



# Leander Club

## Water Safety & Emergency Plan - 2016

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### I. Introduction

Leander Club is committed to the safety of its members and its visitors whilst they are engaged in club related activities. The aim of the Safety Plan is to ensure that all members and visitors are made aware of the safety requirements of rowing, sculling and related activities at Henley so that they may participate safely. The Safety Plan is supplementary to British Rowing's RowSafe guidelines<sup>1</sup>.

The requirements apply to the Henley on Thames reach of the River Thames between Marsh Lock and Hambleden Lock and to Club members when operating away from Henley except where local safety procedures are issued for the location visited. These instructions are also to apply to crews visiting Leander and any other person boating from the premises. (See attached Plan of the Henley Reach of the river)

### II. Emergencies

In the event of an emergency; guidelines on how to deal with the emergency are contained at Appendix A – Emergency Plan.

### III. Responsibilities

All members are personally responsible for and have a duty of care to ensure that their actions, both on and off the water, are conducted in a manner that does not compromise the safety of themselves or others.

All members are expected to comply with the requirements of the British Rowing, Row Safe Guide, the Club Safety Plan and any other instructions issued by the Club, in respect of safety.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/RowSafe/Complete-v1.pdf>

## IV. General Water Safety Requirements

### A. Safety Equipment

The Club provides items of safety equipment, which must be used by its coaches, athletes and members:-

#### **Life Jackets / Buoyancy Aids:**

The wearing of a lifejacket or buoyancy aid is compulsory for:

- All coxswains.
- All drivers and passengers of any launch used in connection with Club activities.
- All junior members that have not completed and passed a Club organized capsized drill and swim test.

Where participants are adults and have not undertaken a club swim test/capsized drill, lifejackets/buoyancy aids should be offered.

Where, due to a medical condition, members are considered to be at risk of becoming unconscious or immobile, as a result of immersion, an automatic lifejacket must be worn.

#### **Throw Lines:**

Any person providing coaching or safety cover from the bank should equip himself or herself with a throw line. All throw lines are kept in the Coaches office.

#### **Thermal Exposure Blankets:**

All thermal exposure blankets are in the safety bags along with first aid kits and throw line. A safety bag must be carried in the launch at all times.

#### **First Aid Box**

First Aid boxes are located in the Gym and General Office.

### B. Traffic Light System

The Club operates a Traffic Light System to indicate river conditions based on Environmental Agency advice. **Red**, **Yellow** and **Green** lights indicate to members the current regulations which apply. Indicator boards are located on the door leading into the boathouse from the inner lobby and on the gate post leading onto the pontoon.

#### **Control of Safety Boards**

The Lead Coach on duty will control the safety Boards. The definition of each state is as follows:

- RED** - Flow very fast-water level high. The Lead Coach in charge will make a decision based on the prevailing river and weather conditions and the experience and ability of the crew. No crew or sculler may boat without the permission of the Lead Coach. All crews that boat must turn at and remain upstream of Henley Management College boathouse. (See attached Plan of River).
- Yellow** - Adverse Conditions, Flow fast, level above normal. Restrictions Apply. All boats must remain upstream of Henley Management College boathouse. Any person wishing to boat, must be entitled to do so under the Rowing and Sculling Proficiency Scheme or have specific dispensation from the Chief Coach or Safety Adviser.
- GREEN** - Flow Normal. Standard safety precautions apply. Normal restrictions apply and a Green board does not necessarily mean that an individual is competent to cope with the conditions.

### C. Thunder Storms and Lightning

All coaches and athletes should be aware of the local weather forecast when planning outings, particularly when thunderstorms have been predicted.

If thunder is heard and/or lightning observed before the outing has commenced; individuals and crews must remain at the club.

If thunder is heard and/or lightning observed whilst on the water, individuals and crews must seek proper shelter. If safe to do so, individuals and crews should return immediately to the Club; however this has to be with due consideration to the "30-30" rule for lightning. The rule being to count the time taken until you hear the thunder. If it is 30 seconds or less you must seek proper shelter.

If no lightning is visible but thunder is heard; individuals and crews must seek proper shelter.

