



BRITISHROWING

# Honorary Rowing Safety Adviser Monthly Report

March 2026

Stephen Worley

TEAMWORK | OPEN TO ALL | COMMITMENT

## Coaches save a life at Bedford

Four coaches worked together to persuade an unknown women, not to enter the water to end her own life. Richard White and Jason Foster, of Bedford School BC and Lily Boulton and Daniella Flemons, of Bedford Modern School BC, have been nominated for Royal Humane Society awards.

This incident occurred on 26 February at 15:00. There is a detailed account in Appendix 1.

## Rowers Save a life at Maidenhead

Three rowers worked together to save the life of an unknown woman who was in the water attempting to take her own life. This incident was described briefly in the [HRSA Monthly Report December 2025.pdf](#).

George Foot, Sharon Mower and Jo Stringer arrived at Maidenhead Rowing Club for a planned Indoor Rowing session. They heard shouts of “Help Me” from a person in the water on the far side of the river. They worked together to rescue that person and have been nominated for Royal Humane Society awards.

This incident occurred on 19 December 2025 at 6:30 am. There is a detailed account in Appendix 2.

## People who try to take their own lives

Each year about 600 people drown in the UK. The [National Water Safety Forum](#) maintains the [Water Incident Database](#). Data from [2024](#) (below) shows that 197 people took their own lives by drowning, this is approximately half of all the people who drowned due to a known or suspected cause. It is believed that the “Not recorded” category includes a significant number of self-inflicted deaths.

United Kingdom: All outcomes	2024
Accident suspected	177
Crime suspected	5
Not recorded	206
Natural Causes suspected	16
Suicide suspected	193
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>597</b>

In 2015 the RNLI responded to 867 incidents related to suspected self-harm, representing 11% of UK RNLI activity in that year. The RNLI record suicide threats and attempts as “suspected self-harm” in its internal operational database. The [report](#) also suggests that the RNLI save five persons for every life lost in the case of suspected self-harm.

There is evidence to show that people who act intending to take their own lives immediately regret taking that action. A survivor of a jump from a bridge said: -

*"I instantly realized that everything in my life that I'd thought was unfixable was totally fixable—except for having just jumped."*

Members of the Rowing Community are often well placed to assist people who are considering entering the water to take their own lives or who have entered the water to do so and regretted that decision. There are examples here: -

- [David McNeill awarded a Royal Humane Society Certificate of Commendation for life saving - British Rowing](#)
- [Christchurch RC members recognised for life-saving actions - British Rowing](#)
- [Rowers Henry Jackson and Alfie England awarded for rescue bravery - British Rowing](#)

Please read [Safety-Alert-Small-Talk-Saves-Lives.pdf](#) and look out for people who may be in distress in or near water.

## **Incident Reports for March**

### **Take care when the stream is strong**

An 8+ rowed downstream through a bridge when the stream was strong. There was a late decision to use the centre arch. The stern was pushed sideways into the bridge and snapped off just behind the cox's seat. The stream then pushed the boat through the bridge where it started to sink. The crew was rescued by a fisherman in a boat, and a resident came to the crew's assistance in their boat. They took the crew safely to the bank before helping the crew recover the boat.

The crew identified the following learning opportunities: -

- Although the approach to the bridge was slow and wide, the decision to commit to using the middle arch could have been made sooner.
- The crew is experienced but their response to instructions was not uniform. It would have been useful to have a verbal run through of the approach to the bridge in the briefing to ensure that the whole crew understands the calls that might be required.
- Using bow four instead of stern four could give quicker impact when corrections need to be made.

### **Violent Anti-social behaviour in a car park**

There was an incident in a car park at a head race when a marshal was "bumped" by a car which continued to drive at him as he tried to prevent the car from driving into a boat being carried to the boating beaches by rowers. This was witnessed by another marshal. The marshals were not injured. This was reported to the Police who arrived within about 10 minutes. They took notes and listened to the marshals' accounts and said they'd be trying to find the driver.

There is more information about the use of a car as a weapon in the item on Martyn's Law below.

