



## Safety Alert - Stay on your feet

There have been incidents recently where rowers have slipped and fallen when launching or recovering their boats. In many cases this has been because landing stages, pontoons, etc. have become slippery or muddy. Some landing stages and pontoons have not been adequately maintained. Slips and falls tend to cause serious injuries that prevent rowers from rowing for some days or weeks.

Landing stages can be immersed during periods of heavy rain when river levels rise and then become exposed again as the river levels fall. The falling water levels can leave behind a layer of silt.

When river levels fall after a period of heavy rain then the land exposed at the edge of the river will be sodden having been under water for some time. It will be slippery and muddy.

It is not unusual for falls to cause ligament damage and even broken bones. Rowers sometimes cut or lacerate their legs when slipping off landing stages. This is particularly worrying at a time when there is concern about water pollution and the extent to which sewage has been allowed to enter rivers.

Ice may also become a problem during the remainder of the winter. It is not just the land at the edge of the water that can become slippery.

So, what can we do? Please encourage clubs and rowers to:-

- Keep landing stages clean and well maintained
- Take extra care when the land at the water's edge is slippery or muddy
- Wear boots (wellingtons) because they will:-
  - provide better grip
  - protect the legs from cuts and abrasions and
  - reduce the extent to which polluted water makes contact with the skin
- Do not forget to wash after coming ashore

Coxes should not go afloat wearing boots as they can become a liability if the cox enters the water.

### Take care to stay upright and uninjured.

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