



BRITISH ROWING

# RowSafe

Safety advice for  
rowers, clubs, and  
competitions

## Summary of Changes in 2024



MON109

# Contents

4 Competition Safety

4.8.1 Rescue Provision for Adaptive Rowers at Competitions

## 1 Culture and Expectations

### 1.2 Positive Safety Culture

#### Leading people to change their behaviour

The leaders of clubs can motivate and encourage their members to develop “safe” behaviour and avoid “at-risk” behaviour. The first step is to understand the importance of behaviour in the causation of incidents. This is normally shown in the annual Analysis of Incidents; there is a link on the [RowSafe](#) page.

There is more information for Level 2 coaches in “Coaching Safe Behaviour”, [here](#) for Level 2 Session Coach and [here](#) for Level 2 Club Coach.

#### Further Information

- Coaching Safe Behaviour – Session Coach - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=148&section=3>
- Coaching Safe Behaviour – Club coach – [https://www.rowhow.org/pluginfile.php/52751/mod\\_resource/content/6/Coaching%20safe%20Behaviour%202019.pdf](https://www.rowhow.org/pluginfile.php/52751/mod_resource/content/6/Coaching%20safe%20Behaviour%202019.pdf)

## 2 Communication

### 2.1 Communication of Safety Information

#### Expectations

##### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Read, understand and implement the guidance on Coaching Safe Behaviour that can be found, [here](#) for Level 2 Session Coach and [here](#) for Level 2 Club Coach.

### 2.3 Radio Procedure

Advice on Radio Licensing and Operators' Certificates of Competence are provided in Section 12 of the Guidance on Safety in Club Premises [here](#).

#### Further Information

- British Rowing Website
  - Safety in Club Premises [https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/British\\_Rowing\\_Safety\\_In\\_Club\\_Premises\\_June-2023.pdf](https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/British_Rowing_Safety_In_Club_Premises_June-2023.pdf)

# 3 Club Safety

Guidelines with dealing with the Aftermath of a Serious Incident at a Club or Competition can be found [here](#).

## Further Information

- Safety Alert – Coping with the behaviour of others - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Safety-Alert-Coping-with-the-behaviour-of-others-June-2023.pdf>

## 3.1 Club Risk Assessment

### Expectations

#### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Review these risks at the time of the activity and determine whether, or not, it is safe to proceed as planned

## 3.2 Club Safety Plans and Safety Rules

Safety Plans can also contain items such as:-

- using appropriate footwear on land and during launch and recovery to protect the feet and reduce the risk of slipping and falling
- each crew carrying a communications device such as a waterproof VHF radio transceiver or mobile phone in a waterproof pouch, tied to a person and not to the boat.

### Expectations

#### Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that inexperienced coaches are supported and, where necessary, supervised.

#### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- If a rower is feeling unwell after exercise, then make sure that someone stays with them until they are feeling better.

## 3.5 Training Camps and Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters

### Expectations

#### Training Camp Organising Committee

Training Camp Organising Committees are expected to:

- Check that all launch drivers are competent and hold any qualification required by the host club or venue management.
- If using equipment provided by the host club or organisation, then check it thoroughly prior to use. Ensure that all boats have sufficient inherent buoyancy.

# 4 Competition Safety

Guidelines for Responding to Major Incidents at Competitions can be found [here](#).

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

## 4.8.1 [Rescue Provision for Adaptive Rowers at Competitions](#)

## Further Information

- Competition Organisers Manual - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/British-Rowing-Competition-Organisers-Manual-March2024.pdf>
- Guidelines for Responding to Major Incidents at Competitions [British-Rowing-Guidelines-for-Managing-Major-Incidents-at-Competitions-March2023.pdf](#) ([britishrowing.org](http://britishrowing.org)).

## 4.1 Competition Risk Assessment

### Further Information

- Safety Alert – Coping with the behaviour of others - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Safety-Alert-Coping-with-the-behaviour-of-others-June-2023.pdf>

## 4.2 Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules

### Expectations

#### Competition

Competition Safety Plans should include:

- Circulation patterns should also identify areas where crews can, perform practice starts or row at full pressure.