## **Look after your trailer**

A wheel came off the trailer as it set off from the boat house; this was thought to be due to bearing failure. It was suspected that the brakes had been sticking since the beginning of day. The club will arrange for a full service before the trailers next use and will put in place more regular and robust maintenance checks.

It is that time of year when some trailers tend to be used for the first time in some months. Please take care to check yours before you use it. Please also remember that although most trailers are not subject to MoT tests, they are legally required to be in good condition whenever they are used.



I have been advised by a well-known British boat trailer manufacturer that it is good practice not to apply the hand brake on trailers that are to be parked for a protracted time as this can result in the brakes jamming on. If necessary, use chocks (or even bricks) on the downhill side of the wheels to prevent the trailer from rolling away.

## **Evidence of unsafe behaviour**

A motor vessel was heading upstream at speed, creating significant wash. It passed several 1xs and 2xs and ignored calls to slow down. Some of these boats were partially swamped. It also passed a paddleboarder, almost causing the paddleboarder's dog to be washed off the board.

A coach in a launch followed the motor vessel and videoed it. This coach reported the incident to the volunteer lockkeeper and phoned the PLA. The PLA rang back to express interest in the video.

Please see the item below relating to evidence of wrongdoing and please be prepared to gather evidence.

## **Take care to direct your own crews and ensure that safety is prioritised**

The bow rower in a 4- was looking ahead every three or four strokes but was told by their coach to look ahead every six strokes as the looking ahead was affecting the boat. This contributed to a collision with another 4-. Prior to the collision, the coach of the first 4- tried to direct the second 4- by telling them to stop.

Coaches are expected to keep their crews safe. They should be aware of hazards near their crews and direct their crews accordingly. They should not tell their steers not to look ahead so often or try to direct other crews.

### **Take care to teach rowers to respond immediately**

A 4x+ was heading downstream and was instructed to turn 350m before a fallen tree partially blocking the river. The crew ignored several instructions to turn before deciding to turn with just 75m from the fallen tree. The 4x+ was slow to turn and when advised to row on beyond the obstacle the crew continued trying to spin the boat. They were halfway through the 180° turn and were into the tree. As they tried to move slowly away from the tree an oar was caught and the rower let go. The boat then capsized away from the tree, and the cox and crew got out and immediately climbed on top of the boat. The crew then shuffled along the boat towards the bow where they were rescued by the safety launch. There was some boat damage.

In another incident the crew of an 8x was instructed to spin but took too long and approached too close to the bank. The stern was caught in some trees, then as the stream pushed the boat around and the stern snapped.

Please take care to teach inexperienced rowers to respond to instructions immediately. Command the attention from the rowers and ensure that they know what is going on.

### **Please keep a good lookout for yourself and do not rely on others**

An 8+ was spinning and a 4x was stationary waiting for other boats to spin but did not move up or call for the 8+ to stop. The bow rower in the 8+ was looking in the other direction.

Please remember that you must not rely on calls from others, helpful though they are. Each crew should maintain a good lookout in all directions.

### **Take care to consider others**

There was an anonymous complaint that three 8+s had been left on trestles, unattended, blocking the pavement on a public road. The report said, "*This is anti-social behaviour towards local residents*".

Please take care not to inconvenience others.

### **Head on Collisions**

There continue to be many head on collisions. Please maintain a good lookout at all times and take care to be in the correct place on the waterway. If rowing in darkness, please ensure that your lights are properly fitted and working correctly. It helps to wear hi-vis kit (wear white at night).

### **Look out for floating debris**

A 2x collided with floating debris causing damage to the mid bow canvas section. The bow section took on water, but the boat remained useable. A launch escorted the boat back to the club.

### **Check that the engine is securely fixed to the launch**

A coach was driving a borrowed launch. The launch and its engine were new and had only recently been set up. After stopping, the coach restarted the engine which began shaking and jolting before becoming detached from the stern and falling into the water. The launch became unstable and the coach fell in shortly afterwards. Other coaches came to the rescue of the coach who fell in and recovered the boat and the engine.

