

## Safeguarding juniors at club events where alcohol is being consumed

This document is a guide for club committees and event organisers, to help them manage rowing events and club functions in a way that is safe and suitable for juniors, particularly if alcohol is on sale. It is not intended to deter the inclusion of juniors from events or club dinners rather to highlight some of the areas that organisers might consider, solutions some clubs have found and to signpost them to some helpful documents. Organisers of rowing events for juniors should also consult the British Rowing Guidance document WG 3.4 Guidelines for Rowing Competitions [www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/Association/Welfare/BritishRowingWG3.4.pdf](http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/Association/Welfare/BritishRowingWG3.4.pdf)

If, in the course of your rowing activity or a related social event, your club uses a premises (such as a pub, social club and even your own clubhouse) that is licensed under the *2003 Licensing Act*, for training sessions, competitions, end of season presentation nights or fundraising functions, the premises manager has a legal responsibility to make sure systems are in place to protect children from 'physical, moral and psychological harm'. This is so that children may participate in activities and benefit from the facilities in a safe and enjoyable way. The venue you choose may have alcohol on sale, or offer other 'licensable activities' such as gambling machines. The *Licensing Act* is not intended to create overly restrictive conditions on the admission of children to events and venues where alcohol is on sale or being consumed, it is partly intended to help promote responsible drinking and family-friendly environments. The document '*Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003*' was revised in 2007 and explains the responsibilities of licensees; it can be downloaded from [www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/RevisedGuidanceJune2007.pdf](http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/RevisedGuidanceJune2007.pdf)

Clubs with licensed bars, or hiring out their premises for licensable events, are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the guidance contained in this document.

If you are holding an event at a licensed venue outside of your clubhouse you may find that the licensee/premises may already have effective safeguarding systems operating to make sure the environment remains family friendly, so that children involved in junior rowing events can learn to socialise, integrate and drink responsibly. Some premises may already have dedicated child welfare staff. These systems may be a legal condition of their premises licence, so it is important that you are aware and compliant with the child protection systems operating at the premises. If you are holding an event at your club and the club has a licensed bar, the club committee and licensee must ensure that any legal requirements relating to safeguarding are in place.

## What are the risks at junior rowing events and functions?

The risks will vary, depending on the type of activities taking place and the audience attending. For example, if you're running training sessions attended by children and supervised by qualified coaches, the risks may be lower than if you're organising an end of season function, where alcohol is on sale. The government guidance document above lists a number of circumstances where children at licensed premises such as young rowers, or other children attending, may at risk of 'physical, psychological or moral harm'.

These may include:

- children exposed to inappropriate behaviour (including strong or offensive language, shouting, swearing, bullying, verbal abuse, criticism)

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- children exposed to dangerous adult behaviour (including adults who are intoxicated, violent or aggressive)
- indecent exposure/urinating in public
- accidental harm (for example from discarded drinks containers, broken glass)
- children buying or consuming alcohol
- proxy purchasing (adults/friends buying alcohol for under 18s)
- adults failing to supervise children
- unsuitable adults supervising children.

## How should risk be managed?

Everyone involved in providing a service or organising an event for children or young people has a duty of care to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid putting these children at any additional risk of harm. It is recommended that club or organising committees discuss the potential risks for any event or situation, at the earliest possible opportunity and look at what systems may already be in place at the club. Where an event will take place at a venue other than the club you should discuss potential risks with the venue manager at the time you book the event and ask what systems they have in place to protect children. You may be asked to agree to comply with their systems, and this agreement may form part of your booking contract with the premises manager. By demonstrating that safeguarding measures operate at the premises, this should reassure the parents/carers and your club's management committee that the premises are a suitable venue.

### Overnight stays

Two-day regattas where clubs camp on site can also create higher risk situations especially where alcohol is available. Club coaches and/or junior co-ordinators should consider how overnight stays without parents present will be managed, including number and gender of coaches and chaperones. It may be too much to expect a coach to be responsible for a group of children, no matter how few, 24 hours a day. Clubs and events might consider whether it is necessary for junior rowers to race on both days and whether junior events could be held on one day only therefore avoiding the overnight stay and risks involved.

### Within the club environment

- Are those operating your club bar trained to:
  1. Challenge potential purchasers who look under 25 years to provide proof of their age? The British Beer and Pub Association's 'Challenge 25' initiative encourages those serving at bars to seek proof of age from anyone who looks under the age of 25 years and to encourage those who are or look under 25 years to carry appropriate identification. Resources and information on this scheme can be found at [www.challenge25.co.uk](http://www.challenge25.co.uk)
  2. Make refusals for alcohol sales if a person appears to be intoxicated or under the age of 18?
  3. Manage confrontation?
  4. Be vigilant for proxy purchase?
  5. Understand the law in relation to alcohol?
  6. Maintain a refusals log and incidents log?
- Who from the club or event is responsible for managing the safeguarding responsibilities? Will the Club Welfare Officer be on site during the event/function?
- Where relevant are sponsors and advertisers appropriate to the age of those attending the event.

- If running an event open to a number of other clubs, or where there is public access, organising committees may wish to consider prominent display of signage to highlight:
  1. Adults must supervise their children/comply with the *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy*
  2. Designated drinking areas, if appropriate
  3. Restricted access areas (for example, changing facilities)
  4. Toilet facilities
  5. Named Event Welfare Officer
  6. Challenge 25 proof of age scheme
- Does the club have appropriate measures in place to sanction irresponsible adults and/or juniors? Annual club dinners can be some of the most difficult situations to manage. A zero-tolerance of alcohol for under 18s is normal at school club dinners and is the preferred safeguarding option; some clubs prefer to insist that parents attend with under-18 year olds and are responsible for their children's behaviour and alcohol intake; other clubs have taken the decision to hold a separate club lunch for junior rowers where alcohol is not available; only over-18s are allowed to attend the evening club dinner.

## Risk Assessment

It is best practice for the event organiser to do a risk assessment prior to each event/function – at an independent venue ask the venue manager to provide you with a copy of their written risk assessment, prior to the event; club events should develop a specific risk assessment prior to an event which can be developed over time. This should be retained on your club files, as a record to demonstrate that you have shown due diligence towards child safety at your event/function, should a situation arise regarding the safety of a child.

Your organising committee should also promote best practice by encouraging parents/carers to adhere to your Code of Conduct and explaining at parent induction meetings the importance of adults behaving in a safe and acceptable way at junior rowing events.

## Useful Contacts

British Beer and Pub Association  
[www.beerandpub.com](http://www.beerandpub.com) **020 7627 9191**

Office of Public Sector Information for information about Acts of Parliament  
[www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)

Department for Culture Media and Sport for guidance documents relating to Acts of Parliament  
[www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

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NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit  
[www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu)