



Leeds Rowing Club
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Leeds Rowing Club: Risk Assessment Waterloo Lake Version October 2022

This risk assessment will be a 'live' document and subject to regular review by the club Water Safety Officer and at club committee meetings. The assessment will be updated as required considering analysis of reported incidents and emerging risks. All club members must be familiar with this document.

Remember, safety is everyone's responsibility and although coaches will routinely carry out risk assessments all club members need to review potential hazards and possible safety controls and take responsibly for the safety of themselves and others.

Note that the Leeds Boathouse has a separate Risk Assessment for Covid-19 and requires all clubs to produce Covid-19 Return to Rowing Safety plans that align with that Boathouse Risk, Assessment, BR's Return to Rowing Guidance, and Government and Local Authority guidance.

Hazard	Description	Risk Level	Control Measures	Final Risk
General				
Club member awareness	Rowers unaware of safety rules	H	New members must be offered an induction session that covers the key points of this risk assessment, the circulation pattern, the water environment generally, potential risks and how to mitigate them. Clubs to have mechanisms in place to ensure standards and procedures are enforced and reviewed regularly. Clubs to hold regular safety briefings.	L
The Water Environment				
Deep Water	The water is deep in places and can be expected to be greater than standing depth	M	Map of navigation available and all club members required to be familiar with it. Circulation pattern published and adhered to. All boats to keep to the right/ starboard side of the lake (when facing direction of travel ie `bow side). Club Safety Code reviewed and updated regularly. Club members required to adhere to it and to British Rowing `Row Safe' guidelines. All members informed of potential hazards and action to be taken in event of accident. Safety launch crew to be aware of potential weed hazard and check propeller. Fishermen not a major hazard to rowers but boats are a hazard to fisherman. Crews and coxes to try and avoid rowing close to fishermen's lines All Club members required to be able to swim (or wear appropriate buoyancy aid) and club holds	L
Vegetation/ weed in lake	May foul safety launch propeller Hazard to single scullers in summer			
Poor Water Visibility	Visibility below water will be limited			
Debris	Debris maybe present on and below the water surface			
Underwater Obstructions	Underwater obstructions maybe present creating potential for underwater entrapment and injury			
Fishermen	Fisherman may have lines out into the lake			
Dam and Stakes	The lake is short, 650m before you have to turn leading to a risk of collision with dam or stakes.			
Weirs	There is an overflow weir near the dam			

			<p>regular swim tests and capsized drills for members.</p> <p>Throw lines available in the event of a person in the water (carried by coaches). First Aid Kit and Thermal blankets are available in the boathouse and in launch bags and are checked regularly</p> <p>Rowing boats and safety launches not to be too close to the overflow weir, dam and stakes all of which are marked on the map of the lake at the boathouse.</p> <p>Coaches/Coxes will carry mobile phones (waterproof pouches available) to contact each other in case of emergency. Safety Launch will be available but see comment below re capsized.</p> <p>Swimming in the lake forbidden.</p> <p>Coxes alert to floating debris and underwater hazards – can be removed by safety launch.</p>	
Vegetation	In places vegetation may overhang the lake and restrict sight lines. This is a particular problem in the summer months	L	Coxes and Crews to be alert to this possible navigation hazard and report incidents to club for dissemination to all members.	L
Weather				