Individuals and crews must remain at the club or under proper shelter for a minimum period of 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder, before considering it safe to commence the outing.

FOG and Poor visibility:- If the BUCKS BANK (Town Side Of River) cannot be seen this is viewed as **RED** conditions irrespective of water flow.

### D. Condition of Equipment

Prior to use, athletes shall check the equipment to be used; heel restraints, bow ball, buoyancy chamber hatch covers etc to ensure that it is serviceable

and appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended. Coaches will periodically check and carry out any maintenance and repairs to equipment and that all boats have a valid identification i.e. LDR 123. The coaching/safety launch should be prepared and ready for use at the beginning of each training day if not already out on the river and being used for coaching.

## E. Incidents and Accidents

All members are responsible for reporting all accidents, incidents and near incidents that they have knowledge of or witness within 24 hours of the event, via the British Rowing online incident reporting system<sup>2</sup>, to satisfy the requirements of the British Rowing Row Safe Guide.

In addition to the online system, all members are to bring the incident to the attention of the Water Safety Adviser and their coach.

All accidents and incidents will be reviewed by the Water Safety Adviser, and these will be discussed by the coaches and reported to the Rowing Management Group; along with any additional control measures that are deemed necessary to avoid any future repetition.

Emergency Services are to be contacted by the best means possible as appropriate to any accident or emergency situation. See below for contact numbers and postal codes of access points to river bank for emergency services. All coaches must carry these numbers and post codes in their cell phone.

## F. Launch

The Club launch is to be used only by drivers authorised by the Chief Coach and as checked out by the coach responsible or the Safety Adviser. All drivers and passengers must wear lifejackets. The driver is responsible for ensuring that a safety bag/launch rescue kit is carried. The driver must replace any items used or missing from the safety bag and action their replacement.

**Kill Cords** – all drivers must wear an operational kill cord (and carry a spare) securely attached to both driver and engine. Failure to wear a kill cord puts the driver and others at risk. It is essential to:

- \* attach the cord to your life jacket or around your leg before the engine is started.
- \* test regularly to ensure the engine stops when the kill cord mechanism is operated.
- \* make sure the cord is in good condition.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org/?q=incidentreporting>

\* stop the engine before transferring the kill cord to another driver or removing the kill cord.

Launch drivers are to ensure that the launch is handled with consideration to other river users and in accordance with the British Rowing, Row Safe Guide and the Environment Agency Regulations.

The launch is EA registered to carry 4 persons, the driver and 3 others whilst following and coaching crews. In the event of a capsize recovery operation the maximum number of persons on the launch can be up to 10 persons in order to safely convey athletes to the safety of the river bank or boathouse.

## G. Coxswains and Steersman

In all coxed boats, the coxswain is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and crew. The wearing of lifejackets or buoyancy aids by coxswains is compulsory. If front-loaders are being coxed, care is to be taken to ensure that the lifejacket does not prevent a cox from escaping in the event of capsize or sinking.

In coxless boats, the person occupying the bow seat or the person controlling the rudder (when fitted) is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and the crew.

The only exception to the foregoing being when the coxswain, or the steersman, is a beginner; in which case responsibility will be transferred to the coach or to the person providing the direct instruction and supervision.

Boats should be placed in the water with bows up-stream towards Henley Bridge. Before pushing off from the pontoon the cox, steersman or single sculler must check if any traffic is moving downstream through Henley Bridge.

Crews and scullers move down stream keeping to the BERKS bank. Care should be taken passing Upper Thames RC, cross over point, where crews may be going afloat or coming into the UTRC pontoon. Temple Island must be passed with care on the BERKS side of the island. Crews and scullers moving upstream from Hambleton Lock towards Henley Bridge must keep to the BUCKS side of the river. Temple Island should always be passed on the right.

Crews and scullers returning to the Leander pontoon should stop at the New Street Public Slipway at the end of New Street on the Bucks Bank and check before crossing to disembark at Leander pontoon.

Turning and Crossing: Turning points are at: a) New Street Public Slipway, b) Upper Thames RC, c) below Temple Island and gate, d) at White Cottage boathouse or Henley Management College boathouse. Crews and scullers must not turn below the “**Danger**” board at Hambleton Lock. Crews turning

at Temple Island and New Street Public Slipway, must take care to avoid other craft already on passage. Crews must not turn **above** Temple Island.

