

# GLOBE SAFETY PLAN FOR ALL MEMBERS

December 2010

## **Purpose of this Globe Safety Plan**

Our Club fully supports and implements BRITISH ROWING's "**Water Safety Code**" which should be read by all members and can be found at:

[www.britishrowing.org/watersafety](http://www.britishrowing.org/watersafety). This Globe Safety Plan highlights particular safety aspects pertinent to our Club and therefore should be brought to the attention of all existing and new members who must read it regularly so that they are familiar with the obligations and requirements placed upon each and every person wanting to row with our Club.

The Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it remains compliant with The BR "Water Safety Code", and the Committee urge all members to do likewise.

Safe use of the clubhouse, the boat shed, gym the Thames and the facilities at the Royal Dock, when used, are of extreme importance to the Globe Committee.

There is a responsibility for each individual to be familiar with and uphold the Water Safety Code at all times. This is a condition of membership of BRITISH ROWING through the annual registration scheme. The Committee strongly recommend that all active rowing members register annually with BRITISH ROWING and thereby take advantage of the insurance cover and make themselves familiar with all safety issues.

Every club member must assist in improving safety practice by adhering to these safety instructions. ALL members should directly challenge any member or water user who is seen to be non-compliant with the Water Safety Code or the guidelines outlined below.

Members are reminded that the Committee will not hesitate to take disciplinary action against any members who acts in an irresponsible or unsafe manner on the water, whether in Club boats or in their own boats.

## **1. REQUIREMENTS ON ALL MEMBERS**

New or potential Club Members must:

1. Receive an introduction to safety issues both regarding their own safety and that of others.
2. Receive information about how to lift, carry and launch boats without causing harm to themselves and the equipment.
3. Demonstrate that they can swim at least 100 metres unaided.
4. Provide evidence that they are in good health and do not suffer from any medical conditions likely to pose a hazard either to themselves or any other rowers or river users. All medical conditions that might affect members while at the Club must be disclosed to the Club.
5. At all times wear suitable clothing for the weather conditions at the time.
6. Obey instructions of those coaching, coxing or instructing when handling boats or when on the water. This is an activity that must be taken seriously at

all times so whilst rowers are encouraged to enjoy their rowing, no foolhardy behaviour will be tolerated.

## 2. CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

### a) CLOTHING

Members should wear close fitting clothing which will not interfere with the blade handles or mechanism of the boat. Care must be taken not to allow long shirts or tops to get caught in the seat slide. If in any doubt about the suitability of their kit, members should consult a Committee member.

### b) COLD WEATHER:

Especially during the winter months, the risk of hypothermia from wearing insufficient clothing or with inexperienced crews not moving vigorously enough to generate sufficient body heat is a REAL DANGER. Members should wear several thin layers of appropriate clothing, preferably with a waterproof garment on top. Coxes, especially, should be well protected, including hats, thick wool socks and gloves (preferably waterproof). All rowers must also read and take note of at least the 5 page précis of the December 2010 document:

#### **“Rowing in cold water conditions – Taking sensible precautions”**

The main 10 page document is essential reading for coaches and any potential rescuers. They contain important warnings and risks involved in case of cold water immersion that may lead to serious **hypothermia** problems. Both the précis and the longer version are available on our Globe website and on the Clubhouse notice board (and extra copies are available on request from the Club Safety Adviser).

### c) HOT WEATHER:

Precautions (hat, sun cream) should be taken against sunburn, as the sun's effect is doubled due to reflection from the water.

### d) BUOYANCY AIDS

Coxswains and coaches in launches must wear buoyancy aids at all times.

### e) FOOTWEAR:

Members, including coxes, using club boats must wear wet-shoes, crocs, sandals or Wellington boots.

### f) BOATS AND BLADES:

Members **must** check the condition of boats and blades, including bow-balls, buoyancy bags and heel restraints, before going afloat and **must not boat** if these items are defective. This applies not only to members using club boats but also to those using private boats. The following criteria should be used:

- Boat hull - Check not cracked, split, nor holed. Check no water in sealed compartments.
- Bow Ball - Check securely fitted, no cracks or splits

- Heel Restraints - Check they are in good condition and not frayed or missing. Check heels only come up far enough to allow full foot movement while rowing. **50mm rise is about right.**
- Riggers - Check riggers are not loose and are in good condition with gates securely attached and undamaged.
- Bungs or corks - Check these are in place and secure.
- Steering equipment - Check rudder cables are free and have full movement. Check for frayed cable. Check cable is not too tight - if necessary, adjust cable length.
- Rudders & fins - Check rudder and fin are not bent. Check free and full movement of rudder.
- Buoyancy bags - Check all buoyancy bags are present, not split, and adequately inflated.
- Buoyancy compartments - Check all hatch covers are in place and properly closed.
- Blades - Check no loose components, buttons are secure and not worn down, no water in shaft.