Temperature	<p>Cold, Ice, Snow, cold may be exacerbated by wind speed</p> <p>Sun, Heat</p>	H	<p>Coaches must carry out a risk assessment of temperature and likely wind chill factor before all outings and consult with crews.</p> <p>Crews must wear appropriate clothing – see below</p> <p>In inclement weather coaches will consider halting outings or restricting the length of outings to a maximum of, for example, of 40 minutes if rowing is permitted.</p> <p>In some weather conditions it may be possible to allow experienced crews to row but restrict coxed crews, inexperienced scullers, and juniors.</p> <p>The safety launch must be out if anyone is to row/ scull in very cold or windy weather.</p> <p>Coaches must ensure crew have water bottles available and use sun block</p>	L
Ice	<p>In cold weather the lake may partially freeze, thick ice may damage boats and lead to capsize or sinking.</p> <p>Decking may be icy</p>	M	<p>Coaches must carry out a risk assessment, and consider cancelling outings.</p> <p>Use of salt/ grit when appropriate</p>	L
Wind	<p>High winds may cause capsize if boats become inundated with water, may increase risk of collision by blowing boats of course</p>	H	<p>Coaches must carry out a risk assessment of wind speeds and will ban rowing if they believe rowing is unsafe.</p>	L
Electrical Storms	<p>Lake is large stretch of open water – risk of lightning strike.</p>	M	<p>30/30 rule will be invoked. If thunder follows lightning by less than 30 seconds then rowing will be suspended and begin 30 minutes after last such occurrence.</p>	L
Light/ Visibility	<p>Rowing is unsafe in the dark</p> <p>Fog can limit visibility increasing the risk of collisions.</p>	H	<p>Strict rules about the timing of outings. Members may not row in the dark either early in the morning before sunrise, or in the evenings after dusk – under any circumstances</p> <p>When there is fog must be able to clearly see 250m ahead, at the new boathouse this is approximately</p>	L

			<p>from the pontoon to bridge, if visibility is less then will not boat.</p> <p>In sunshine glare from the water can significantly reduce visibility. Coxes and rowers should consider if the use of sunglasses is required to allow them to see other craft/ obstacles in good time.</p>	
Rowing Activities				
Collision	<p>With other rowing boats</p> <p>With bank, buoys, fixed obstructions or floating debris</p>	M	<p>Basic competence of coxswains and steersmen.</p> <p>Knowledge of navigation, map available with hazards marked.</p> <p>Strict adherence to circulation pattern.</p> <p>Crews being overtaken must give way to faster crews by moving to the right/ starboard side of the lake (when facing direction of travel ie `bow side`). This means slower crews moving towards the bank.</p> <p>Leaving open water for faster crews to overtake</p> <p>See actions for Capsize below.</p> <p>All incidents to be reported to the Water Safety Officer who will pass on to British Rowing.</p> <p>Bow Balls must be present and secure</p>	L
Congestion in Boathouse area	Risk of collision as greatest concentration of boats as crews go out and return – both on land and on water.	H	<p>Strict adherence to circulation pattern on water.</p> <p>Coxes or strokes in charge of boats on land</p>	L
Increase in usage	Membership growth and/ or new activity (eg schools) may lead to too many rowers on the water.	M	Management of session times and numbers rowing by close communication between users.	L
Boat capsize, sinking or boat unrowable	Rowers and coxes in water, risk of shock, injury, hypothermia and drowning	M	<p>Safety code clear about what to do in event of capsize – must stay with boat and swim with boat to bank.</p> <p>Boats will normally remain buoyant.</p> <p>Coxes required to wear lifejackets.</p> <p>All club members required to be able to swim (or wear</p>	L

			<p>appropriate buoyancy aids) Shoe types allow quick escape from boat. Scullers instructed in Capsize Drill. Coaches will carry throwlines, and have first aid training. All coxes and coaches to carry mobile phones. Lead coaches with level 2 certificate to have a current first aid qualification. The club has a Safety Launch but with 4-5km of water it will not always be in the right place. In the event of capsizes crews will follow standard safety procedure and stay with the boat as it will float, but swim with the boat to the bank. Coaches will be able to call safety launch with walkie talkie/ mobile if required, but may also be able to help crew leave water with throwlines. Crew members may be able to help themselves if this will be safest Hatches must be present on boats to prevent swamping, on older style boats without compartments buoyancy bags must be inflated. Juniors should go out in 'flotillas' wherever possible so that scullers are never too far from other more stable boats, and quads/ fours on junior outings should carry throw lines as well as the coach. Inexperienced scullers (in coaches' judgement) to stay within sight of boathouse. Single scullers are not allowed to take a single out on their own unless they have been deemed sufficiently skilled by the Head of Rowing. All incidents to be reported to British Rowing.</p>	
Inappropriate rowing activity	<p>Performing tasks not suitable for the individual needs of those participating – inappropriate type, intensity or volume of activity Inexperienced novices straying too far out into</p>	L	<p>Coach's responsibility. Adherence to British Rowing guidance on 'How much, How often' for Juniors. LRC rules on timing and organisation of sessions – see BR Safety Code</p>	L