There are two designated crossing points: 1. Upper Thames RC and 2. Leander Club.

## H. Coaches

All Coaches are to be British Rowing qualified with Instructor Award (IA) or UKCC Level 2 as the minimum standard.

Coaches are to ensure that:

- Crews are aware of the appropriate safety procedures;
- Crews use safe rowing/sculling equipment;
- The outing is conducted appropriate to the prevailing weather and water conditions;
- Consideration is shown to other water users;
- Crews are appropriately dressed for the session;
- The Coach is to be particularly alert for symptoms of hypothermia and heat stroke / dehydration;
- In particular, when coaching young people, the whole crew should be dressed suitably;
- When coaching coxed boats, care must also be taken to ensure that the cox is properly dressed;
- Particular attention is paid to the coaching of coxes as their competence is essential to water safety as well as the crew's success;
- When coaching from the bank a throw line and mobile phone/radio is taken when appropriate;
- The coach/athlete ratio for junior athletes should be one coach to no more than ten junior athletes;

Junior athletes under the age of 18 are not allowed on the water unless attended by a coach.

## I. Circulation Pattern

All members must adhere to the Clubs designated circulation pattern for the Henley Reach, as shown on the Plan displayed on the Club safety notice board in the Gym and inside the door leading out onto the concrete apron in front of the boathouse and on the Club website.

## J. Henley Royal Regatta

During the installation of the regatta course booms and erection of other regatta course facilities (April to August) care should be exercised as the hazards change daily. The lead coach should brief crews and scullers of the changes as displayed.

In the period running up to and during Henley Women's Regatta and the Royal Regatta the number of crews using the river increases significantly and thus the hazard level.

#### **K. Rowing and Sculling at Night**

Rowing and sculling in the dark is not permitted. In accordance with the EA rules, all rowing/sculling boats must show lights before full light in the mornings and after sunset. A white light, mounted on the boat to both bow and stern, must be shown. LED lights are permitted. *Flashing lights are not to be used as main lights. Lights should not be fixed to the riggers as they can be obscured when negotiating bends and turning.*

#### **L. Unescorted Outings**

Individuals going on the river outside the normal club training sessions must carry a mobile phone in a zip lock bag that won't sink (containing emergency telephone numbers) also a safety bag attached to their person.

### **V. OFF-WATER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

#### **A. Lifting of Boats**

Coaches and crews are to ensure that every care is taken to prevent injury when lifting boats in and out of the racks and the river. One person is to be in charge of the manoeuvre, giving clear instructions before and during the lift.

#### **B. Gym**

All members are responsible for keeping the gym clean, tidy and free of equipment left lying where it can be a hazard to others. After use, every member is responsible for returning all equipment that they have used, to its proper location and for cleaning down all items of the equipment that they have utilized.

All members shall be deemed responsible for their own safety whilst using any of the Club's gym equipment. Should any member have any doubt concerning how to use any item of equipment, or correct technique; they should seek guidance from the Coach. Athletes should wear purpose made footwear when weight training.

Junior members are not permitted to use any of the gym equipment (rowing machines, weights machines or free weights) unless accompanied by a qualified coach or supervised by a person deemed responsible by the Chief Coach.

The use of any gym equipment by non-squad members and their guests must be sanctioned by the Chief Coach.

#### **No Smoking Policy**

The Club has a No-Smoking policy and smoking is not permitted in any part of the Club. Members are responsible for ensuring that their guests are briefed accordingly.

### **C. Fire**

In the event of a fire the Building is to be evacuated and proceed to the muster point in the Car Park. An attempt is to be made to account for individuals.

### **D. Car Park**

Extreme care is to be taken by all when using the car park in order to prevent injury to people on foot or carrying boats whose vision may be obscured.

## **VI. Feedback**

Safety is a standard item on both main Committee and RMG agendas, and is reviewed at every meeting.

Safety can only be consistently achieved through a process of good communication, education and periodic review. If any individual identifies any safety related issue which is not documented, or that they feel others can learn from, they can make a significant contribution by discussing the topic with the Safety Adviser who can then take the appropriate action.

