

With the change of seasons it is time for my annual reminder on safe rowing practices in reduced daylight hours:

- There is absolutely no rowing on the river in the dark, so make sure that it will still be sufficiently light on your return BEFORE going afloat; if in doubt use the lake instead
- When training on the lake in the evenings the use of appropriate lights is required, as even if it's still light when you start your outing it may not remain so throughout the outing, please refer to the **PCRC water safety plan** if in doubt about what lights to show
- In addition, if training on the lake first thing in the morning lights may also be required, though it should be obvious at the start of your outing if it is dark!
- When rowing in the dark on the lake extra vigilance is required to avoid collisions on the water; in particular you must follow the lake circulation pattern at all times
- When handling boats in the dark extra vigilance is also required to avoid collisions when crossing the foot/cycle path
- If you fail to show suitable lights when darkness is falling please do not be surprised when asked to leave the water – we do this for your safety, which we take very seriously
- If you're a new member with no prior experience of rowing in the dark please check with your captains or coaches if you are ready to do so before going afloat
- The club policy on junior members not rowing on the water in the dark still applies

With increased daytime use of the river during the head season, please also note the following points:

- There are currently a number of known obstructions on the river, some of which are new:
 - Contractors working on both the Parkway Bridge and on the railway bridge have reduced visibility and narrowed the river at both locations (currently on the north side of the river) – extreme caution needs to be observed in both areas and the river navigation rules followed, especially when returning upstream to the clubhouse as you may need to give way to downstream traffic in these areas
 - low overhanging and fallen branches between The Cut and the bridges in town,
 - more than usual amounts of weed and reeds on the river margin,
 - boats moored in unexpected places and sometimes “double-parked”,
 - an unmarked partially sunken cruiser on the south side of the river between the Fitzwilliam Bridge and the bend (which may be hazardous to you when rowing downstream),
 - a number of unmarked partially sunken cruisers on the north side of the river between the Fitzwilliam bridge and the Key Theatre (which may be hazardous to you when rowing upstream),
 - an increased likelihood of encountering inexperienced river users in canoes and on paddleboards in the vicinity of the Key Theatre (boating and de-boating on the north side of the river) – please exercise extreme caution in this area as they may be unfamiliar with the river navigation rules.
- Additional vigilance and observation is thus required.
- Open water swimmers have also been observed in the Nene during training outings so again take extra vigilance – especially when they are travelling in the same direction as your boat as they may be very difficult to see and less able to quickly move out of your way
- Remember the navigation rules – stick to the side of the river closest to the cox's right hand / oars-person's left hand side
- Again, if you're a new member with no prior experience of rowing on the river please check with your captains or coaches if you are ready to do so before going afloat

Hopefully, by observing the above points we will all continue to have a safe experience when rowing at Peterborough but please note that any incidents that do occur must be reported to me so that appropriate steps can be taken to ensure your continued safety and enjoyment of our sport. I would also like to remind you that any “near misses” should also be reported to me for the same reasons. Incidents and near misses can be reported to me ideally via the **Incident Reporting portal** on the British Rowing website or in person or via email to **paulscutts63@gmail.com** .

Please speak to me if you have any concerns about the above or any other safety-related matters.

Paul Scutts

PCRC Water Safety Advisor