

PUTNEY TOWN ROWING CLUB

2017 Safety & Emergency Plan for Rowers

<i>Introduction</i>	3
<i>Emergencies</i>	3
<i>Responsibilities</i>	3
<i>General Water Safety Requirements</i>	3
Safety Equipment	3
Safety Lights for Boats	4
Safety Clothing - Hi-Vis	5
PLA Ebb Tide Warning System	5
Thunder Storms and Lightning	5
Condition of Equipment	6
Incidents and Accidents	6
Launches	6
Coxswains and Steersman	7
Coaches	7
Circulation Pattern	8
Rowing and Sculling at Night	8
<i>OFF-WATER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS</i>	9
Lifting of Boats	9
Hall Training & Weights Room	9
No Smoking Policy	9
Telephones	9
Kitchen	9
Fire	9
Car Park	10
Members of the Public	10
<i>Boat Transportation</i>	10
Drivers	10
Boat Loading	10
<i>Feedback</i>	10

Appendix A to Safety Plan

<i>Emergency Action Plan for Rowers</i> _____	11
In the event of a capsize _____	11
In The Event Of A Serious Incident _____	11
Possible serious incidents associated with rowing _____	11
Hypothermia - Identification_____	11
Treating hypothermia_____	12
Near-Drowning _____	13
First aid for a near-drowning victim_____	14
STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS: _____	14
Key Locations & Telephone Numbers _____	15

Introduction

PTRC is committed to the safety of its members and its guests whilst they are engaged in club related activities. The aim of the PTRC Safety Plan is to ensure that all members and visitors are made aware of the safety requirements of rowing, sculling and related activities PTRC so that they may participate safely. The Safety Plan is supplementary to British Rowing's RowSafe guidelines¹.

The requirements apply to the Tideway from Putney Bridge up to Richmond Lock and to Club members when operating away from PTRC except where local safety procedures are issued for the location visited. These instructions are also to apply to crews visiting PTRC and any other person boating from the premises

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency; guidelines on how to deal with the emergency are contained at Appendix A – Emergency Plan.

Responsibilities

All members are personally responsible for and have a duty of care to ensure that their actions, both on and off the water, are conducted in a manor that does not compromise the safety of themselves or others.

All members are expected to comply with the requirements of the British Rowing, Row Safe Guide, the Clubs Safety Plan and any other instructions issued by the Club, in respect of safety.

General Water Safety Requirements

Safety Equipment

The Club provides items of safety equipment, which shall be used by its members to accord with the following:

Life Jackets / Buoyancy Aids:

The wearing of a lifejacket or buoyancy aid is compulsory for:

- All coxswains.
- All drivers and passengers of any launch used in connection with Club activities.

Where participants are adults & have not undertaken a club swim test/capsize drill, lifejackets/buoyancy aids should be offered.

¹ <http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/RowSafe/Complete-v1.pdf>

Where, due to a medical condition, members are considered to be at risk of becoming unconscious or immobile, as a result of immersion, an automatic lifejacket must be worn.

Throw Lines, Thermal Exposure Blankets, First Aid Boxes:

Any person providing coaching or safety cover from a launch should ensure they have taken the appropriately numbered safety bag from the petrol cupboard.

Additional First Aid Box

First Aid boxes are located in the Gym and Kitchen and Safety cupboard in the boat house, Safety Bags to be used in launches are located in the petrol can cupboard in the far left hand side of the boat yard when facing the front (river side) of the Club.

Defibrillators

We have 2 defibrillators. One is in the hall through the double doors hanging on the left wall, adjacent to the cox box cupboard. The other is in the boat house above the signing out sheet. The Defibs are checked on a monthly basis by two club members (S. Pictor and A. Carboo) . They have both received training in usage. However any member or non member, in the case of a cardiac emergency should use the machine, following the very easy to understand verbal instructions that emit from the machine.

Safety Lights for Boats

The rules on lights on boats can be different in each navigating authority. The rules on the Thames in London are:- “All rowing crews must have the following lights firmly fixed to their boat in low visibility. On the bow: a flashing white light – flashing to determine direction of travel On the stern: a constant white light The lights must be visible for 800m and also be visible through 180° – so that the boat effectively has lighting visible through 360°.” In accordance with British Rowing, all rowing/sculling boats must show lights after sunset. The lights should be bright and clear. The purpose of navigation is to enable your boat to be seen and to enable you to see other boats. Not only should you be able to see them but they will also tell you something about what type of boat it is and where it is heading.

