



## Safety at Peterborough City Rowing Club

In order to ensure that all members of Peterborough City Rowing Club (PCRC) and those visiting the club can enjoy rowing in safety and comply with the RowSafe Guide published by British Rowing (BR); it is necessary to have a Safety Policy, a Water Safety Plan and an Emergency Response Plan. In addition, there are some further safety-related policies that cover specific scenarios relevant to the club.

### Safety Policy

PCRC has a zero tolerance for anyone being harmed as a result of our members' participation in the sport and has a **Safety Policy** which can be found [here](#).

The PCRC Management Committee has appointed a Club Rowing Safety Adviser (CRSA) who is responsible for advising on all safety matters both on and off the water. The contact details for the CRSA are on display in the PCRC Boathouse. While the club appoints the CRSA it is the duty of all members to ensure a safe environment for rowers, visitors, volunteers and members of the public at all times.

All members and visitors to PCRC must comply with the requirements of the Water Safety Plan, Emergency Response Plan and other associated documents, which may be in force at the time as notified by either the PCRC Management Committee or PCRC Rowing Committee via the PCRC Secretary and/or PCRC website.

The Club is also committed to learn from the incidents it becomes aware of and will share this information to help others in the sport to learn too. We are committed to making full and appropriate use of British Rowing's Incident Reporting System.

### Water Safety Plan & Associated Policy Documents

The **PCRC Epilepsy Policy** (which can be found [here](#)) outlines our approach to safety for members with epilepsy.

The **PCRC Rowing in Darkness Policy** (which can be found [here](#)) outlines our approach to safety with regards to use of the river and lake outside the hours of daylight.

The **PCRC Rowing in Flood Conditions Policy** (which can be found [here](#)) outlines our approach to safety with regards to use of the river and lake during periods of high water and flood.

The **PCRC Tying boats down Policy** (which can be found [here](#)) outlines our approach to safety with regard to unattended boats being left/stored on trestles/racks/trailers outside the boathouse.

The **PCRC Club Safety Plan** (which can be found [here](#)) describes what members and others should do to make an incident less likely to happen; it includes sections dealing with the above safety-specific policies.

The associated **PCRC Emergency Response Plan** (which can be found [here](#)) defines the actions to be taken if an incident does happen. It will help to reduce the harm that such an incident could otherwise cause.

These two documents supplement the rules and advice given in the British Rowing guide:

- **Row Safe: A Guide to good Practice in Rowing**

This guide is typically updated annually, and the latest version can be found online [here](#)

Please ensure you familiarise yourself with the contents of these documents, the key points of which are summarised below.

In addition, PCRC normally runs a number of competitive events during each year on the river Nene (Head of the Nene) and on the PCRC lake (Spring Regatta, Junior Regatta and Summer Regatta). The safety plans and other documentation specifically covering these events are posted elsewhere on the Events section of our website each time they are run.

## Water Safety Plan

### Medical conditions

If you have any pre-existing medical conditions that might impact on your ability to row and/or potentially cause issues whilst rowing, you should advise the club – specifically the PCRC secretary and your coaches - so that where possible suitable arrangements can be put into effect to either enable you to row safely and/or effectively deal with any medical emergencies that may emerge whilst you are training or competing. Where necessary, this will be documented in an individual risk assessment and safety plan to ensure your safety whilst participating.

From the club's policy, having thoroughly considered the risks associated with club members diagnosed with **epilepsy** participating in the sport of rowing and taking advice from British Rowing we have determined that members diagnosed with epilepsy will not be permitted to take part in on-water rowing activities at PCRC. However, subject to prior individual risk assessment and production of an individual safety plan, club members diagnosed with epilepsy will be encouraged and supported to pursue appropriate indoor rowing activities instead.

### Accident and Incident reporting

#### What to Report

If you are involved in an accident or incident, please report it as soon as possible. Reporting of accidents where it involves damage or injury **MUST** be reported as soon as possible on the day of the incident. Other incidents such as capsizes where there is no injury or damage must be reported within seven days.

If you see any incident which you feel may lead to an accident or injuries, then please say something, do not assume someone else will deal with it. Any serious incidents or breaches of the plan should be reported as soon as possible.

### **How to Report**

Always use the on-line British Rowing Incident Reporting system (which can be found [here](#)) to report all incidents and any near misses as soon as possible. The CRSA will automatically be informed of all incidents reported in this way and take whatever action is required; including reporting a summary of all notified incidents to the PCRC Rowing and Management Committees with recommendations for further action, as needed.