### **Take care to check your launch.**

As a coach reversed a Laser Performance Fun Boat launch, the stern dug into the water, bow tipped up and then the boat fully flipped backwards. The coach jumped into the water and was alongside the inverted launch. Another coach on land unmoored a catamaran launch and rescued the coach in the water. The bungs in the Fun Boat had not been tightened. The coach did not know that the bungs should be checked. The Fun Boat was taking on water and starting to submerge. The coach on the catamaran radioed for help and a coach on another Fun Boat joined the rescue. They tried to recover the half sunk Fun Boat but were all drifting closer to the weir. The motor on the operational Fun Boat cut out so they left the sunken Fun Boat and towed the Fun Boat without power back to the Boat House. They were aware that they were very close to the weir. On returning to the Boat House, it was noticed that the fuel line had come detached in the Fun Boat that lost power. The half sunken fun boat wedged itself against the weir and remained there for some time.

In another incident a coach was using a catamaran launch when one hull started taking in water. The coach stopped the outing, instructed the crew to return to the club and tried to drive the launch downstream to the Marina. When it became clear that the launch would not reach the Marina, the coach drove the launch to the bank where it sank rapidly. The Marina will salvage the launch. The coach and their colleague in the launch were not harmed.

It is not just rowing boats that should be checked prior to use; please take care to check launches too. Please check for hull security and for the security of fuel connections. There is further information here [Safety-Alert-Launch-pre-use-checks.pdf](#)

### **Take care when coaching and driving a launch.**

A launch driver who was also coaching a 4x was on the wrong side of the waterway. It appears that the coach did not notice another 4x, travelling in the opposite direction and on the correct side of the waterway. There was a clash of blades and some equipment damage. If you are driving and coaching, then please give priority to the safe conduct of your launch

### **Do not overload your launch**

A launch, loaded to its capacity, was travelling at speed. It reduced speed, causing the bows to drop and the bow wave to swamp the launch. The launch was pulled to the bank and bailed out. The club reminded all launch drivers of the correct loading and balancing limits and of the safety procedures.

## **Please take care to use the correct reporting system**

There have been concerns relating to the wellbeing and welfare reported using the (Safety) Incident reporting. This, in itself, is not particularly problematic as I share these reports with the Safeguarding team. The Incident Reporting system can be found here [British Rowing Incident Reporting](#) and Safeguarding Concerns can be reported here [br.vissro.com/br/forms.nsf/safeguarding-report](http://br.vissro.com/br/forms.nsf/safeguarding-report). Please report all incidents but please take care to use the appropriate system.

A Safety Alert containing QR codes of each of these links, will accompany this report. Please print this and display it on your noticeboards to encourage members to report incidents.

## **Launch Driving and the RYA Level 2 Powerboat Qualification**

I was asked whether “British Rowing safety rules” require launch drivers to be RYA certified. The rowing club involved provides proper training for launch drivers on their lake. It has an internal course and competency standard that they must pass to be permitted to drive on their lake.

There are three reasons why they do not want to set a requirement for RYA Level 2, i.e.

1. The cost, they cannot afford to put 8-10 drivers through the RYA powerboat certification,
2. They have additional requirements beyond the certification that they would cover in their own course around rescue and recovery of rowers and boats,
3. There is a lot in the RYA certification that isn't necessary just for driving on their lake.

The response was that providing the lake does not have a navigation authority that requires a driving qualification then it is not necessary to have a qualification. The relevant guidance is in Section 5.2 of [RowSafe](#) on Launch Driving. I felt that the club's approach is perfectly acceptable and very sensible.

## **Large Motorboats on Canal and River Trust Waters**

Last month's report included a request that if you are involved in an interaction with a motorboat on Canal and River Trust waters then it would help if you could provide photographic or video evidence that identifies the boat and, if possible, depicts the action that it took.

There is also a problem with dangerous mooring. There have been reports of large boats mooring, and double mooring, in places where it is dangerous to do so.