	the lake		Novice and L2R coaches to ensure inexperienced rowers remain close to boathouse	
Inappropriate coxing activity	Coxes going out for consecutive sessions in poor weather		Coach, cox and crew to take responsibility for ensuring coxes are not abused!	
Inappropriate coaching activity	Coach not assessing or informing participants of hazards and risks. Inappropriate coach participant ratios	L	All coaches qualified or being trained. Not all crews need coaches for every outing. Experienced crews can row without a coach and inexperienced crews may row with an experienced cox. Decisions about who may row without coaches present to be made by Head of Rowing and/ or coaches.	L
Adaptive Rowing	Where rowers with disabilities may have individual needs to reduce risks.	M	All rowers must inform the coach of any disability which may need to be adapted for whether it be through equipment or coaching communication. Rowers within the LTA classification may row inclusively within crew boats ensuring coaching needs are met. Those with visual impairment must be suitably guided around on land and water. Rowers within the TA and AS classification must use equipment that meets the FISA regulations. To ensure safe rowing or people with disabilities a BR trained classifier must indicate suitable classification, preference to formally classify when possible. Be aware that for some boat types and disabilities the boats may not move as fast so reduced wind levels and flow rates must be considered. Where getting into the boat requires transferring on the floor a transfer surface must be used to reduce risks from being on a cold and potentially wet floor. Where rowers do not use all limbs, or have reduced circulation, consider reducing session times when cold, they might not be aware getting cold.	L

Equipment Failure				
Inappropriate/ Unsuitable clothing	Risk of hypothermia if cold, sunburn if hot and potential problems if clothes catch on equipment or on capsizes.	M	Coaches will assess whether participants are adequately clothed for the conditions and prevent those inadequately clothed from rowing. Multiple layers of light clothing are best for cold weather. Cover up to avoid sunburn in hot weather. Avoid loose fitting clothes that could catch oars or get stuck in the slide Avoid bulky fleeces and quilted tops that can absorb water and become very heavy when wet, and clothes that restrict movement when rowing like denim jeans or tops, and hoodies with front pouches/ pockets. Coxes must not wear heavy boots.	L
	Crew members with long hair are at risk of becoming entangled in riggers in et event of capsizes.	M	All crew members with long hair are strongly advised to either tie hair firmly in a bun or wear a tight hat to contain hair.	L
	Risk from use of in/ over ear personal audio devices/headphones that restrict the ability to hear and may snag in equipment.	M	Rowers are not allowed to row with such equipment. Coaches may use video and recording equipment, coxes may use cox box related equipment and carry mobile phones/ walkie talkies for safety purposes	L
Inappropriate/ Unsuitable equipment	Failure of equipment may lead to accidents on the water or on land (if trestles collapse). Routine checklist should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cracked/ damaged hull • Bowball • Hatches • Heel restraints • Slides and seats • Riggers, topnuts, swivels and gates • Steering mechanisms 	M	All boats to be checked before use and any potential problems reported to the coach and addressed before the boat is taken out. See check list opposite for basic minimum. Any damage or equipment failure to be reported. All incidents to be reported to the Water Safety Officer who will pass on to British Rowing. In case of para-rowing within TA & AS classification strapping, support and floats must be present and within FISA regulation	L