As guidance lights should be fixed in the Empacher slot or similar on the bow and at the top the rudder yoke in the stern. This will make them easy to see. If you mount the light directly onto the hull then ensure that it is not hidden by the saxboards. Lights can also be mounted on a pole on the stern behind the cox or in the bow in front of a steersman – although care must be taken to conserve night vision with this system. LED sticks on the back of the cox or bowman are also useful, although only as an addition to the main lighting system. Lights should not be fixed to the riggers as they can be obscured when negotiating bends and turning.

The following do not work and should be avoided:

- Head Torches – the movement of your head ensures it cannot be seen from all directions.
- Using only one light – unless it is on a pole that is higher than your head
- Lights with Low Batteries – a failing or weak light is worse than nothing as it can give you a false sense of security.

Safety Clothing – AKA Hi visibility top layer

All oarsmen are advised to wear hi visibility top layers when rowing. However all bow steers and bow paddlers **MUST** wear a high visibility outer layer. In particular at times of low light, low cloud, early mornings, dusk and during night time rowing, to maximise their visibility to other oarsmen and other vessels.

PLA Ebb Tide Warning System

Putney Town pays strict attention to the PLA Ebb Tide Warning System. The Green, Amber, Red & Black Flagged system monitors the volume of fluvial flow on the ebb tide. The PLA display the colored flags on the home page of their web site www.pla.co.uk and the www.boatingonthames.co.uk website.

Green = The PLA advise all river users to navigate with caution and maintain a proper lookout

Amber = The PLA advise all river users that the fluvial flow is stronger than average and they advise schools, novices or junior crews or those that do not regularly use the tidal Thames not to go afloat.

Red = The PLA advise all river users that the fluvial flow is far higher than usual and extreme caution is urged PLA advise man-powered vessels not to go afloat.

Black = The PLA advise all river users that the fluvial flow is less than usual and lower than predicted tides may be expected, especially around low water.

In Amber flag situations only larger boats with experienced oars people are allowed to boat. In Red flag situations, no one is allowed to boat from PTRC.

Thunder Storms and Lightning

All members should be aware of the local weather forecast when planning outings, particularly when thunderstorms have been predicted.

If thunder is heard and/or lightning observed before the outing has commenced; individuals and crews must remain at the club.

If thunder is heard and/or lightning observed whilst on the water, individuals and crews must seek proper shelter. If safe to do so, individuals and crews should return immediately to the Club; however this has to be with due consideration to

the “30-30” rule for lightning. The rule being to count the time taken until you hear the thunder. If it is 30 seconds or less you must seek proper shelter.

If no lightning is visible but thunder is heard; individuals and crews must seek proper shelter.

Individuals and crews must remain at the club or under proper shelter for a minimum period of 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder, before considering it safe to commence the outing.

Condition of Equipment

Prior to use, all equipment is to be checked to ensure that it is serviceable and appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended. Any damaged equipment is to be reported using the book on the workbench at the back of the Boat House and a member of committee (Geoff Adams) is to be emailed or spoken to. If a member is capable of mending the equipment please do so as soon as possible.

Incidents and Accidents

All members are responsible for reporting all accidents, incidents and near incidents that they have knowledge of or witness within 24 hours of the event, either themselves via the online reporting system on British Rowing, via the Captain – Peter Jones or via the safety officer, Camilla Lister on safety@putneytownrc.co.uk. They will then log the incident onto the British Rowing online incident reporting system, which satisfies the requirements of the British Rowing Row Safe Guide. In the absence of these two named persons and if you are unsure how to submit a report please ask a member of committee or suitable Squad captain or squad Safety rep who can then log the incident for you.

All accidents and incidents will be reviewed by the Water Safety Adviser, and these may be discussed at rowing sub-committee level; along with any additional control measures that are deemed necessary to avoid any future repetition.

Emergency Services are to be contacted by the best means possible as appropriate to any accident or emergency situation.

Launches

Launches are to be used only by drivers authorized by the Captain. The membership secretary maintains the list of current approved drivers. All drivers and passengers are to wear lifejackets. The driver is responsible for ensuring that a safety bag / launch rescue kit is carried. Any items used or missing are to be notified to the Safety Adviser as soon as possible. All launch drivers must by law, wear a kill cord.