#### Officials

Race officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews, marshals and other personnel are expected to: . . . .

#### British Rowing

British Rowing:

- Provides advice on [Competition Planning](#).

### Further Information

- Competition Organisers Manual - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/British-Rowing-Competition-Organisers-Manual-March2024.pdf>

## 4.3 Competition Emergency Response Plan

It is important that this plan is implemented in a timely manner.

### Expectations

#### Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Process for summoning assistance in an emergency, including how and when to call for an ambulance (999 call).

## Further Information

- Competition Organisers Manual - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/British-Rowing-Competition-Organisers-Manual-March2024.pdf>
- Safety in Club Premises, [British Rowing Safety In Club Premises June-2023.pdf](#) ([britishrowing.org](http://britishrowing.org))

## 4.7 Competition Safety Boat Providers

### Expectations

#### Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that Safety Boat Drivers:
  - Hold any qualification required by the host club, navigation authority or venue management. Many navigation authorities require RYA Level 2 Powerboat.
- Provide a briefing for boat drivers that includes all the information that they need to perform their duties.
- Provide drivers with a Course map showing the circulation plan and the extraction points.

#### Safety Boat Providers

Safety Boat Providers are expected to:

- Ensure that Safety Boat Drivers:
  - Hold any qualification required by the host club, navigation authority or venue management. Many navigation authorities require RYA Level 2 Powerboat.

## Further Information

- Competition Organisers Manual - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/British-Rowing-Competition-Organisers-Manual-March2024.pdf>

## 4.8 Adaptive Competitions

### Expectations

#### Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that sufficient and appropriate safety cover is available for adaptive rowers. (See [RowSafe 4.8.1](#) below)

## Further Information

- Club Adaptive Guide - Introducing and developing Adaptive Rowing at your Club- <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/British-Rowing-Adaptive-Rowing-Guide-61pp-v4-72ppi.pdf>
- [RowSafe 4.8.1](#) Rescue Provision for Adaptive Rowers at Competitions

### 4.8.1 Rescue Provision for Adaptive Rowers at Competitions

Events for rowers who need adaptations are being increasingly integrated into rowing competitions. There has been some concern about Competitions having boats and competent people available that can be used to rescue rowers who use adaptations, should they need it. Many of these rowers are as capable of self-rescue as any able-bodied rower but some may sometimes need help.

## The Basics - a little extra thought and preparation is needed

- The purpose of any Competition is to provide safe, fair, and competitive racing with safety the ultimate priority.

- Organisers often make mistaken assumptions about the physical capabilities of adaptive rowers. “Adaptive” can, but does not necessarily, mean a “wheelchair user”. Innovative solutions to safety and other issues will have been identified by the athletes and their clubs.
- Many adaptive athletes do not require any safety measures above those defined in a mainstream event safety plan,
- It must be assumed that the safety plan may have to be amended to allow for the special needs of some adaptive entries. It is essential that every competitor with such requirements has a clear Recovery Plan following capsize and or injury.
- Clubs entering will have risk assessed and have pre-defined protocols for each athlete with special recovery requirements. These will form a useful basis to produce the individual event recovery plan.
- The suitability of safety boat provision and the experience/training of those manning them needs to be assessed and deemed fully capable of implementing any special recovery plan.
- All officials and safety personnel must be made aware when a person with a non-standard recovery protocol is on the water (and off). Keeping the number of adaptive rowers on the water at the same time low is advised.
- Early discussion between the Competition Rowing Safety Adviser and competitor and coach prior to the event is essential. A formal safety meeting may be needed.
- Competitions should be aware that safety or other considerations (e.g. steering a Visually Impaired sculler) may require one or more launches to follow a race.
- The best persons to seek advice from are adaptive clubs and those clubs that have run successful adaptive Competitions.
- Experience has shown planning is everything and usually is not that complicated or onerous.
- It is important to share all relevant safety details with those entered. The athlete and club can then risk assess and determine that the arrangements meet the basic safety needs of that individual.