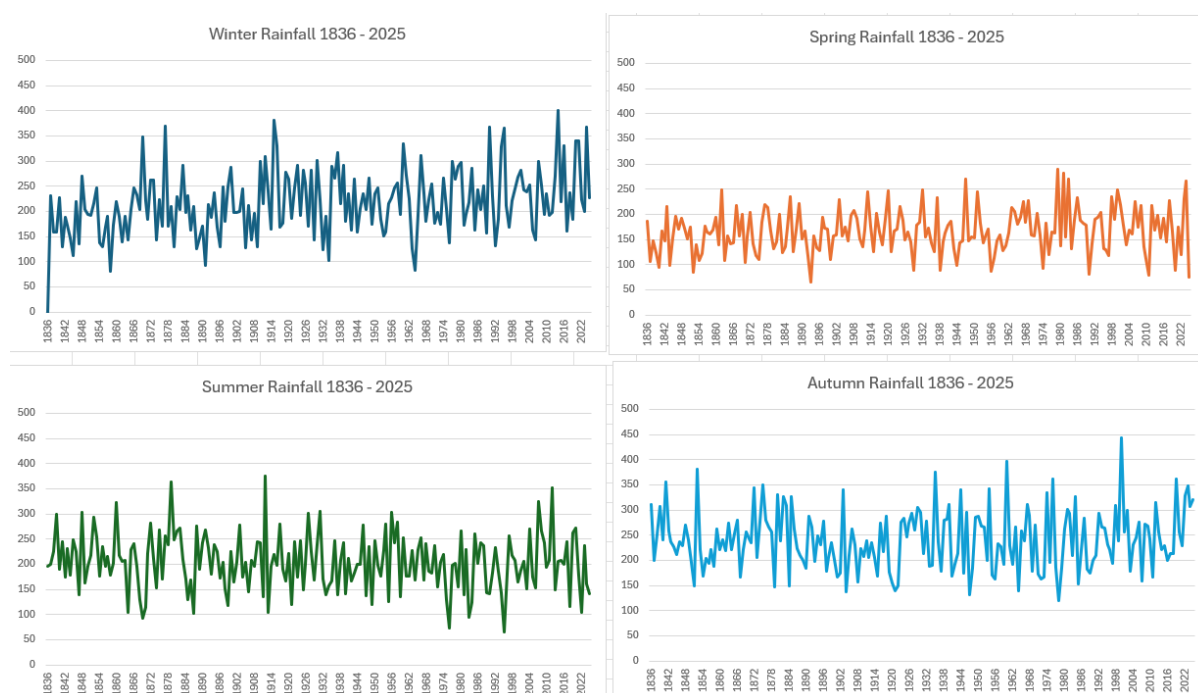
A colleague has been liaising with the Management of the C&RT to encourage them to act. I have been providing information from incident reports so that my colleague can raise these.

For the C&RT to act they need clear, definitive evidence of both the behaviour and of the identity of the boat, preferably the registration number. If you see boats causing risk to other people, then please provide photographic evidence that can then be shared with the C&RT.

## Climate Change Adaption

Rainfall and river flow rates have been reported to have been high in the last few winters and many rowers at clubs on rivers have not able to go afloat for months at a time. When rowers do go afloat then the fast stream can cause problems, some of these are described above. We have recently prepared a list of clubs that row on canals and lakes to help the Coach Education team when planning their on-water events.

These graphs contain Met Office data daily rainfall during Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn for England from 1836 to 2025. This appears to show wetter winters and dryer summers in recent years although the pattern is not particularly clear. (see [metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/datasets/Rainfall/date/England.txt](https://metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/datasets/Rainfall/date/England.txt))



Summer rainfall has reduced leading to lower water levels and the risk of crews running aground or colliding with under water objects. Appendix 3 contains daily river flow data for the Thames at Kingston for 2013 to 2023 taken from the [National River Flow Archive](#).

Some clubs can adapt their winter activities by finding alternative locations to row. For other clubs this is more difficult.

There may be opportunities to work with neighbouring clubs to find a way to go afloat even when the river is flowing fast. For example, clubs that launch upstream of a weir or bridge may arrange to use the facilities of clubs that row downstream of a weir or bridge. There are areas where even high flows are not too hazardous if the river is relatively straight and there are no fixed obstructions.

The weather patterns are not likely to improve dramatically in the next few years so please consider how your club can find a way to go afloat in the winter without increasing the level of risk.

There is guidance on preparation for and recovery from Flooding here [Sustainability - British Rowing](#).