In addition to the above, where appropriate for example a situation with an immediate and ongoing possibility of accident or injury arises, please also report this to any PCRC Club Officers or PCRC coaches who are present at the club at the time so that any necessary immediate actions can be taken.

### **First Aid**

First aid boxes are located in the kitchen and the boat house. Additionally, first aid kits can be found in the coach's rucksacks and in the launch bags for use when away from the clubhouse.

These are for **emergency use only**. Plasters are not for blisters caused by training; members should bring their own supplies for running repairs to hands etc.

The first aid kits are regularly checked, however if you do use some of the contents, please advise the CRSA so that it can be restocked as soon as possible.

Any incident requiring use of first aid supplies must be reported in line with the accident reporting procedure above.

A list of the clubs first aiders can be found in the PCRC Emergency Response Plan, a copy of which may be found on the Safety noticeboard in the clubhouse lobby.

### **Contact Details / Telephone Numbers**

Contact details of the CRSA and other committee members are available on the notice boards in the boathouse.

Emergency telephone numbers are displayed on the safety notice board in the clubhouse lobby. Call 999 in case of an emergency and be prepared to describe the incident and its location. For all non-emergency calls phone 101.

Club address is: Peterborough City Rowing Club  
Thorpe Meadows  
Peterborough  
PE3 6LN

In the event that you are out on the river when in need of the phone the nearest public telephone can be found at:

- Dragonfly Hotel, Thorpe Meadows
- Key Theatre, Embankment

## Insurance and BR membership

All boats used by members of the club and visitors must carry at least 3rd Party insurance. PCRC-owned boats are all covered by the club's 3rd Party Insurance.

If you borrow a private boat, ensure that you are covered with the owner. It is yours, not the clubs, responsibility to ensure that you are adequately covered.

At the time of this document BR membership includes personal accident insurance cover for members while engaged "in any activity of the insured organisation anywhere in the world including direct travel to and from such activity within Great Britain, Northern Island, The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man".

PCRC's insurance does not cover members for personal injury.

## On-water Safety

### Environmental conditions

Before attempting your outing, it is essential to assess the weather and the water conditions for the duration and type of outing you are undertaking.

Make sure you are wearing suitable kit to help keep you warm and dry in cold, wet conditions. In hot conditions ensure you are wearing sunscreen and have access to drinking water.

During extreme weather such as heavy rain, rowers need to be aware that water levels and flow rates can change during an outing depending on the management of the lock systems up stream, river levels can change significantly in a matter of hours as a result of locks being opened up.

### Thunder & Lightning

For clarity and ease of reference, the following guidance is taken from BR RowSafe and the relevant BR Safety Notice.

Please note that in the event of lightning rowers are particularly vulnerable as they are often in wide open spaces where they are the highest thing around.

People struck by lightning are predominantly hit before and after the peak of the storm. **The 30/30 rule helps to ensure that people are sheltering during the riskiest parts of the storm. If the flash to bang time is 30 seconds, or less, then find shelter. Stay there until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.**

What you should do:

- Check the weather forecast – if lightning is forecast then find an indoor activity instead.
- If you are on water, get into shelter as quickly as possible; water will transmit strikes from further away. Proximity to water is a common factor in lightning strikes.

- Find shelter inside a large building or a motor vehicle. The inside of a car is safe as lightning will spread over the metal of the vehicle before earthing through the tyres.
- If you are outside with nowhere to shelter, make yourself as small a target as possible by crouching down with your feet together, hands on knees and your head tucked in.
- Do not shelter beneath tall or isolated trees, one in four people struck by lightning are sheltering under trees.
- Find shelter quickly if your hair begins to stand on end or nearby appliances begin buzzing - it may mean lightning is about to strike.
- Lightning can be conducted, in a building, by aerials, piping or other wires. Except in cases of emergency, don't use your telephone (landline or mobile) until the storm is over.
- Call the emergency services if someone is hit; they will need urgent help. A lightning strike is not usually instantly fatal, a victim's heart and/or breathing may stop. Early use of CPR may well save their life. You will not receive an electric shock from the victim.

### **High Water or Flood Conditions**

The following rules are taken from the PCRC Policy on this topic.

#### **High water/flood conditions - Rowing on the River Nene**

##### **A When the river is running abnormally high, above it's normal level.**

If you are unsure about what constitutes abnormally high, ask someone suitably experienced.