## The Rescue

The two basic processes in rescue are: -

1. Establish the rower in a head above water position and
2. Extract the rower from the water

Once the first is achieved the second can be completed with appropriate care.

## The Rescue Boat

The stability of the Safety Boat is critical, as is the ease with which a casualty can be lifted into the boat. The preferred option is to use a boat with a drop front.

It may be possible also to use a boat that has a relatively low freeboard, rounded sides and is relatively stable. These include small Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs) and Rigiflex Newmatics (Jaffas). RIBs should not be too large as it could be difficult to lift a casualty into a large RIBs.

It may not be safe to use a catamaran launch or a “tin fish” due to their lack of stability. A catamaran launch may have high initial stability and easy access to the casualty, but their ultimate stability is limited. If two crew members stand on one side of the launch and lift the casualty, then it is likely to capsize.

## The Rescue Crew

Whatever type of boats are used, it is important that they have sufficient crew, with appropriate skills and equipment, to affect a rescue. It may be necessary to have people competent and equipped to enter the water to provide support.

Consider the number of people on the safety boat, and their training, at least two rescuers are needed to lift a person into the boat.

The Helm should not be considered as part of the vessel’s Crew. The two people required to lend assistance should be in addition to the Helm, otherwise the vessel is not in control. This will impact on the size of the safety boat needed.

Consider the difference in response of conscious and unconscious rowers. Having quick release Velcro strap fastenings should be effective if the rower is conscious but will not be effective if the rower is unconscious. At least one member of the safety boat crew should be trained and equipped to use a safety knife to cut the straps, they may be required to enter the water to do so.

Consider the number of rowers that the crew of a safety boat can effectively supervise, and within what distance.

## 5 Competence

### 5.1 Steering and Navigation

#### Expectations

##### Coxes and Steers

Coxes and steers (including scullers) are expected to:

- If the cox or steers does not know that the water ahead is clear then they should stop, or at the very least, slow down
- Review the Rowing Coxing Workshops [here](#).
- Follow correct steering procedures and navigation rules as defined by the local navigation authority or the club.
- Watch out for swimmers at all times, even in areas where it is prohibited to swim and be alert to unexpected floating objects. [See Safety Alert - Look out for swimmers](#).

##### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Provide training to coxes and steers (see [Rowing Coxing Workshops](#)).

#### Further Information

- Rowing Coxing Workshops - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/index.php?categoryid=20>
  - o Classic Coxing Rowing Coxing Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=102>
  - o Fixed Seat Rowing Coxing Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=30>
  - o Coastal Cox/Boat Captain Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=88>

### 5.2 Launch Driving

#### Expectations

##### Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that everyone who is permitted to drive launches is competent and holds any qualification required by the host club, navigation authority or venue management. Many navigation authorities require RYA Level 2 Powerboat.
- Ensure that the level of qualification required is also determined by the Risk Assessment.
- Encourage launch drivers to check their launch prior to use (see [Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks](#))



## Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that the number and type of safety launches provided is sufficient to enable the Competition Safety Plan (see the [Competition Organisers' Manual](#)) to be implemented. The Competition Safety Plan should be based on the Competition Risk Assessment. . Safety boats should be dedicated to that purpose and not also used for umpires or marshalling.
- Ensure that everyone who is permitted to drive launches is competent and holds any qualification required by the host club, navigation authority or venue management.
- Encourage launch drivers to check their launch prior to use (see [Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks](#))

## Launch Drivers

Launch drivers are expected to:

- Check the launch prior to each use (see [Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks](#) and [RNLI Outboard Pre-Start Checks](#)) and that the lights, if needed, are working correctly. Take care to check the steering.
- Always:
  - Operate at a safe speed.
- Ensure that the weight distribution and engine trim are such that the launch does not ride with the bows high.

## Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Remember that if you are driving the launch then your primary responsibility should be on the navigation of your own vessel, and not upon coaching or accompanying rowing vessels. If your role requires you to be primarily focused upon coaching, then another helmsman should be sought who can focus upon the navigation of the launch.

## Further Information

- Competition Organisers' Manual - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/British-Rowing-Competition-Organisers-Manual-March2024.pdf>
- Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Safety-Alert-Launch-pre-use-checks.pdf>

# 6 People

## 6.1 People new to Rowing

### Expectations

#### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Encourage rowers to adopt safe behaviour (see Coaching Safe Behaviour, [here](#) for Level 2 Session Coach and [here](#) for Level 2 Club Coach)
- Be prepared for people new to rowing to hesitate when given instructions, ensure that instructions are given clearly and in good time.
- Ensure that people new to rowing and inexperienced rowers are kept well clear of obstructions and other hazards.
- Ensure that people new to rowing are supervised when afloat in small boats (1x, 2x, & 2-)



## Further Information

- Coaching Safe Behaviour – Session Coach - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=148&section=3>
- Coaching Safe Behaviour – Club coach - [https://www.rowhow.org/pluginfile.php/52751/mod\\_resource/content/6/Coaching%20safe%20Behaviour%202019.pdf](https://www.rowhow.org/pluginfile.php/52751/mod_resource/content/6/Coaching%20safe%20Behaviour%202019.pdf)
- The science behind Float to Live - [The Science Behind Float To Live \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).

### 6.1.1 Safety Advice for People new to Rowing

#### Understand that everyone is expected to:

- Avoid wearing loose clothing that can restrict the movement of the hands or can be snagged on equipment in the boat.

## 6.2 Adaptive rowers

### Expectations

#### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Ensure that Competitions are informed whether, or not, Special Recovery Protocols are required for each adaptive rower.

## Further Information

- Club Adaptive Guide - Introducing and developing Adaptive Rowing at your Club- [https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/British\\_Rowing\\_Adaptive\\_Rowing\\_Guide\\_61pp\\_v4\\_72ppi.pdf](https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/British_Rowing_Adaptive_Rowing_Guide_61pp_v4_72ppi.pdf)

## Useful Websites

- SportExcel UK - [Sport Excel UK – Sport learning disability intellectual disability autism Down syndrome](https://www.sportexcel.co.uk/)
- Adaptive Rowing UL - [Adaptive Rowing UK](https://www.adaptiverowing.org/)
  - see also [Myths of Adaptive Rowing](https://www.adaptiverowing.org/myths-of-adaptive-rowing/) and [Not Myths of Adaptive Rowing](https://www.adaptiverowing.org/not-myths-of-adaptive-rowing/).

# 7 Equipment

## 7.2 Transport and Trailers

### Expectations

#### Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Provide adequate ties, lights and end markers for the load, ensure that the ties are in good condition.

The value of the boat, and the cost of repair, is much greater than the cost of good straps. It is false economy to save money on straps. There is further advice on load securing [here](#)

### Trailer Towing Vehicle Drivers and Minibus Drivers

Drivers are expected to:

- If towing, then before each trip, check:
  - That the ties are in good condition and that the load is secure..

## Further Information

- Demonstration of the effects of trailer weight distribution on stability - [7 trailer weight scenarios compared - results may surprise \(youtube.com\)](#)
- Information on Securing loads - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/securing-loads-on-hgvs-and-goods-vehicles/2-load-securing-the-basics>.
- DVSA Guidance on trailer checks - [Tow a trailer or caravan with a car: safety checks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- British Standard BS EN12195-2:2001 (Load restraint assemblies on road vehicles. Safety – web lashing made from man-made fibres)

## 7.3 Safety Aids

### Lifejackets

Lifejackets do not last forever. The time after which lifejackets expire depends on their type and usage: foam life jackets typically have a lifespan of 10 years for leisure purposes, while an inflatable lifejacket lifespan is around 5—8 years depending on its usage. The carbon dioxide cartridge may have a use by date depending on the manufacturer. You will find more information [here](#).