## How to rescue a collapsed rower from their boat.

[RowSafe](#) contains the following guidance: -

- *Practise retrieval of simulated collapsed rowers from boats.*

There was a request for further guidance on how to do this. The response was that retrieving a person from a boat is not easy, this is why we ask clubs to practise. Many launch drivers develop their own methods. The main issue is where to position the launch so that the launch crew can get close to the casualty. The launch driver will have to avoid the obstructions caused by the oars or sculls and riggers.

If the person to be rescued is the cox or the rower at stroke or bow, then the launch should approach the rowing boat so that the centre line of the launch is parallel with the centre line of the boat and facing towards the centre of the boat. If it is a rowing (sweep) boat rather than a sculling boat, then approach on the side opposite the rigger of the person to be recovered.

If the person to be rescued is elsewhere in the boat, then the launch should approach so that the centre line of the launch is perpendicular to the centreline of the rowing boat. If they are in a rowing boat (rather than in a sculling boat) then approach from the side opposite to the person's rigger and recover the person over the bow of the launch. If they are in a sculling boat, then approach as far as possible between the riggers until the bow of the launch is in contact with the rowing boat. Please let me know if you have a better method (contact [safety@britishrowing.org](mailto:safety@britishrowing.org)).

Please bear in mind that it may also be possible to effect a rescue by towing or pushing the boat to the bank so that the crew can take the casualty out of the boat and, if appropriate, help to transfer them to the launch.

## Climbing back into the boat after capsized

A club is planning its capsized drill and a coach suggested that it would be difficult for a rower to climb back into a boat fitted with reverse wing riggers.

The response was that as a rule we do not recommend that rowers in 1xs who capsize climb back into their own boats. Doing so is not included in our capsized training. We do encourage them to get out of the water either by climbing onto their own (inverted) boats or by climbing onto the back of another boat (Buddy Rescue). The capsized training is here [Course: Capsized Drill | Home](#). It is relatively easy to be recovered into a launch when sitting astride an inverted boat.

The reason that we do not teach getting back into your own boat so that you can row is simply that most people who try to do this fail and fall back into the water. After they have tried and failed a few times, they find themselves back in the water more tired and cold than they were when they started.

If a rower wants to get back into their own boat and finds that the rigger would form an obstruction then they could climb in over the bow (right the boat, position yourself at the bow, push the bow down and between your legs, lean forward and pull yourself along the boat until you reach your seat).

The reason why we recommend the removal of backstays during capsized drills is to reduce the risk of someone being hit on the head, when they are in the water, by the backstay, when they right the boat.

## Be a member of British Rowing

I have received reports about rowers who are not members of British Rowing being injured and finding that they have no Personal Accident insurance to claim against. Club insurance does not usually include Personal Accident cover for club members. I try to avoid involvement with insurance, preferring to concentrate on prevention of harm, but am concerned that rowers should have the information needed to make informed decisions.

Most levels of British Rowing membership for individuals include Personal Accident and Public Liability cover. There is more information at [Join British Rowing or renew your membership today - British Rowing](#). There is information on the insurance here [Update on Personal Accident cover for British Rowing members - British Rowing](#)

Please do not write to me with questions about insurance, if you have questions then please contact [membership@britishrowing.org](mailto:membership@britishrowing.org).

## Martyn's Law

### A simple guide to the Scope of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025

The Home Office has been hosting a series of small briefings on the scope of this Act. I attended one of these briefings.

The [Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Act 2025](#), also known as Martyn's Law, received Royal Assent on 3 April 2025. There will be an implementation period of at least 24 months from April 2025, before the Act comes into force. The government will publish guidance during the implementation period to support those in scope of the Act to prepare to comply with the new legal requirements. There is an early announcement here [Information for rowing clubs and competitions about the Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Bill - British Rowing](#).

### Impact on Simple Rowing Competitions (e.g. regattas organised by Rowing Clubs)

Schedule 2 of the Act defines premises that are excluded from the Act; these include: -

*“Parks, gardens and other open-air premises used for recreation or leisure (only applies to open access premises which do not have measures to secure or check that access is restricted).”*

In other words, the simple “regatta in a field” where there is unrestricted access, perhaps because there is a public right of way, footpath or tow path through the field are not impacted by this law. In many cases there is also a public right to navigate the waters being used for racing.