All launch drivers are to ensure that the launches are handled with consideration to other river users and in accordance with the British Rowing, Row Safe Guide and the Environment Agency Regulations.

The launches are designed to carry two persons, the driver and the coach. In the event of a capsize recovery operation the maximum number of persons on the launch may exceed two persons in order to safely convey athletes to the bank or boathouse.

Coxswains and Steersman

In all coxed boats, the coxswain is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and crew. The wearing of lifejackets or buoyancy aids by coxswains is compulsory. If front-loaders are being coxed, care is to be taken to ensure that the lifejacket does not prevent a cox from escaping in the event of capsize or sinking and should therefore only wear a self inflating life jacket.

In coxless boats, the person occupying the bow seat or the person controlling the rudder (when fitted) is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and the crew.

The only exception to the foregoing being when the coxswain, or the steersman, is a beginner; in which case responsibility will be transferred to the coach or to the person providing the direct instruction and supervision.

Coaches

All full time Coaches are to be British Rowing qualified with Instructor Award (IA) or UKCC Level 2 as the minimum standard. Supporting part time coaches should look to achieve the Level 2 if thinking of continuing with this for some time As a minimum Coaches should hold the PTRC steercert.

Coaches are to ensure that:

- Crews are aware of the appropriate safety procedures;
- Crews use safe rowing/sculling equipment;
- The outing is conducted appropriate to the prevailing weather and water conditions;
- Consideration is shown to other water users;
- Crews are appropriately dressed for the session;
- The Coach is to be particularly alert for symptoms of hypothermia and heat stroke / dehydration;
- In particular, when coaching young children, the whole crew should be dressed suitably;
- When coaching coxed boats, care must also be taken to ensure that the cox is properly dressed
- Particular attention is paid to the coaching of coxes as their competence is essential to water safety as well as the crew's success
- When coaching from the bank a throw line and radio is taken when appropriate;
- The coach/athlete ratio for junior athletes should be one coach to no more than ten junior athletes;
- Also there must be no more than twenty junior athletes from each squad on the water at any one time.

Junior athletes under the age of 18 are not allowed on the water unless attended by a coach.

Circulation Pattern

All members must adhere to the Clubs designated circulation patterns when boating on land, as displayed on the Clubs safety notice board and on the website as well as following water navigation patterns as shown in the PLA Tideway Code

Rowing and Sculling at Night

Outings after sunset and before sunrise are only allowed when accompanied with a launch and with Captains permission, and for certain boat types only. Please ask the Captain separately on this matter.

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- Lights with Low Batteries – a failing or weak light is worse than nothing as it can give you a false sense of security.

OFF-WATER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Lifting of Boats

Coaches and crews are to ensure that every care is taken to prevent injury when lifting boats in and out of the racks and the river. One person is to be in charge of the maneuver, giving clear instructions before and during the lift.

Hall Training and Weights room

All members are responsible for keeping the gym areas clean and tidy. After use, every member is responsible for returning all equipment that they have used to its proper location and for cleaning down all items of the equipment that they have utilized.

All members shall be deemed responsible for their own safety whilst using any of the Club's gym equipment. Should any member have any doubt concerning how to use any item of equipment, or correct technique; they should seek guidance from the Captain or a Coach.

The use of any gym equipment by guests is prohibited.

No Smoking Policy

The Club has a No-Smoking policy and smoking is not permitted in any part of the Boathouse including on the balcony. Members are responsible for ensuring that their guests are briefed accordingly.

Telephones

There is a phone in the bar but it is not accessible when the bar is closed. A list of useful numbers is displayed on the wall in the hall entrance to the club and on the safety notice board in the boathouse. Coaches and crew are encouraged to carry a mobile telephone at all times when training on the water.

Kitchen

Users of the kitchen and its cooking appliances are to ensure that care is taken in their use, that the cooker, toaster and kettles are not left unattended when in use and that all appliances are left safe when finished with. Furthermore, work-tops, crockery etc are to be left in a clean and hygienic state.

Fire

In the event of a fire the Boathouse is to be evacuated and the Main Car park used as a muster point. An attempt is to be made to account for individuals. Members are responsible for the safety of their guests

Car Park

Extreme care is to be taken by all members when using the car park in order to prevent injury to people on foot, parking to use the school facilities or accessing the allotments or carrying boats or loading and unloading the trailers.