## 7.4 Launches

### Expectations

#### Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Encourage launch drivers to check their launch prior to use (see [Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks](#))

#### Launch Drivers

Launch drivers are expected to:

- Before each use, check that:
  - [The launch](#), including [the motor](#) is in good condition before starting to use it.
  - The weight distribution and engine trim are such that the launch rides level with the water and that the bow does not rise appreciably when the launch accelerates.

#### Competition

Competitions and Competition Organisers are expected to:

- Encourage launch drivers to check their launch prior to use (see [Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks](#))

## Further Information

- Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Safety-Alert-Launch-pre-use-checks.pdf>

### 7.4.1 Launch Safety Kits

It is recommended that the following equipment should be included in a Launch Safety Kit.

- Enough survival equipment or 'Bivi bags' for the launch's passenger capacity. (Note: Foil blankets tend to keep cold people cold and are not recommended.) Search the internet for "foil lined emergency poncho UK".

As a result of the risk assessment of the location, water and weather conditions, the following equipment may also be required.

- An anchor and line appropriate for the water and weather conditions but try to avoid anchoring in a fairway.
- A communications device such as a waterproof VHF radio transceiver or mobile phone in a waterproof pouch, tied to a person and not to the boat.

# 8 Health

## 8.1 Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia

### Further Information

- The science behind Float to Live - [The Science Behind Float To Live \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).
- Rowing Coxing Workshops - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/index.php?categoryid=20>
  - Classic Coxing Rowing Coxing Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=102>
  - Fixed Seat Rowing Coxing Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=30>
  - Coastal Cox/Boat Captain Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=88>

## 8.2 Sunburn, Heat Illness and Exhaustion

### Expectations

#### Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand the effects of hyperthermia (heat illness and heat exhaustion) and sunburn (see [Avoiding Heat Illness](#) in the coaching course material [here](#) and [NHS Choices - Heat exhaustion and heatstroke](#)).

### Further Information

- Club Coach course material - Avoiding Heat Illness - [https://www.rowhow.org/pluginfile.php/52750/mod\\_resource/content/6/Avoiding%20heat%20illness%20v2.1.pdf](https://www.rowhow.org/pluginfile.php/52750/mod_resource/content/6/Avoiding%20heat%20illness%20v2.1.pdf)

## 8.3 First Aid

### Expectations

#### Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Clubs with AEDs should ensure that they are maintained in good condition.

#### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Keep their First Aid qualification up to date by attending a First Aid course at least every three years.
- Be competent and confident to deliver Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

#### British Rowing:

- Provides an [Competition Organisers' Manual](#).

### Further Information

- Competition Organiser's Manual - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/British-Rowing-Competition-Organisers-Manual-March2024.pdf>
- A guide to Automated External Defibrillators - [https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/AED\\_Guide\\_RCUK.pdf](https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/AED_Guide_RCUK.pdf)

- Safety Alert – Automated External Defibrillators - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Safety-Alert-Automated-External-Defibrillators-1.pdf>

## Other

St John Ambulance publishes First Aid videos that provide some information on specific subjects. These do not constitute formal training, but they may be of use either as a reminder, or in preparation for more formal training. The videos include: -

- [How to do the Primary Survey](#)
- [How to do CPR on an Adult](#)
- [The Recovery Position](#)
- [How to treat severe bleeding](#)
- [How to treat shock](#)
- [How to treat an asthma attack](#)
- [How to use a Defibrillator \(AED\)](#)
- [What to do if someone has a stroke](#)
- [What to do if someone is choking](#)
- [How to treat shock](#)
- [What to do if someone has a spinal injury](#)
- [How to bandage a sprain](#)
- [What to do if someone is having a diabetic emergency](#)
- [How to help someone who has fainted](#)
- [What to do if someone has a seizure](#)
- [How to treat a fracture and fracture types](#)
- [How to help someone with a head injury](#)
- [How to treat heat stroke](#)
- [How to treat heat exhaustion, signs and symptoms](#)
- [How to treat frostbite](#)
- [How to help someone having a heart attack](#)

also

- [How to treat drowning and](#)
- [Agonal breathing in cardiac arrest](#)

There is also the [life-saver app](#).