Any defects or damage should be written in the log book and notified to a Committee member as soon as possible. Any such defects in a private boat should be rectified before the boat is next used.

Any accident involving injury must be recorded in one of the First Aid /accident books (one is kept in the gym in the cupboard at the top of the stairs and the other by the diary book of outings in the boat club).

### **3. ASSESSMENT OF CREW COMPETENCE**

a) **NOVICES:** Novice members (which means members new to rowing and/or new to the river) may not take out club boats unless they are accompanied by an experienced member in the boat or by a safety launch. Novice members may only row with a coxen who is well acquainted with the river.

b) **SCULLERS:** Scullers are strongly advised not to go afloat alone. Inexperienced scullers may go afloat only if accompanied by experienced scullers and/or by a safety launch.

c) **COXLESS BOATS:** Coxless boats should only be used by experienced members with a steersperson who is regarded on the day as competent by a Committee member. In all other cases they should be accompanied by a safety launch.

d) **CAPSIZING DRILL/RIVER SAFETY TOUR:** All members should complete the capsizing drill and river safety tour at the first possible opportunity. The capsizing drill is compulsory for all scullers. All rowers should take note of the December 2010 safety guidance contained in:

**“Rowing in cold water conditions – Taking sensible precautions”**

#### 4. ASSESSMENT OF RIVER CONDITIONS

i) **UNSAFE CONDITIONS**: The Committee or its representative who is designated as being in charge of any Club river session shall have the authority to deem boating **unsafe** due to dangerous wind, fog, or tide conditions, low visibility or extreme cold. No boat must be out before sunrise or after sunset without lights. In this situation, **no member shall go afloat against the advice of that club official's decision**. This will be written in the log book. Any person boating against this decision will be subject to disciplinary action by the Committee.

ii) **OTHER CONDITIONS**: Members should take guidance from experienced members as to whether the conditions are suitable for them to go out. As an outline, members should use the following guidelines to decide whether conditions are safe to boat.

iii). **TIDE AND WEATHER CONDITIONS**: The best time to boat is approximately three hours after high tide. The tide tables may be found on our website and on the Boathouse board beside the logging out and in diary or on notice-boards at the club and should be checked when planning outings or before going afloat. When a strong prevailing wind is in the opposite direction to the tide “wind against tide” (or when the tide will soon change to make this the case) members should not boat as conditions are likely to be too rough. Members should not boat in high winds in any event because it will be too difficult to have proper control of the steering and the boat is more likely to be swamped by high waves. When fog or mist causes conditions of poor visibility such that the other bank cannot be seen clearly no members should go afloat. Members should check weather forecasts before each outing so as to be aware of any possible deterioration in river conditions.

iv) **WASHES**: Many commercial and pleasure boats use the river. Care should be taken when they are on the water as they (in particular the double hulled ‘clippers’ can leave a considerable wash which can put boats in danger of swamping or capsize). When members are boating they should be aware of any boats about to leave or turning by Greenwich Pier opposite, or approaching boats further down the river. The initial ‘draw’ and subsequent washes from these boats will result in boats close to the beach being run aground and badly damaged.

When on the water, members should consider adopting one of the following when a large wash approaches the boat:

- two or more rowers ‘drop out’ to balance the boat with their blades lying on the surface; and/or
- the whole crew moves down to quarter or half slide rowing;
- or stop rowing altogether and raise the boat slightly on the side facing the oncoming wash. Boats should be positioned side on to an incoming wash and the crew should slightly raise the side of the boat nearest to the wash to prevent the boat being swamped.

On weekends, commercial ferry traffic (‘the clippers’) normally start around 8.55am. Heavy commercial traffic, e.g. tugs, normally only travel up river on a flood tide when the water is above the wall, when members should not be on the water except

with the launch. When the water is on the wall any wash will be reflected many times and can make conditions unrowable for several minutes.

v) **EARLY MORNING OR EARLY NIGHT TIME ROWING**: Rowing in dark conditions in Club boats is not permitted. PLA do not permit rowing before sunrise or after sunset without lights.