##### **B When the flow on the river is abnormally fast.**

If you are unsure about what constitutes abnormally fast, ask someone suitably experienced.

##### **C When the flow of water down the river exceeds the capacity of the normal river channel and floods adjoining land.**

For the avoidance of doubt, when the water is crossing the dam which separates the river from the rowing lake the river can be deemed as flooding adjoining land.

**Where conditions meet criteria A and B**, the river may not be used by juniors, novices, inexperienced or unfamiliar athletes or coaches. Other more experienced athletes who are familiar with the river & wish to use it should make a thorough assessment of the risks & document that assessment before deciding it is safe & reasonable to row on the river in those prevailing conditions. If in doubt, athletes should seek further guidance from such persons as the Club Water Safety Adviser, captains, coaches, or other suitably qualified club officers. Reference should also be made to any flood warnings and advice provided by the Environment Agency on their website.

In the event of high-water conditions on the river athletes must continue to use landing stages to put boats in and out of the water in the same manner as during normal conditions. **If it is not possible to boat from a secure landing stage, the river is deemed out of bounds.**

Athletes should take particular care when putting boats into and taking them out of the water when using landing stages which are not in their normal position, check the stages are securely positioned before attempting to boat.

Athletes using the river in high water/flood conditions should be aware that water levels and flow rates can change during an outing depending on the management of the lock systems up stream. River levels can change significantly in a short period of time as a result of lock management.

Athletes should be aware that the river may contain debris during and after flooding which may present a danger to boats and athletes. Caution must be exercised at all times and a good lookout maintained in order to spot and avoid such hazards.

**Where conditions meet criteria C**, there should be no rowing on the river Nene.

### **High water/flood conditions - Rowing on the PCRC Lake**

**D If the cycle path adjacent to the lake is flooded and coaches cannot accompany athletes along the entire length of the lake.**

**E If in addition to criteria D, it is not possible to boat onto the lake from a secure landing stage.**

**Where conditions meet criteria D**, the lake will be out of bounds to juniors, novices, inexperienced or unfamiliar athletes or coaches. **In these conditions the lake will also be out of bounds to everyone outside the hours of daylight.**

Other experienced athletes who are familiar with the lake & wish to use it should make a thorough assessment of the risks & document that assessment before deciding it is safe & reasonable to row on the lake in those prevailing conditions. If in doubt, athletes should seek further guidance from such persons as the Club Water Safety Adviser, captains, coaches, or other suitably qualified club officers.

In the event of high-water conditions on the lake athletes must continue to use secure landing stages to put boats in and out of the water in the same manner as during normal conditions. Landing stages can be installed at the hotel end of the lake, if necessary.

Athletes should take particular care when putting boats into and taking them out of the water when using landing stages which are not in their normal position, check the stages are securely positioned before attempting to boat.

Particular care should be taken when navigating on the lake. Keep clear of the bushes, trees & posts on the opposite side of the lake to the clubhouse and clear of the posts & footpath on the clubhouse side of the lake.

In all circumstances athletes should observe the normal circulation pattern on the lake. When the buoys are not visible, athletes must take extra care to ensure a reasonable amount of separation between boats travelling in opposite directions on the lake.

Athletes should be aware that the lake may contain debris during and after flooding which may present a danger to boats and athletes. Caution must be exercised at all times and a good lookout maintained in order to spot and avoid such hazards.

**Where conditions meet criteria E**, it is not possible to boat from a secure landing stage and hence **the lake is deemed out of bounds and there should be no rowing on the lake by anyone at any time.**

**If you are unsure if rowing conditions are safe, do not risk it – it is always better to be on land wishing you were on the water rather than on the water and wishing you were on land.**

### Rowing in the dark

There is strictly no rowing on the river Nene for anyone outside the hours of daylight.

As autumn approaches and the nights start drawing in care should be taken in planning your outing to ensure that you are off the river before dusk and consideration should be given to using the lake instead at these times.

For juniors there is strictly no rowing on the water (river or lake) outside the hours of daylight unless a specific written exception to row on the lake - in line with the relevant PCRC Policy - has been requested from the CRSA and approved in writing by the Trustees. Such permission will only be considered and granted under exceptional circumstances.