## 8.4 Waterborne Infections and Diseases

Diseases can be caused by waterborne infectious agents such as bacteria or viruses or contracted due to exposure to other contaminants in the water. These can include, for example, algal blooms, jelly fish (at sea), faecal matter and chemical contamination.

### Expectations

#### Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Wash all equipment after outings to remove any potential contamination, take particular care to wash oar handles.

If you have been splashed by water that could be contaminated, then: -

- Personal hygiene is an important part of the preventative strategy. So, taking a shower, or at least washing hands and face will lower ingestion rates. Washing down boats and oars will also lower the spread of infection.
- This is in addition to skin, blister, cuts, and graze care.
- Observe proper hand hygiene (with or without blisters). Cover blisters, cuts and grazes and treat them so that they heal and do not become infected. If the blisters are red or weeping, do not row until they have healed. If you have blisters make sure that you wash the handle of any blade you have rowed with so as not to pass on infection.
- There is "Guidance on Rowing when the Water Quality is Poor" [here](#) and Guidance on Rowing and Water-borne Disease [here](#)

## Further Information

- There is "Guidance on Rowing when the Water Quality is Poor" - [Guidance-for-Rowing-When-Water-Quality-is-Poor-March-2024.pdf \(britishrowing.org\)](#)
- Guidance on Rowing and Water-borne disease - <https://www.britishrowing.org/athlete-health/rowing-and-water-borne-disease/>

## 8.5 Concussion

Exercising when suffering from concussion can make the condition worse. All sport should be avoided for 7 – 10 days or longer if the concussion is severe. Head injuries sustained outside rowing should be reported to the coach. If in any doubt seek healthcare professional advice and follow it.

## Expectations

### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Be aware of the Concussion Recognition tool (CRT6) [here](#).

## Further Information

- Concussion Recognition tool (CRT6) - [The Concussion Recognition Tool 6 \(CRT6\) \(britishrowing.org\)](#)

## 8.6 Coping with Illness and Diseases

## Expectations

### Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

If you have been ill then make a graduated return to fitness, like this: -

1. Light exercise with no exertion. It could also include flexibility exercises and technique exercises in a boat.
2. Gentle, aerobic exercise, such as walking or slow jogging or slow paddling, providing the heart rate is not elevated.
3. Moderate intensity aerobic and strength & conditioning exercises. This could be two intervals of 5-minute aerobic exercise followed by rest.
4. Somewhat hard intensity aerobic and strength & conditioning exercise. Only progress to the next stage when fatigue levels are normal at the end of the exercise.
5. Baseline exercise returning to the normal exercise pattern. Only attempt any degree of exertion if you feel comfortable doing so.

If you do not recover completely in a reasonable time, then go back one phase. If it feels uncomfortable then stop. Each phase should take about one week, possibly more. There is more information in a Safety Alert [here](#).

Remember, if you are ill, then training will not make you better, but it could make you much worse.

## 8.6.2 Chronic Conditions and Diseases

Rowing can help people who suffer from a chronic condition or disease to maintain and improve their health. There is more information in [Athlete Health](#).

### Epilepsy and Other Seizures

It is recommended that rowers with epilepsy, or other seizures and their parents if the rower is under 18, work with their coaches, club officials and event organisers, using the [guidance of the British Rowing Medical Panel](#), along with local and national safety advice, to risk assess and put in place appropriate measures to support a participant in rowing.

The Medical Panel guidance has been put together along with advice and information provided by the [Epilepsy Society](#), but it is important that anyone with epilepsy or other seizures has a discussion with their GP or specialist to better understand how they can manage their condition and take part in rowing safely.