Ross Hunter

Club Water Safety Adviser

# Appendix A to Leander Safety Plan

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## I. Emergency Action Plan

### A. In the event of a capsize

- If out of your depth and unable to wade ashore, hold onto the capsized hull as a buoyancy aid & attempt to swim it to shore.
- If the water is cold, get as much of your body out of the water, onto and straddling the hull, as soon as possible, draping yourself over the upturned hull (if necessary turning over the hull for this purpose).
- If possible, "buddy-up"; holding on to each other to provide mutual warmth and support until rescued and to help ensure all are accounted for.
- Other boats in the vicinity should fetch help or a launch if one is available. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESCUE FROM ANOTHER ROWING SCULL - you are likely to tip over, putting more people in the water with no one to get help.

### B. In The Event of A Serious Incident

- IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, INCLUDING A CREW MEMBER BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY ILL, INJURED OR BECOMING UNRESPONSIVE, IMMEDIATELY:
  - Raise the Alarm with a launch or with other boats if available.
  - Use a cell phone to dial for emergency assistance 112 or 999; or if no cell phone available row to the nearest location where a safe landing can be made, get to a telephone, and make a 112 or 999 call, indicating the closest access location from the list below. Put the post codes of the locations below in your cell phone so you can guide the ambulance to the nearest location.
  - Key Locations and Emergency Equipment  
Defibrillator: one is located in a locked box on the wall on front of the boathouse facing the river. 999 will provide the code to you to open the box.

Leander Club: Henley on Thames. RG9 2LP  
Tel: 0491 575 782.

Doctor:  
Hart Surgery, York Road, Henley on Thames. RG9 2DR  
Tel: 01491 843 200.  
Bell Surgery, York Road, Henley on Thames. RG9 2DR.  
Tel: 01491 843 250.

Hospital: If Ambulance Required DIAL 999.  
Minor Casualties should be taken to:  
Townlands Hospital, York Road, Henley on Thames.  
RG9 2EB. Tel: 0491 637 400.

Major Casualties should be taken immediately to:  
Royal Berkshire Hospital, London Road, Reading. RG1  
5AN. Tel: 0118 322 8616 (A&E).

Police: Henley on Thames. Tel: 0845 850 5505.

Environmental Agency 24 hour Emergency  
Tel: 0800 807 060. Flood line: 0845 988 1188.

**Emergency access points to river bank (post codes):-**

Phyllis Court, Marlow Road, Henley on Thames. RG9 2HT.

Fawley Court, Marlow Road. RG9 3AE.

Upper Thames Rowing Club, Remenham Lane, Henley on Thames. RG9 3DB.

Remenham Church, Remenham Lane, Henley on Thames. RG9 3DB.

Henley Management College, Marlow Road. RG9 3AU.

Hambleden Lock, Keepers House. RG9 3AZ.

**C. Possible serious incidents associated with rowing**

The following gives guidance for recognizing and treating possible serious incidents associated with rowing.

**1. Hypothermia**

The degree of hypothermia depends on how cold the environment is and the length of exposure to that cold. Severe hypothermia needs urgent medical treatment in hospital. Shivering is a good guide to how severe the condition is. If the person can stop shivering on their own, the hypothermia is mild, but if they cannot stop shivering, it is moderate to severe.

**Mild cases**

In mild cases, symptoms include:

- shivering,
- feeling cold,
- low energy,
- discomfort at higher temperatures than normal, or
- cold, pale skin.

## **Moderate cases**

The symptoms of moderate hypothermia include:

- violent, uncontrollable shivering,
- being unable to think or pay attention,
- confusion (some people don't realise they are affected),
- loss of judgment and reasoning,
- difficulty moving around or stumbling (weakness),
- feeling afraid,
- memory loss,
- fumbling hands and loss of coordination,
- drowsiness,
- slurred speech,
- listlessness and indifference, or
- slow, shallow breathing and a weak pulse.

## **Severe cases**

The symptoms of severe hypothermia include:

- loss of control of hands, feet, and limbs,
- uncontrollable shivering that suddenly stops,
- unconsciousness,
- shallow or no breathing,
- weak, irregular or no pulse,
- stiff muscles, and
- dilated pupils.