Rowing outside the hours of daylight is only permitted on the PCRC lake under the following conditions:

- **Members:** For suitably competent senior and masters athletes, check with your coach or the captains to determine your competence or for exceptionally permitted juniors whilst accompanied by their coach in accordance with their unique safety plan
- **Competence:** Athletes may be deemed competent by coaches or captains if they are suitably experienced and able to self-rescue in the event of a capsize in the dark
- **Behaviour:** Members observe strict adherence to the lake circulation pattern at all times to minimise the risk of collision
- **Conditions:** Only when environmental conditions would otherwise allow, see previous section above
- **Equipment:** The boat is displaying two lights, a white light at the bow and a red light at the stern, the boat should be visible a full 360° at all times, as shown in the diagram [here](#).
- **Turning:** Owing to the additional risks caused by turning from the access lane into lanes 1, 2, or 3 before reaching the start end of the lake when it is dark, such practice is not ordinarily permitted and you must only turn at either end of the lake. The only allowable exception is in the event of an emergency situation in which case extra vigilance must be taken when undertaking this manoeuvre as boats travelling in lanes 1, 2, or 3 will not expect you to be in their path and you may need to shout loudly to warn them of your presence so that they can take avoiding action. Any occurrence of such emergency situations should be reported to the CRSA as an incident by the boat making the early unplanned turn across the lake.

Please be aware that you may be asked to get off the water immediately if you do not comply with the above conditions.



Again, as autumn approaches and the nights start drawing in care should be taken to ensure that you are either off the lake before dusk or are both competent and suitably equipped to be on the lake after dark and that the lights on the boat are in use. Please be aware that you may be asked to get off the water immediately if you do not comply with the above conditions.

## Equipment

Your safety is significantly affected by the condition of the equipment you choose to row or scull in.

You must make sure that the boat you are going to use is in a safe condition before you go down to the landing stage. Bow ball, heel restraints or buoyancy compartments **MUST** be checked before every outing.

Boats that have a missing or defective bow ball, heel restraint or buoyancy compartment **shall not** be used under any circumstances until a repair is made.

Any maintenance problem or damage to a club boat should be reported to the Boat Maintenance Officer and/or a committee member as soon as possible.

All lifejackets and buoyancy aids must comply with the relevant national EN standards and carry the CE mark of approval. All coxswains must wear an approved lifejacket or buoyancy aid on top of all other garments when in the boat.

Coxswains should never wear wellington boots when in the boat as these may cause death in the event of a capsize particularly in cold conditions. Jeans and other stiff fabrics are also to be avoided as these restrict the ability to swim to safety in the event of capsize.

## Tying boats down outside the boathouse

All members are reminded that:

- everyone involved in rowing has a duty of care to ensure their actions both on and off the water are conducted in a manner which does not compromise the safety of either themselves or others
- extra care and vigilance must be taken when handling boats during PCRC events when large numbers of people unfamiliar with how boats are handled on land are likely to be in the vicinity, especially in actual or potentially windy conditions
- all boats must be suitably tied down to trailers, racks and trestles at all times when they are left unattended outside the boathouse, especially in actual or potentially windy conditions
- in windy conditions further consideration should be given to whether it is actually safe to leave any unattended boat tied on to trestles outside the boathouse rather than properly racked inside the boathouse
- if they observe boats not being suitably tied down when left unattended to remind the crew(s) and/or coaches concerned of the need to do so

## Capsize or Sinking



In the event of capsize or sinking **stay with the boat** as it will continue to float and will make it easier for a rescuer to spot you. If the stream is taking you towards an obstruction, such as a bridge, try and keep the boat between you and the obstruction so it can provide you with a degree of protection.

## Rowing on the River

All inexperienced rower/scullers must be accompanied by a coach along the bank when training on the river. If you are uncertain as to whether you are sufficiently experienced to go on the river unaccompanied then you should check with either the Men's or Ladies Captain, the Chairman of the Rowing Committee, the Head Coach or the coach of your group.

Based on the risk assessment completed by the junior representative or coach, junior members training on the river may either be accompanied by a launch and/or a coach on the bank.

When juniors wish to train on the river, they should be accompanied by a launch or coach on the bank. The following should be carried as appropriate (to be found in the coaches rucksacks and/or launches / launch bags). For example:

- spare clothes
- space blankets/bivvy bags
- first aid kit
- toolkit
- throw line
- audio signalling device, such as a loudhailer
- mobile phone
- PCRC Emergency Response Plan

Plus the following items, when accompanied by a coach in a launch:

- safety knife with rope cutter
- spare kill cord
- boathook
- bailer
- paddle

All launch drivers should be trained and preferably hold a RYA level 2 powerboat certificate. All launch drivers and passengers must wear an appropriate life jacket at all times. **RIBs are the recommended boat of choice.**

## Navigation Rules on the River

When training on the river ensure you stay on the correct side of the river (cox's right or sculler's left). All bridges must be navigated with caution, through the centre arch. Rowers travelling downstream (towards the dog in the doublet) have right of way when going through the bridges.