The Act may apply if there is a ticketed or restricted access enclosure that could hold 200 or more people at any one time. It may also apply if the boat house is used for catering or other purposes and there may be 200 or more people in it at any one time.

### Impact on Large rowing events such as the British Rowing Championships

These events usually take place at venues such as Eton Dorney, National Watersports Centre, etc. that would qualify as “Premises in scope of the enhanced tier requirements”. As such they would be covered by the act but the venues would have developed their own procedures and measures to comply with the Act. The Competition Organisers would simply have to act under the direction of the venue management.

## **Large events organised by clubs and held within their own premises or in the immediate vicinity.**

If these events (such as annual dinners, wedding receptions, etc.) involve 200 or more people (including staff, caterers, etc.) then they would fall with the scope of the Act.

If they occur at other premises (such as an Hotel) then the onus would be on the management of those premises to comply.

The [Security Industry Authority - GOV.UK](#) will be the regulator for this Act. This is taken from their [Marty's Law: the SIA's new regulatory role - GOV.UK](#)

*Smaller premises where 200 to 799 individuals may be present will be in the 'standard tier'. The requirements in this tier are centred on simple, low-cost activities designed to ensure those working at premises or events are better able to reduce harm, and save lives, in the event of an attack.*

*These activities could be as simple as locking doors, closing shutters, and identifying safe routes to cover. There is no requirement to put in place physical measures in the standard tier.*

and

*Persons responsible for standard tier premises, that is qualifying premises where it is reasonable to expect that between 200 and 799 individuals may be present at the same time from time to time, will be required to:*

- *notify the regulator, the Security Industry Authority (SIA), that they are responsible for their premises*
- *have in place, so far as is reasonably practicable, appropriate public protection procedures that could be reasonably expected to reduce the risk of physical harm being caused to individuals if an attack was to occur there or nearby*

## **Terrorism and Violent Anti-social behaviour**

Terrorism is defined in the [Terrorism Act 2000](#). The definition can be summarised as “the use or threat of action designed to influence the government or intimidate the public, aimed at advancing a political, religious, racial, or ideological cause. This action must involve serious violence, danger to life, or significant disruption to health, safety, or electronic systems”.

However, we may also be concerned about violent anti-social behaviour, possibly involving people with mental health issues. The incidence of offences involving a sharp instruments has been declining slowly in recent years, there is more information here [Knife crime statistics England and Wales - House of Commons Library](#) but the possibility still remains. It is also not unknown for vehicles to be used as weapons with the intent to do harm by being driven into crowds. There is further information here [Vehicle as a Weapon Threat Methodology | NPSA](#)

If your competition takes place at a location where you consider the threat of terrorism or violent anti-social behaviour to be of legitimate concern, then you would be well advised to include these hazards in your risk assessment. You should then be able to plan the actions you can take to reduce that risk.

With careful planning, the resources that many competitions already use to manage their events could also be used to reduce the risk associated with terrorism and violent anti-social behaviour. These resources typically include: -

- a centralised “command centre” (regatta control)
- marshalls with radios
- announcements on the public address system
- the provision of medical treatment and First Aid
- the use of launches

## **Terrorism Threat Levels**

There are 5 levels of threat:

- low - an attack is highly unlikely
- moderate - an attack is possible but not likely
- substantial - an attack is likely
- severe - an attack is highly likely
- critical - an attack is highly likely in the near future

The current threat level in the UK is **Substantial**. There is more information here [Threat Levels | MI5 - The Security Service](#).

## **Actions and Measures**

These notes deal with the scope of the requirements. The actions and measures that events within the scope are recommended to take will be described in the guidance that should be published in April 2026.

