appointed their own Club Safety Advisor (CSA) to be responsible for the Club's adherence to the RowSafe guidelines and for developing local risk assessments.

The Lower Thames Rowing Club Safety Advisor will also regularly monitor compliance with the standards and report his recommendations for improvement to the committee who will initiate the appropriate response / action, the responsibility for the implementation of the recommendation will remain with the officers of the club.

Club members who have safety concerns should discuss their concerns with the club safety advisor in the first instance.

The **RowSafe** guidelines shall be prominently displayed in the Dauntless Cabin and the Two Tree Island container, now referred to in this document as each location.

Safety Notice Board

At each of the Locations there shall be Safety Notice board that is solely for the use of Safety Information. No other Club information must be fixed to this board.

This safety Board will contain but will not be limited to the following information.

Telephone numbers for Emergency and non emergency calls to

- Fire,
- Police
- Ambulance
- Coastguard
- Doctors
- RNLI

A schedule of information needed by the emergency service,

- Service required
- Precise location
- Access details
- Contact name

Clear directions to the nearest alternative telephone point shall also be Displayed

There shall be clear directions to the Local hospital casualty department

Safety Equipment at each location

Safety and First Aid Equipment shall be readily available

First Aid Box (to be fully stocked, contents listed and replaced as used,

The First aid box contents to be checked on a regular basis and logged in the Incident log book

Thermal / exposure blankets

Posters on water safety, life saving and resuscitation procedures will be displayed prominently.

Comprehensive Insurance

The LTRC committee shall ensure that it carries and maintains adequate comprehensive insurance to cover personal injury to members on and off the water and personal injury and damage to property or third parties;

Such cover should include a member to member extension to third party Liability.

In addition LTRC should advise their insurers of events, i.e. regattas, Special events and so forth, as well as how many such events may be held each year.

Rowing Plan and associated Hazards

LTRC shall draw up and display a plan of their rowing location highlighting attention to the applicable navigation rules and any local interpretation required to accommodate particular hazards.

Instructions shall be included on any variation in normal procedures necessary to combat tidal, wind or other climatic conditions which may arise locally.

Rowing Log and incident book

The rowing log is to be completed before and after every rowing outing and there will be no exceptions.

The rowing log identifies the items to be checked and equipment required before any outing is authorised by the Duty Officer.

If in the Duty Officers opinion the risk is too great for safe rowing then that is the final decision.

If the Duty Officer is ignored then the person or persons involved will be subject to the LTRC disciplinary rules.

All Near misses, Accidents or Injuries will be logged in the Incident book and the Safety Advisor will be notified as soon as practicable.

The incident book report shall contain as a minimum the following

- Time of Incident,
- Name of Injured party/ies
- Place and nature of incident,
- Injuries
- Damage caused
- Names and addresses of witnesses.

All cases of accident involving injury shall be notified to British Rowing who will advise on any further action necessary.

LTRC Safety Rules

Equipment

The following equipment must be available for each boat before every outing on the open Sea or Tidal Rivers.

No exceptions !

- Mooring Lines (Bow & Stern)
- Bailer / Sponge
- VHF Radio or Mobile phone (tethered to boat in Waterproof Pouch)
- Lifejackets for all the crew
- Flares
- First Aid Kit
- Hypothermia Blankets
- Whistle or Hooter
- Crew adequately clothed for conditions
- Drinking Water to avoid dehydration if Hot Weather

The following items must be checked and must be in good repair before any outing.

- No Leaks
- Bung Fitted
- Gates & Pins
- Oars
- Buoyancy compartments
- Rudder
- Footboards

All the above will be the responsibility of the Duty Officer to agree/check before allowing a row to proceed. This will be achieved by completion of the Rowing log.

Also to be considered as ideal are;

- Boats to be fitted with a bow fender.
- An anchor and warp of suitable size for the boat .
- If undertaking a training or touring session in failing light, boats must carry the correct running lights or a torch showing a white light

Personal

Rowing is a physically demanding sport and participants must be in good health, if in doubt they should check with their doctor before starting to row.

All participants in rowing must be able to demonstrate both competence and confidence in and under the water by:

- Swimming at least 50 metres in light clothing (rowing kit)
- Be able to swim to the ROSPA recommended standard of 100 metres
- Treading water for at least two minutes
- Swimming under water for at least 5 metres

Rowers unable to demonstrate the minimum standard and those under 16 years of age must wear a personal flotation device.

All Coxes & Passengers must wear Lifejackets

Beginners to the sport are not allowed to use equipment without adequate prior instruction and are not allowed to row unsupervised.

Physically challenged Rowers participating in organised rowing activities must be provided with suitable rescue facilities to cope with any accident whilst afloat.

Be constantly aware of the rights of others to the free use of the water and extend to them at all times the courtesy they would similarly wish to receive.

Before Setting Out

The Duty Officer will carry out a risk assessment based on the weather forecast ,tide tables ,time of year ,the crew abilities and time allowed for the rowing session.