#### Know your condition – Your Personal Risk Assessment

Epilepsy varies from person to person and so the risks will depend on the nature of their epilepsy.

In Appendix 1 of the Medical Panel advice there is a list of questions. It is recommended that these are printed out, completed and shared with the club, so they can support the athlete with developing a complete and accurate risk assessment.

#### Advice for staying safe

Please ensure you declare your medical condition – don't put others in danger who may need to assist or rescue you.

To mitigate any risks associated with having a seizure during rowing we would advise:

- Row with other people in groups.
- Ensure that at least one person who is either in the boat, or in the group knows basic rescue/life saving techniques including capsizing, recovery, or man over-board recovery.
- Ensure that at least one person knows about the athlete's epilepsy and how to deal with a situation should a seizure occur.
- Ensure that any emergency medication that may be needed is within reach whilst on the water; this should be in a personal waterproof bag secured in the boat, with the cox, or with a coach in a launch accompanying the crew.
- Wear a buoyancy aid or life jacket. This should be considered where the likelihood of a seizure is high and the likelihood of falling into the water is equally high.
- Ensure there is a communication protocol for getting assistance or contacting the emergency services from the water.
- Wear a medic alert bracelet or necklace.
- Regularly review the personal risk assessment and protocols to account for any updates or changes needed.

To help you produce a personal risk assessment with your club, use the safety information produced by the [Epilepsy Society](#).

### Risk Assessment for Clubs and Competitions

#### Club rowing

It is essential that clubs carry out a risk assessment prior to someone with epilepsy participating in rowing on land or on the water.

The rower will need to provide the club with a completed Fact Find questionnaire (see Appendix 1 of the [Medical Panel advice](#)) and give consent for the club to use this information in their risk assessment for the individual. The information provided should be comprehensive and current and the risk assessment completed jointly between the club and the rower, with further input from the rower and their GP/medical supervisor where required.

When completed, the club and the individual should use the risk assessment template (see Appendix 2 of the [Medical Panel advice](#)) to work together to document the key risks, the barriers and controls that need to be in place to support the rower when rowing.

The risk assessment will detail all the measures to put in place so that everyone knows the protocols to follow in the event that the rower has a seizure.

Furthermore, if the rower's condition changes, it is important to update the risk assessment so that safety measures can be modified appropriately.

#### Competition rowing

It is recommended that the club obtains consent from the rower to share this risk assessment with any competition organisers. This will ensure the necessary provisions are in place so that the rower has a safe and enjoyable experience in the competition environment. It may be necessary for the competition organisers to carry out their own risk assessment, especially if the environment is significantly different to the rower's home waters. Rowers may need to seek advice from their coach, club or outdoor centre on any increased risk and further precautions or notifications that may be required.

## Further Information

- Athlete Health - <https://www.britishrowing.org/athlete-health/>
- Rowing and Epilepsy - <https://www.britishrowing.org/athlete-health/rowing-and-epilepsy/>

## 8.7 What To Do If Someone Collapses

AEDs can safely be used in metal boats. The current passes between the pads and the pads are placed on either side of the heart so that the current will pass through the heart. The impact of "leakage", if any, should not reduce the effect on the casualty and will not harm the person operating the AED. The same applies if the casualty is lying on a wet surface or in a few millimetres of water.

### A Little more information about CPR

Please take care because many cardiac arrests look like seizures in their acute phase due to the way the brain reacts to low flow or no flow circulation.

Do not try to deliver CPR in a lightweight rowing boat.

Cracked or broken ribs may be associated with performing chest compressions. Feeling or hearing ribs cracking should not deter the rescuer from performing chest compressions to the best of their ability – the chest compressions are keeping the casualty alive; the cracked ribs can be managed following a successful resuscitation.