Members of the Public

Owing to the nature of the premises, members of the public frequently enter the site in the belief that there is public access to the river. All members are to exercise care and attention to prevent members of the public being injured and are to, if appropriate, politely ask them to leave the premises for their own safety.

Boat Transportation

Drivers

Only individuals authorised by the Club are to drive the Club truck and trailers. All drivers are to be conversant with the BR Code for the Towing of Boat Trailers.

Boat Loading

When crews are traveling to regattas or alternate training locations, the Captain will detail the trailer loading plan and email it round to all relevant squads plus stick a copy up on the notice board and trailer. Loading is to be strictly in accordance with this plan and the driver is to check compliance with the plan prior to departure. The driver is to ensure that all boats and equipment is safely secured prior to departure and that the necessary requirements for rear projections and lighting are observed.

Feedback

Safety is a standard item on the main Committee agenda and the Rowing Sub committee, and is reviewed at every meeting.

Safety can only be consistently achieved through a process of good communication, education and periodic review. If any individual identifies any safety related issue which is not documented, or that they feel others can learn from, they can make a significant contribution by discussing the topic with the Water Safety Officer who can then take the appropriate action.

Camilla Lister
Putney Town Rowing Club
07967 343 670

October 2016

safety@putneytownrc.co.uk

Appendix A To Safety Plan

Emergency Action Plan for Rowers

In the event of a capsize

- If out of your depth & unable to wade ashore, hold onto the capsized hull as a buoyancy aid & attempt to swim it to shore.
- If the water is cold, get as much of your body out of the water as soon as possible, draping yourself over the upturned hull (if necessary turning over the hull for this purpose).
- If possible, "buddy-up"; holding on to each other until rescued to provide mutual warmth and support and to help ensure all are accounted for.
- Other boats in the vicinity should fetch help or a launch if one is available. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESCUE FROM ANOTHER ROWING SCULL - you are likely to tip over, putting more people in the water with no one to get help.
- Dial 999 and ask for life guard

Possible serious incidents associated with rowing

The following gives guidance for recognizing and treating possible serious incidence associated with rowing.

Hypothermia

The symptoms of hypothermia depend on how cold the environment is and how long you are exposed for. Severe hypothermia needs urgent medical treatment in hospital. Shivering is a good guide to how severe the condition is. If the person can stop shivering on their own, the hypothermia is mild, but if they cannot stop shivering, it is moderate to severe.

Mild cases

In mild cases, symptoms include:

- shivering,
- feeling cold,
- low energy,
- discomfort at higher temperatures than normal, or
- cold, pale skin.

Moderate cases

The symptoms of moderate hypothermia include:

- violent, uncontrollable shivering,

- being unable to think or pay attention,
- confusion (some people don't realise they are affected),
- loss of judgment and reasoning,
- difficulty moving around or stumbling (weakness),
- feeling afraid,
- memory loss,
- fumbling hands and loss of coordination,
- drowsiness,
- slurred speech,
- listlessness and indifference, or
- slow, shallow breathing and a weak pulse.

Severe cases

The symptoms of severe hypothermia include:

- loss of control of hands, feet, and limbs,
- uncontrollable shivering that suddenly stops,
- unconsciousness,
- shallow or no breathing,
- weak, irregular or no pulse,
- stiff muscles, and
- dilated pupils.

Although hypothermia is defined as occurring when the body temperature drops below 35°C (95°F), mild hypothermia can start at higher body temperatures.

As the body temperature decreases further, shivering will stop completely. The heart rate will slow and a person will gradually lose consciousness. When unconscious, a person will not appear to have a pulse or be breathing. Emergency assistance should be sought immediately and CPR provided while the person is warmed. CPR is an emergency procedure, consisting of 30 chest compression followed by 2 rescue breaths.

Treating hypothermia

As hypothermia can be a life-threatening condition, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Hypothermia is treated by preventing further heat being lost and by gently warming the patient.

If you are treating someone with mild hypothermia, or waiting for medical treatment to arrive, follow the advice below to prevent further loss of heat.

Things to do for hypothermia:

- Move the person indoors, or somewhere warm, as soon as possible.