## **Recent Update**

I have recently received an email from the Martin’s Law team at the Home Office that contains the following: -

*“We advise everyone to remain wary of third-party companies offering compliance services in respect of this legislation. The Home Office and the Security Industry Authority do not endorse any third-party products offered by the private sector in respect of compliance with Martyn’s Law.*

*We appreciate your continued engagement with us via your trade associations and sector representatives.*

*We encourage you to visit the [ProtectUK](#) website for guidance on protective security, including updates on compliance with the Act. You will find a range of helpful resources there, in addition to [GOV.UK Factsheets](#).”*

## Appendix 1 - Details of the Incident at Bedford

Richard WHITE and Lily BOULTON were separately cycling along the embankment, coaching rowers, and noticed an unknown woman lying on the riverbank close to the river.

Initially they both thought that she was trying to take photos of swans at water level. As he was cycling past, Richard WHITE realised that she had taken her shoes and handbag off and they were alongside her on the bank. It was clear to him that she was not taking photos, so he turned around and went back to her.

When he approached her, the unknown woman was nearly face down on the bank, facing the river so he asked her if she was OK, and if there was anything that he could do to help. She replied that there was no point and that she wanted to get into the river.



Richard WHITE asked her name and told her his and then tried to engage her in conversation in any way that he could. He tried to persuade her to sit on one of the benches rather than remain on the bank. Her only response was that there was no point, and that she wanted to get into the river.

Jason FOSTER first became aware that something was amiss when another coach told him that someone appeared to have collapsed on the Embankment on the far side of the river. He hurried across the bridge and along the river until he reached Richard WHITE and the unknown woman. He briefly asked if Richard was OK and in control of the situation. However, it was immediately apparent that further assistance would be required. He told Richard that he would be back in less than two minutes and cycled 150m downstream to hand his rowing crew over to another coach.

While cycling along the river with her rowing crew, Daniella FLEMONS noticed Richard WHITE standing beside a woman who was lying on the edge of the riverbank. After ensuring the safety of her crew, she cycled back to offer assistance. She asked the woman for her name and whether she would be more comfortable sitting on a bench or near a tree away from the water. The woman declined and repeatedly stated that she “just wanted to be in the river.” This was closely followed the arrival of Lily BOULTON and the return of Jason FOSTER.

The unknown woman was lying on the concrete dangerously close to the edge of the water, her shoes and bag were a little way up the bank. Jason FOSTER explained to Richard and Daniella that he had a level three qualification in Welfare and Safeguarding and took over from Richard so that Richard could speak to the emergency services without being overheard by the woman. Richard WHITE moved away and contacted the police for assistance. He was confident that if the woman tried to get into the river, then Jason FOSTER would have been able to restrain her.

Jason FOSTER moved closer to the woman, to almost the same level, so as not be intimidating. He was close enough to be able grab her clothing should she make a further move towards the water. He asked her name, told her his, and asked if he could help her to move away from the edge (and that he had a female colleague that could help her move if she preferred) to which she shook her head. He tried to position himself closer as she had made another roll towards the water. The smallest of movements would have seen her fall into the water.

Jason FOSTER moved behind the woman and asked Lily BOULTON to take his place at her head, as he felt that a young female in her field of vision might be perceived as less threatening. Daniella FLEMONS was at her feet. Lily and Daniella used their legs to block the woman from rolling into the river. Jason remained close enough to grab her clothing if she moved again towards the water. He tried to maintain dialogue with her, speaking in a calm, controlled and sympathetic manner. She was responding infrequently and appeared to be disoriented and confused.

Richard stepped away to contact the police. While he did this, Daniella accessed the woman's medical information through her phone, which was in her shoe, which Lily BOULTON had retrieved. This provided her name and emergency contact details. She attempted to call the woman's emergency contact. The medical information also indicated that she was diabetic, though she was not showing any signs or symptoms of a diabetic episode. They found that the woman's name was Harry.

Jason asked if Harry could remember when she had last had something to eat, and she shook her head to indicate that she could not. Daniella FLEMONS was able to find some Smarties. Jason offered her some Smarties in case her blood sugar was low, and as an incentive to entice her away from the edge but she refused and reiterated that she wanted to be in the river. During this time, Lily and Daniella engaged her in gentle conversation to help keep her calm and to make her feel safe while they waited for emergency services to arrive.

Richard WHITE had returned and informed the others silently that the Police were on their way.