**Remember, IF IN DOUBT, DON'T GO OUT!**

## **5. GENERAL PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED FOR ALL OUTINGS**

### **1. WOOLWICH RADIO:**

During a rowing session, the first crew to boat **must phone Woolwich Radio** on 020 8855 0315 advising "Globe crews on the river, training between xxxx and yyyy (locations)" and must note on the blackboard that they have done so. The last crew off the water **must phone** to advise "All Globe crews off the water". NOTE THAT THE NEAREST PUBLIC PAYPHONE IS SITUATED IN THE CLUBHOUSE

2. LOGBOOK and BLACKBOARD: Members **must log 'out'** whenever they boat by writing their names, boat and time in the diary provided for this purpose next to the entrance door to the boathouse and in chalk on the blackboard by the large boathouse doors. Each returning crew **must sign back in** to the diary with its return time and wipe their crew name off the blackboard.

3. The tide tables and weather forecast should be checked before each outing and the recommended route followed.

4. After a row, boats must be washed and wiped down after use and any damage noted in the diary, to help ensure their continuing safe condition.

## **6. CIRCULATION PATTERN AND NAVIGATION RULES**

1. Boats must be launched with the bows facing the oncoming stream and must remain inshore while moving against the stream. When travelling with the stream, boats should remain towards the centre of the river. Members should familiarise themselves with the maps of the river displayed on notice-boards at the clubhouse and see the video on our Globe website showing hazards and correct boat positioning. Members must not go downstream of Blackwall Point during a Thames Barrier closure if there is a sailing regatta taking place. Planned closures are notified by the PLA in their Notices to Mariners and are posted on club notice-boards, in the log book and on this website.

## **7. COACHING AND USE OF LAUNCHES**

1. No member may use any launch unless they have been fully instructed in its use and have the permission of a Committee member.
2. Every person using a launch shall wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid at all times whilst afloat. Only one other passenger may ride in the launch so that there is room to pick up one or more crew from a boat that has encountered a problem.
3. All coaching launches and safety boats shall carry the following safety aids:
  - A bailer, and, for inflatable rubber dinghies, a suitable inflation pump and a spare inflation valve.
  - A sound signalling warning device, capable of attracting attention over at least 200 metres.
  - A grab line at least 15m (50ft) long with a large knot tied in one end to assist throwing (ideally a purpose made rescue/heaving line - 'throw bag').
  - Thermal exposure blankets.
  - A basic first aid kit (contents recorded and checked as before).
  - A sharp knife in carrying sheath.
  - A paddle.
  - Simple handholds fixed to the side of the launch to give help to any person being rescued and provide self-help should the driver fall overboard.
  - Anchor and line.
4. Launches are fitted with engine cut-out lanyard devices which must be fixed to the driver on entering the launch.
5. Coaches using the launches must carry a fully charged mobile phone at all times and must have emergency numbers pre-programmed (see Section 10). They must leave details of this number in the log at the clubhouse for contact in an emergency.
6. Note that not every launch is able to effect rescue of capsized rowers out of the water due to the difficulty in pulling swimmers over the sides (in particular the metal launches)

## **8. WATER-BORNE DISEASES**

The water we row upon is not always as clean as we would choose and certainly is not pure enough to be swallowed without giving more than a passing thought to the possible effects it will have upon our internal systems.

The Water Safety Code has as its primary concern, the prevention of accidents involving physical injury, damage to equipment and at the worst, drowning. However, there are other risks to health associated with water based activities which arise from the micro biological or chemical quality of the water itself and of its immediate environs. The use of inland waters can never be risk free and it is essential that, as users, members are aware of the risks present.

1. WEILL'S DISEASE- LEPTOSPIROSIS:  
The risk of contracting Leptospirosis from tidal salt water is small; however,

the serious nature of the disease is such that we must be aware of the dangers and should take simple precautions to reduce the risk of infection, viz.,

- Cuts and abrasions (including blisters) should be covered with waterproof dressings.
- Wear footwear to avoid cuts and protect feet when paddling in the water (launching a boat).
- Shower after contact with the water.
- Wash hands thoroughly before eating and drinking.

If 'flu-like symptoms develop shortly after contact with the water (1-3 weeks) then your doctor should be contacted and advised of the circumstances of exposure.

## 2. GASTRO-INTESTINAL ILLNESS:

There are currently no micro-biological standards for recreational water. Assessing the risks posed by water quality is difficult as conditions can vary substantially in a very short space of time. In general, the health risk will depend on the number and proximity of sewage effluent discharges in any particular body of water. Thames Water periodically discharges sewage into the Thames following periods of heavy rain. During these periods extra care should be taken. When known, this will be announced on the website. By way of precaution after immersion or contact with water of uncertain quality -

- Do not eat or drink before showering/washing.
- If 'foul' water has been swallowed refer to your doctor with full details of incident.