# 9 Topics Covered in Risk Assessments

## 9.1 Weather

### Further Information

- Lightning Maps (contains maps tracking lightning) - <https://www.lightningmaps.org/>

## 9.3 The Water

### Example Risk Management Plan

#### Hazards associated with the water

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Barriers</b> (to reduce the probability)	<b>Hazardous Events</b>	<b>Controls</b> (to reduce the severity of harm)
Fast Flowing water Areas of Shallow water (permanent or tidal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay upstream of the boathouse</li><li>• Use larger, faster boats (4x rather than 1x)</li><li>• Mix Juniors with experienced, fit adults</li><li>• On tidal waters, row when the tide is on the flood (coming in) as this tends to counteract the effect of the fluvial flow.</li></ul>	Cannot get back to boathouse against stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have a safety boat available for towing</li><li>• Land boat somewhere else and carry it back await improved conditions</li></ul>



## 9.4 Other Water Users

### Expectations

#### Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Keep a good lookout to avoid collisions and shout a warning to the crews of other boats if there is a risk of collision.

### Further Information

- Rowing on the Tideway - <https://activethames.co.uk/rowing>
- Safety Alert – Coping with the behaviour of others - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Safety-Alert-Coping-with-the-behaviour-of-others-June-2023.pdf>

## 9.5 Going Afloat and Landing

### Further Information

- Boat manoeuvring on land - [WRRA Coxing - Boat maneuvering on land \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRRA_Coxing_-_Boat_manoeuvring_on_land)

## 9.6 In and Around the Boathouse

### Further Information

- Safety in Club Premises, [British Rowing Safety In Club Premises June-2023.pdf \(britishrowing.org\)](https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/British_Rowing_Safety_In_Club_Premises_June-2023.pdf)

# 10 Rowing on the Sea

## 10.1 Coastal and Inshore Rowing

### Expectations

#### Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Row only in the conditions that they can cope with.

#### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Provide coaching to coaches (see [Coastal Cox/Boat Captain Workshop](#)).

#### Launch Drivers

Launch drivers are expected to:

- Be competent and hold any qualification required by the host club, navigation authority or venue management.

### Further Information

- Coastal Rowing – Planning and Resource Guide - [Coastal Rowing: Planning and Resource Guide: Amazon.co.uk: Churchill, Dr Nancy, WA Inc, Coastal Rowing: 9798372781405: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Churchill-Dr-Nancy-WA-Inc-Coastal-Rowing-9798372781405/dp/B000000000)

- Coastal Cox/Boat Captain Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=88>

## 10.2 Fixed Seat Sea Rowing

### Expectations

#### Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Provide coaching to coxes (see [Fixed Seat Rowing Coxing Workshop](#)).

#### Launch Drivers

Launch Drivers are expected to:

- Be competent and hold any qualification required by the host club, navigation authority or venue management.

### Further Information

- Fixed Seat Rowing Coxing Workshop - <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=30>

#### 10.2.1 Gig & Other Fixed Seat Boat Safety Kits

For gigs and other fixed seat rowing boats that are used on the open sea, it is recommended that the following equipment should be included in a Boat Safety kit.

- A communications device such as a waterproof VHF radio transceiver or mobile phone, in a waterproof pouch tied to a person and not to the boat, fully charged

## 12 Incident Reporting

The purpose of the Incident Reporting system is to learn from incidents and to share that learning to prevent a recurrence. It does not really matter who did what. What does matter is that we understand what happened and have some understanding of why it happened. Please try to avoid any thoughts about fault, blame and guilt; they have no place in Incident Reports.

Please take care to avoid profanities and swear words in Incident Reports. British Rowing has rules on abusive language incorporated into the [Codes of Conduct](#).

Please also take care to avoid including people's names particularly those of Juniors. Only use names if you would like to praise or thank someone.

## 13 Auditing

### 13.1 Safety Inspections

#### Examples of items that could be in a monthly Safety Inspection

Including but not limited to:

- The condition of gas and electrical equipment. (see section 4 of Safety in Club Premises [here](#))

### Further Information

- Guidance on Safety in Club Premises, [British Rowing Safety In Club Premises June-2023.pdf \(britishrowing.org\)](#)