Turning boats should be done only downstream of bridges. When turning at the Staunch (upstream) end of the river, boats are not permitted to go beyond the road bridge before turning. At the dog in the doublet, boats should not approach closer than 250m from the lock before turning.

Beware of all other traffic on the river, many barge drivers do not know the rules of the river and may be travelling on the wrong side. Downstream of the Fitzwilliam Bridge there is no speed limit, crews must take care on this stretch of river due to the possible presence of speed boats.

## **Navigation Rules on the Lake**

All users are required to adhere to the lake circulation pattern at all times. It has been developed for the safety of all on the lake.

Boats must enter the Access Lane below the red marker buoys at the finish end of the lake and stay in the Access Lane until reaching the start end of the lake.

In the Access Lane, slower boats or boats being coached are to remain close to the bank and faster boats should overtake them on the side of the Access Lane next to Lane 4. If a faster crew is approaching a slower crew in the Access Lane, the slower crew shall attempt to move out of the way of the faster crew to allow them to pass safely (by temporarily moving within the Access Lane, where it is safe to do so), while also shouting "take a look" in a timely manner. However, faster crews must be prepared to slow or take avoiding action if necessary and coxless crews must take a look ahead approximately every five strokes or more often if approaching other crews.

Lane 4 is not to be used at any time, except in an emergency.

Boats turning from the Access Lane into lanes 1, 2 or 3 at the start must do so above the red marker buoy and only use these three lanes to proceed to the finish end of the lake. Extreme caution must be taken if turning across the lake from the Access Lane into Lanes 1, 2 or 3 before reaching the start end of the lake in order to avoid being hit by other boats in the Access Lane and by boats using Lanes 1, 2 or 3 who won't expect you to be carrying out this manoeuvre.

For reference, posters showing the navigation rules for the lake are available in the boathouse and can also be viewed [here](#).

When leaving the landing stages travel across the lake to the access lane as quickly as possible. Make sure you are aware of other boats travelling down the course towards the finish line. Do not push off from the landing stage unless you have checked it is clear to do so as crews approaching the finish line may be travelling quickly and be unaware of your presence.

When going up the lake away from the clubhouse to the start point – using only the Access Lane, make sure you are aware of your surroundings and the end of the lake keeping an eye out for the end sign (in the summer months this sign may be obscured by reeds, so check your position regularly).

When travelling down the lake towards the clubhouse / 1km finish point, boats must only use Lanes 1, 2 or 3 and make sure you stay within your lane. In order to

maximise the value of training and hence competitiveness by enabling the completion of 1km pieces at firm pressure – especially at busy times, crews should select the appropriate lane and gapping according to the following criteria:

- Lane 1: is the “slow” lane and should also be used by crews being coached from the path,
- Lane 2: is the “medium speed” lane,
- Lane 3: is the “fast” lane,
- Consideration should also be given to allowing a suitable gap to any crew that you are following down a lane to ensure that you don’t catch them up before arriving at the club house end of the lake.

If a faster crew is approaching a slower crew in the same lane, the slower crew shall attempt to move out of the way of the faster crew to allow them to pass safely (by temporarily moving to another lane, where it is safe to do so), while also shouting “take a look” in a timely manner. However, faster crews must be prepared to slow or take avoiding action if necessary and coxless crews must take a look ahead approximately every five strokes or more often if approaching other crews.

## **Off-water Safety**

### **Use of the gym**

All junior members must be accompanied by a junior coach or a delegated person, juniors found using the gym without supervision will be asked to leave.

All new adult members should not use weights until they have been suitably assessed/trained by a coach or delegated person.

When using weights, ensure the surrounding area is clear of obstacles and floor is not slippery.

When using a bar, gym users must have a spotter to help if they get into difficulty.

Please also ensure you are wearing suitable non-slip shoes.

When finished with the weights, make sure all bars and free weights are returned to the storage area to avoid trip hazards for other gym users.

To maintain the appropriate hygiene standards and protect the health of other club members and volunteers; all gym equipment contact points should be sanitised after every use, using the cleaning products provided.