They will sign the log book that will give authorisation to take a boat out.

If in the opinion of the Duty Officer it is not safe to proceed with a rowing outing then their word is the final one.

No one should over rule the Duty Officer of the day. If they do and proceed to row without permission then they will be dealt with under the LTRC disciplinary rules

REMEMBER: If you have any doubts DON'T GO OUT!

Other Sea Users

Consideration must be given to other creek, river & sea users

Rowers should be extremely aware of other users such as swimmers or beach users when moving or mooring boats in and around areas such as Sea Shell Beach and Bell Wharf at Leigh on Sea

Rowing boats must give way to commercial power driven vessels and yachts that have to stay in narrow deep water channels due to their draft.

Rowing boats should be aware that sailing dinghies operate, race/ train in the creek and from the foreshore and may change course rapidly when tacking to windward or rounding race marks,

It may be frustrating but remember all sailing vessels have the right of way and it should be common courtesy not to impede their progress especially if young children or novices are under instruction.

Jet skis and speedboats will also be encountered, some of these are sensible and courteous, some are not and may display little knowledge of the rules of the road or boat handling, Try to be courteous to them and report any conflict to a club officer as soon as possible so that it may be reported to the authorities

Dangerous Acts Reporting

All dangerous incidents by other Sea users must be reported

If a dangerous incident occurs report to a club officer ASAP or phone the police.

ESSEX POLICE MARINE SECTION:

Jason Lane 01621 785961

OR DIAL999.

The Marine section also has two mobile numbers that are carried by boat personnel:

07850 706072

07850 706073

Hazard Awareness

As well as general consideration for safety, rowers should be particularly aware of potential hazards.

Rowers should be aware of other users such as swimmers or beach users when moving or mooring boats.

Crews should make themselves aware of local hazards and channels and how they are marked. Coxes should take these into account at all times when on the water.

Beware of stakes & other obstructions which may be found in various places.

There are three tidal barriers in our area, Benfleet, East Haven & Fobbing there may be strong currents between the structures and boats must obey the warning signals displayed when the barriers are in operation and keep well clear

Proceeding Under Tow

One crew member to remain in the towed boat

When being towed by a safety boat the cox or other responsible crew member must stay with the boat to steer behind the towing boat.

Clothing

Always wear suitable clothing

In the summer it is all too easy to get dehydrated and plenty of drinking water should be carried. Consideration as to whether spare clothing should be carried should be made as it can get surprisingly cold at times. You can always take layers off if you get hot

In winter the risk of hypothermia is very real and coxes & passengers in particular should dress appropriately,

Clothing should be:

- Bright and visible, with several layers to reduce heat loss
- Close-fitting, to avoid getting caught up in equipment
- Waterproof fabric is advisable for the outer layer
- Hats should be worn and not easily lost in a capsized situation
- Gloves will keep hands warm

Rowers should change to dry warm clothing as soon as rowing is finished.

Crew and Rowing Conditions

Crew requirements and usage limitations

Gigs must not be used at any time without a Cox - NO EXCEPTIONS.

The Bow oarsman must always keep a proper look out where the boat is going by looking over their shoulder every few seconds, it is all too easy to run into something and this can be expensive or painful!

The 16ft Skiffs are very small and caution should be used when using them as they were built for boating lake and sheltered water use only. They are not suitable for rowing in rough water and care should be taken that wind against tide conditions do not catch you out.

They are limited to carry two adults and one small child only.

The Gigs are far more seaworthy but care should be exercised as they weigh over half a ton with crew and are fast enough to cause considerable damage to any boat should they collide with it!

Privately Owned boats used outside of the rules in the Cox's Charter, Rowers charter and club safety code will be deemed to be operating outside of LTRC insurance and therefore will be uninsured.

Accidents and Emergencies

Give assistance if possible but stay safe

If a boat requires help it is incumbent on other boats nearby to render assistance.

If this happens during a race then points will be adjusted to compensate or the race will be declared void.

In the event of a collision between boats, crews must keep their hands inside their boat and try not to fend off the other craft.

Boats can be mended more easily than people.

If a boat should capsize the crew should stay with the boat, if possible and await rescue. Do not swim around collecting equipment, this can be collected later.

The crew's safety is more important.

If an incident occurs involving a boat insured by LTRC then it is the responsibility of the Cox or crew member in a coxless boat to report the incident to the Chairman or club safety adviser within 24 hours of the incident.

All accidents or incidents must be entered in the club incident log which is kept in the boathouse as soon as possible

A meeting with the crew & Cox will then be held with the Chairman & Safety adviser and secretary to get statements of the event. A committee meeting will be held if deemed appropriate.

In the event of an incident the Duty Officer or Safety adviser has the right to stop any boats taking to the water or limiting boats to certain areas until further notice.