Lily BOULTON told the woman her name was Lily and that she was here to support her. After that she started to respond but only by whispering. Lily BOULTON asked how long she had been sitting by the edge, and she said she didn't know, she also told Lily that she "wanted to kill herself and wanted it all to end by jumping into the water".

Lily BOULTON then asked if she wanted to move away from the edge and the woman said no. Lily said to her "I understand that you don't want to move and I won't make you, but could you lay on your side with your head on the ground so I can talk to you easier". She then agreed and moved so her head was on the ground next to Lily's leg and Lily could see her face. Lily then said to her that we were only there to help her, but she said she just wanted it all to end.

The first Police Officer arrived shortly thereafter, and Richard WHITE explained the situation to him. The Police Officer then spoke to Jason FOSTER about the woman's current situation and state of mind (and whether he believed her intent to enter the water to be serious, to which Jason replied that he believed that it was). The officer attempted to engage with the woman (who at this point had exchanged some words with Lily BOULTON) but similarly had limited success. The officer asked if Richard WHITE and Jason FOSTER would stay until he could get further help and spoke on his radio. Two further Police cars arrived shortly thereafter.

A female Police Officer from the first vehicle tried to engage with Harry and, upon failing to elicit a response, the three officers exchanged a silent signal and swiftly and forcefully grabbed and moved her in one rough but efficient movement away from the water to a safer position on the bank.

It is believed that the unknown woman, Harry, was trying to take her own life.

The Director of Sport at Bedford School reached out to both members of Bedford School Staff and contacted the Director of Studies at Bedford Modern School. The staff were offered the opportunity to see the Bedford School counsellor; they politely declined.

## Appendix 2 - Details of the Incident at Maidenhead

George FOOT, Sharon MOWER and Jo STRINGER arrived at Maidenhead Rowing Club for a planned Indoor Rowing session at 6:30 am.

As they were walking across the car park, they heard a voice shouting "Help me, I can't swim" from the far side of the river. George FOOT shouted back but it was not clear what was happening as it was dark and he couldn't see anything.

George FOOT decided to run to the far side of the river. He phoned 999 as he ran over Maidenhead bridge. Jo STRINGER coordinated from club side of the bank and also phoned 999. George FOOT ran past the Thames Riviera Hotel down Guards road, to Reitlinger park (directly opposite the club) where he was able to find a spot on the riverbank.

George FOOT could just make out the outline of someone in the water maybe about 10 metres from the bank. They were clinging onto a branch in a faster flowing section of the river.

George FOOT communicated with the unknown female in the water. He provided encouragement and told her that the emergency services were on their way. She was very distressed at this point and said that she would not be able to hold on. The emergency services were also calling to ask for additional information. However, it was still dark so George FOOT could not see much.

Fearful of her drifting down the river, George FOOT managed to locate a life-ring and throw it towards the unknown woman. However, she was almost out of range, and he fell a couple of times as the bank was slippery and wet. On the second or third attempt he managed to throw the life ring so that it landed close to her and guided her to take hold of the life ring whilst retaining her grip of the branch.

Once the unknown woman had hold of the ring. George FOOT was able to pull her to the bank. The unknown woman was fully clothed and was wearing a full rucksack.

Once at the bank, Jo STRINGER and Sharon MOWER, both also from Maidenhead Rowing Club, who had driven from the other side of the river (club side), helped lift the unknown woman out of the river and onto the bank. The unknown woman was weighed down by her wet clothes and her rucksack. They were also obstructed by the vegetation on the bank.

Once the unknown woman was out of the water George FOOT, Jo STRINGER and Sharon MOWER escorted her across the park as there is no vehicular access to the riverbank.

They took her to Guard Road where Jo STRINGER and Sharon MOWER helped her out of her wet clothes. Sharon had some dry clothes in her car that she donated to the woman.

The emergency services arrived and George FOOT, Jo STRINGER and Sharon MOWER helped the unknown woman to walk along the road to the waiting ambulance.

The unknown woman told George FOOT, Sharon MOWER and Jo STRINGER that she had tried to end her own life, and the police thought that she jumped from the bridge.

## Appendix 3 - Daily River flow data

Flow data for the Thames at Kingston taken from [Search data | National River Flow Archive](#)