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collars on blades 			
Safety Launch Failure	Essential for crew rescue if accident/incident	M	<p>Ensure launch bag is properly stocked (See BR Row Safe guidance) and in launch.</p> <p>Ensure pair of paddles in launch.</p> <p>Petrol tank full and strapped into launch, not loose.</p>	L
Health				
Biological Contamination	Leptospirosis other waterborne pathogens and contaminated needles may be present.	M	<p>Cover all wounds with waterproof dressings</p> <p>Wash any new cuts, broken blisters with clean water</p> <p>Wear suitable footwear when launching boats</p> <p>Avoid unnecessary contact with lake water, mud etc., especially swallowing and in the mouth, nose and eyes</p> <p>Do not splash face or boats fittings with river water</p> <p>Wash/shower after capsizing</p> <p>Wash hands before handling food and drink</p> <p>Wash damp kit immediately</p> <p>Weil's disease (Leptospirosis) is rare but serious. The first stages are flu-like symptoms in 2 to 20 days: if these appear, report to your doctor</p>	L
Medical Emergency	Urgent and/or major treatment required	M	<p>Procedure for calling Emergency Services in place and known by all coaches and crews and set out on Club Safety Notice Board. All Coaches trained in basic CPR. First Aid Kit at boathouse.</p> <p>There is a Defibrillator attached to the railings by the main front entrance to the café.</p> <p>See Safety Notice Board.</p> <p>Safety Launch to be deployed if needed</p>	L
Illness or injury	Treatment required, Possible emergency	M	<p>Procedure for calling Emergency Services in place and known by all coaches and crews and set out on Club Safety Notice Board. All Coaches trained in basic CPR. First Aid Kit at boathouse. See Safety</p>	L

			<p>Notice Board</p> <p>Safety Launch will be available but see comment about capsize above.</p> <p>Declaration of relevant existing illness a requirement of membership and coaches informed, with consent of rower.</p>	
Infectious disease	Illness transmitted between athletes and coaches within the club.	M	Clubs should encourage their members to comply with the Government's vaccination regime where possible. All those with symptoms of Covid or any other flu like symptoms should remain at home for 7 days before attending rowing and only then if symptom free.	L
Inadequate first aid kit	First aid kit supplies run down or out of date and injuries cannot be treated effectively on site.	M	Annual audit undertaken of First Aid kits, and supplies maintained at suitable levels.	L
Land Based Hazards				
Slips Trips & Falls	<p>Pontoons and launching areas may be wet or on occasions icy.</p> <p>The lake banks in places are steep and uneven, access may be difficult.</p>	H	<p>All crew members instructed in safe handling of boats. Coxes in charge of coxed boats, Stroke in charge of uncoxed boats. Throwlines available in case of fall into water. First Aid Kit available.</p> <p>Coaches instructed not to approach too close to edge of bank.</p> <p>Use of salt/ grit when appropriate</p>	<p>M</p> <p>L</p>
Petrol	In portable metal tanks for safety launch – risk of fire	L	Petrol tank strapped to floor of launch when in use and in locked metal cabinet when not in use.	L
Trailer Loading	Risk of damage to boats if not loaded and secured correctly	H	See separate Safety Guidance on loading and towing of trailers and trailer checklist	L
Pontoon	Risk to crews and boats if not secured correctly.	H	Ensure pontoon secured mid way between the two rings and lines tied securely.	M
Rowing Machines	Risk of injury to users if incorrect technique	M	See separate Rowing Machine Risk assessment	
Weights, boats and	Risk of injury if members have to move things that are too heavy for them	M	Club members must always return weights to appropriate place	

other heavy lifting			Always ask for help if in doubt about ability to move a boat	
Anti-social Behaviour	Anti-social behaviour may be experienced at various locations in the park and associated structures.	M	Coaches and coxes to be alert and aware. All incidents to be reported to Club Committee. Call police or community liaison officer if required	L
Objects thrown at boats	Objects can be thrown from the bank	M	Coaches and coxes to be alert and aware. All incidents to be reported to Club Committee. Call police or community liaison officer if required	L
Dogs in water Ducks and swans in water	May cause accident/ collision/ capsize	L	Notice to public to keep dogs on lead in boathouse area Crews and coxes to be alert to potential dangers	L
Other users on lake side	Various people use the paths and including walkers, runners, cyclists and anglers	L	Access to boat launching areas around boathouse restricted with members of public not allowed. Coaches cycling along towpath warned to be aware of potential risk to other users.	L
Towpath and riverside vegetation	Vegetation over hanging towpaths may be a problem especially in summer	L	Coaches cycling along towpath warned to be aware of potential risk to other users. Incidents to be reported to club for dissemination to all coaches.	L
Access & Egress	The lake and getting out of the lake after capsize may be difficult	L	No need for coaches or crew to access or leave water away from boathouse unless capsize. Either coaches will assist with throw lines or Safety Launch will retrieve crew – see comment about capsize above.	L