Coxes Charter

Rules applicable to those coxing Club craft

1. All Coxes must have been briefed before undertaking the Duty Officer roll by the Race Captain and Club Safety Officer to ensure that they are fully aware of the responsibilities of the roll and are considered suitably competent by these two officers.
2. It is the Cox's responsibility to ensure they have been registered as a Cox with the club's officers before taking a crew out.
3. It is the Coxes responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure that all persons in the boat are paid up members of the LTRC.

Failure to do so will mean disqualification from racing and no insurance cover for the entire boat. This may make the Cox personally liable in the event of a claim.

4. Coxes must wear a correctly fitted lifejacket and ensure that any junior rowers or passengers also do so. The lifejacket should be worn as the outer layer not under clothing. Coxes should carry flares or keep them close at hand when on the water so as to be readily available in an emergency.
5. Coxes must be at least 16 years old and 18 years old if taking out a junior crew.
6. Anyone taking the helm of a Gig becomes responsible for the safety of the boat and everyone on board, This should not be done lightly. Coxes should be encouraged to undergo training before taking the job on.
7. Only experienced coxes should take out novice crews.
8. Crews must respect the Cox as the person in charge of the boat. No Cox should be subject to bullying or aggressive behaviour by a crew or be encouraged to take a boat into a situation, which they are unsure of their ability to deal with.
9. All Coxes have the right to refuse to take to the water if in their opinion the weather conditions or condition of the boat make it unsafe to do so.
10. Coxes should be in sound health with adequate vision and hearing. No one who suffers from epileptic fits or blackouts shall take the helm; in case of doubt medical advice should be sought.
11. Every Cox shall ensure that all members of the crew of which they are in charge are aware of the appropriate safety procedures at all times. Coxes should carry flares or similar and these should be carried close at hand so as to be readily available in case of emergency.
12. It is the cox's responsibility to notify someone ashore of when they are going on the water, their route and estimated return time and how many people are on board.
13. The Cox should be conversant with the "rules of the road" especially in respect of the rights and needs of other water users. Also club safety and emergency procedures, weather and water conditions (arrange outings to avoid danger) and the correct and safe rowing equipment and ensure it is used correctly to avoid injury.
14. Where crews undertake training in failing light conditions provision should be made by the Cox for the boat to either display the correct lights as for sailing vessels or an all-round white light. This should apply to river and sea rowing.
15. All instructions or commands used while coxing the boat should be given in a clear and concise manner using the correct nautical terms and correct names for parts of the boat.
16. When on the water the Cox should be aware of their position at all times and understand how wind and tide can affect the boat, the Cox should keep watch out for any hazard they may meet while on the water.
17. The Cox should dress to the prevailing conditions and take care that he/she stays warm and dry and able to function fully at all times.
18. The Cox should pay attention to their crew and watch out for any signs of hypothermia; special attention should be given to any juniors or passengers being carried. Hypothermia should be regarded as a medical emergency at all times

Rowers Charter

Rules applicable to all crew in Club craft

1. All rowers unless guests on a try out row must be paid up members of the LTRC before taking to the water. Failure to do so will mean disqualification in racing and no insurance cover for the entire boat; this may make the Cox personally liable in the event of an incident or claim.
2. All persons taking part in rowing must be in good health. Any disability must be declared on the membership form declaration. If you have a disability or chronic illness such as asthma which may require you to carry medication with you, then it is your responsibility to ensure it is on board and close at hand, you should also inform your Cox and crew of what to do should there be an emergency. You should also be aware of your limitations if disabled and try not to exceed them!
3. Rowers should acquaint themselves with the club safety and emergency procedures and comply fully with them at all times during training and racing.
4. Rowers should maintain their rowing equipment in good order and check it is in a safe condition before use.

5. Training should be on-going in all crews at all times.
Adequate instruction should be given to novices before taking to the water, this should include but not be limited to
6. Instruction on getting in, sitting in and moving about the boat safely.
7. Instruction on stretcher position and how to adjust them,
8. Instruction on how to hold the oar and to row safely without causing injury or strain.
9. Instruction on what to do in the event of catching a crab.
10. Encourage rowers especially juniors to row on both sides
11. Ensure rowers are aware of the club charters and safety rules and their own responsibilities.
12. Be aware of the responsibilities held by the Cox, especially
13. Anyone taking the helm of a gig becomes responsible for the safety of the boat and everyone on board, this should not be done lightly.
14. All crews should respect the cox as the person in charge of the boat.
15. No Cox should be subject to bullying or aggressive behaviour by a crew or be encouraged to take a boat into a situation which they are unsure of their ability to deal with.
16. All junior rowers must wear properly fitted and fastened lifejackets at all times when in the boat.
17. All passengers must also wear lifejackets as above.
18. No passenger or spare rower to sit on the bow or gunwales of the boat.

Row Safe Guide

Embedded below in the electronic version of this safety policy



**Row Safe
Complete-v1.pdf**