- Once sheltered, gently remove any wet clothing and dry the person
- Wrap them in blankets, towels, coats (whatever you have), protecting the head and torso first
- Your own body heat can help someone with hypothermia. Hug them gently
- Increase activity if possible, but not to the point where sweating occurs, as that cools the skin down again
- If possible, give the person warm drinks (but not alcohol) or high energy foods, such as chocolate, to help warm them up
- Once body temperature has increased, keep the person warm and dry

It is important to handle anyone that has hypothermia very gently and carefully.

Things you should NOT do:

- Don't warm up an elderly person using a bath, as this may send cold blood from the body's surfaces to the heart or brain too suddenly, causing a stroke or heart attack;
- Don't apply direct heat (hot water or a heating pad, for example) to the arms and legs, as this forces cold blood back to the major organs, making the condition worse
- Don't give the person alcohol to drink, as this will decrease the body's ability to retain heat
- Don't rub or massage the person's skin, as this can cause the blood vessels to widen and decrease the body's ability to retain heat. In severe cases of hypothermia there is also a risk of heart attack

Near-Drowning

The goal is to safely rescue the victim and begin first aid.

In a near-drowning emergency, the sooner the rescue and first aid begin, the greater the victim's chance of survival. Do not endanger yourself in rescuing the victim during this process.

Rescue options to reach the drowning victim in the water:

- Use a Throw Line
- Throw a rope with a buoyant object
- Use a long stick
- Bring a boat alongside the victim and tow the victim to shore. Do not haul the victim into the boat because it may cause the boat to capsize, and both of you will be in the water. Cold water may render the victim too hypothermic to grasp objects within their reach or to hold while being pulled to safety

- As a last resort, you can attempt a swimming rescue if you are sufficiently trained in water rescue. Do not attempt a rescue beyond your capabilities. Otherwise, you may harm yourself
 - For a swimming rescue, approach the person from behind while trying to calm the victim as you move closer. A panicked victim can pull you down
 - Grab a piece of clothing or cup a hand or arm under the victim's chin and pull the person face up to shore while providing special care to ensure a straight head-neck-back alignment especially if you think the person has spine injuries

First aid for a near-drowning victim

The focus of the first aid for a near-drowning victim in the water is to get oxygen into the lungs without aggravating any suspected neck injury.

If the victim's breathing has stopped, give 5 mouth-to-mouth rescue breaths as soon as you safely can. This could mean starting the breathing process in the water.

Once on shore, reassess the victim's breathing and circulation (heartbeat and pulse). If there is breathing and circulation without suspected spine injury, place the person in recovery position (lying on the stomach, arms extended at the shoulder level and bent, head on the side with the leg on the same side drawn up at a right angle to the torso) to keep the airway clear and to allow the swallowed water to drain. If there is no breathing, begin CPR. Continue CPR (30 chest compression followed by 2 rescue breaths) until help arrives or the person revives.

Keep the person warm by removing wet clothing and covering with warm blankets to prevent hypothermia.

Remain with the recovering person until emergency medical personnel have arrived.

STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Do not go out rowing alone, ever, when the water temperature is below 10 degrees C. Hypothermia is deadly quick at lower temperatures.
- Always row with at least one other boat, or with the coach/safety boat.
- Always have your mobile phone with you if there is no coach boat, so that you can call 999 for help. Keep it in a zip-loc bag - then it won't sink!

Key Telephone Numbers & Emergency Locations

Water Safety Officer - Camilla Lister 07967 343 670

All crews are advised to ensure they carry a mobile phone when on the water.

In an emergency call 999. Please state whether Life Guard, Police, Fire or Ambulance

Nearest Hospitals

A&E & Walk In West Middlesex, Twickenham Rd, TW7 6AF 3.4 Miles 020 8560 2121

A&E & Walk-In Charing Cross Hospital, Fulham Palace Rd W6 8RF 3.9 Miles 020 3311 1234

A&E & Walk-In Ealing Hospital, Uxbridge RD, UB1 3HW 5.1 Miles 020 8967 5000

Boots, Bessant Drive Shops, TW9 4AD (5 minute down tow path next to M&S)

Life Guard

In Emergency dial 999.

Location: Corney Reach Way, Chiswick W4 2UG 020 8995 5534

Located just beyond the crossing point on Middlesex side between Barnes and Hammersmith Bridge