## 9. REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

Incidents and accidents must be reported as follows. Any injuries requiring medical treatment must be reported to a Committee member immediately. The Safety adviser should be informed. All damage must be reported to a Committee member and must be recorded in the diary that is kept near the side entrance to the Boathouse.

### WHAT TO REPORT?

- any incident causing injury to any person
- any incident causing damage to boats or equipment
- any incident causing a hazard to the safety of the crew
- any behaviour by another craft which results in a collision, a near-miss or a hazard to safety .

Any accident or incident (including 'near misses') must be reported to BRITISH ROWING

### DETAILS TO REPORT?

- date & time of incident
- location of incident
- names of craft involved
- positions and direction of travel of craft involved

- description of what happened
- name and contact details of reporter

## **WHO TO REPORT TO? HOW TO REPORT?**

- If the incident involves other river users and non-rowers i.e. not just Globe crews, Phone London VTS (Woolwich Radio) on 020 8855 0315 as soon as possible after the incident occurs and follow up with a written report.
- If the incident requires emergency assistance from rescue services, Phone London VTS (Woolwich Radio) on 020 8855 0315 as soon as possible and follow up with a written report.

Each incident reported to London VTS must also be confirmed in writing to the PLA as follows:

- Download a [River Users Incident & Near-Miss Report form](#)
- complete the form and e-mail it to david.foster@pola.co.uk or
- post it to Harbour Master Upper, Bakers' Hall, 7 Harp Lane, London EC3R 6LB

Notify the BRITISH ROWING (go to Incident Reporting) for all incidents which would previously have been recorded by completing the BRITISH ROWING Incident Logbook.

## **EXAMPLES OF INCIDENTS:**

Report to London VTS, PLA, ARA

- Eight cracking in half at bulkhead because of wash caused by Thames Clipper accelerating hard without warning away from berth.
- Pair being thrown sideways into fixed moorings causing cracking of shell because of excessive wash from passing powered boats.
- Boat being launched from slipway – caught by wash from passing powered boat which caused injury to a crew member when she was knocked off her feet

Report to British Rowing only

- Single sculler from Globe colliding with fixed mooring and capsizing
- Eight being blown ashore in strong crosswind causing puncturing of shell

No report

- Eight had to ease and wait for 5 minutes for wash to die down from Police Launch passing at speed – no damage nor safety hazard

IF IN DOUBT – ask a Committee Member

## 10. EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

- WATER EMERGENCIES:

Crews having swamped or capsized should remain with their craft whenever possible. Do not attempt to swim to shore, unless not to do so would give rise to hypothermia or extreme danger. Coaches accompanying crews in a launch should inform Woolwich Radio immediately on 020 8855 0315 if assistance is required. Woolwich Radio will then contact the River Police.

- COLD WATER SAFETY:

As mentioned above, our Globe website (and copy on the Safety Notice Board) contains a December 2010 document relating to the effects of immersion in cold water and how to improve your chances of survival. Members are strongly advised to read and note at least the 5 page précis. Coaches and potential rescuers should read the longer version:

**“Rowing in cold water conditions – Taking sensible precautions”**

- CUTS AND OTHER INJURIES REQUIRING FIRST AID:

There are first Aid kits situated: IN THE BOATHOUSE ON THE WALL BY THE SIDE ENTRANCE and IN THE GYM IN CUPBOARD ON THE TOP OF THE STAIRWELL. An accident report book (that will be under or beside the First Aid boxes) should be filled in. (Also each Coach motor-launch bag contains a First Aid kit). Any serious injury that requires treatment that has been suffered on Globe premises or using club equipment is reportable to HSE under the RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences regulations 1995). Incidents must be reported by a Committee member asap either by phoning **HSE on 0845 3009923** or **online at: [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/online.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/online.htm)**.

- FIRE:

In the event of fire, all persons must leave the building by the nearest exit. Green signs with a running man indicate exits. Do not stop to collect personal belongings.

Fire hoses are located at the top of the stairs and upon entry to the boathouse. Black extinguishers should be used on electrical fires only. Red extinguishers contain water.

In the event of a fire, members should dial 999. The phones in the boathouse, in the men's changing rooms, and in the bar can be used for this purpose.

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