Although hypothermia is defined as occurring when the body temperature drops below 35°C (95°F), mild hypothermia can start at higher body temperatures.

As the body temperature decreases further, shivering will stop completely. The heart rate will slow and a person will gradually lose consciousness. When unconscious, a person will not appear to have a pulse or be breathing. Emergency assistance should be sought immediately and CPR provided while the person is warmed. CPR is an emergency procedure, consisting of 30 chest compression followed by 2 rescue breaths, repeated until the victim is breathing on their own or emergency services take over care.

## **2. Treating hypothermia**

As hypothermia can be a life-threatening condition, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Hypothermia is treated by preventing further heat being lost and by gently warming the patient.

If you are treating someone with mild hypothermia, or waiting for medical treatment to arrive, follow the advice below to prevent further loss of heat.

Things to do for hypothermia:

- Move the person indoors, or somewhere warm, as soon as possible.
- Once sheltered, gently remove any wet clothing and dry the person
- Wrap them in blankets, towels, coats (whatever you have), protecting the head and torso first
- Your own body heat can help someone with hypothermia. Hug them gently
- Increase activity if possible, but not to the point where sweating occurs, as that cools the skin down again
- If possible, give the person warm drinks (but not alcohol) or high energy foods, such as chocolate, to help warm them up
- Once body temperature has increased, keep the person warm and dry

It is important to handle anyone that has hypothermia very gently and carefully.

Things you should NOT do:

- Don't warm up an elderly person using a bath, as this may send cold blood from the body's surfaces to the heart or brain too suddenly, causing a stroke or heart attack;
- Don't apply direct heat (hot water or a heating pad, for example) to the arms and legs, as this forces cold blood back to the major organs, making the condition worse
- Don't give the person alcohol to drink, as this will decrease the body's ability to retain heat
- Don't rub or massage the person's skin, as this can cause the blood vessels to widen and decrease the body's ability to retain heat. In severe cases of hypothermia there is also a risk of heart attack

## **D. Drowning**

The goal is to safely rescue the victim and begin first aid.

In a drowning emergency, the sooner the rescue and first aid begin, the greater the victim's chance of survival. Do not endanger yourself in rescuing the victim during this process.

### **Rescue options to reach the drowning victim in the water:**

- Use a Throw Line

- Throw a rope with a buoyant object
- Use a long stick
- Bring the launch alongside the victim approaching from the down-stream side of victim and tow the victim to shore. Do not haul the victim into the boat because it may cause the boat to capsize, and both of you will be in the water. Cold water may render the victim too hypothermic to grasp objects within their reach or to hold while being pulled to safety
- As a last resort, you can attempt a swimming rescue if you are sufficiently trained in water rescue. Do not attempt a rescue beyond your capabilities. Otherwise, you may harm yourself.
  - For a swimming rescue, approach the person from behind while trying to calm the victim as you move closer. A panicked victim can pull you down
  - Grab a piece of clothing or cup a hand or arm under the victim's chin and pull the person face up to shore while providing special care to ensure a straight head-neck-back alignment especially if you think the person has spine injuries

### 1. First aid for a drowning victim

The focus of the first aid for a drowning victim in the water is to get oxygen into the lungs without aggravating any suspected neck injury.

If the victim's breathing has stopped, give 5 mouth-to-mouth rescue breaths as soon as you safely can. This could mean starting the breathing process in the water.

Once on shore, reassess the victim's breathing. If there is no breathing, begin CPR. Continue CPR (30 chest compression followed by 2 rescue breaths) until help arrives or the person revives. If there is breathing without suspected spine injury, place the person in recovery position (lying on the stomach, arms extended at the shoulder level and bent, head on the side with the leg on the same side drawn up at a right angle to the torso) to keep the airway clear and to allow the swallowed water to drain. If you suspect the victim may have a spinal injury but they are breathing do not attempt to move them until emergency services reach you. **Note: If you suspect a spinal injury, but the victim is not breathing, you should still begin rescue breaths and CPR even if this means potentially aggravating the suspected spinal injury.**

Keep the person warm by removing wet clothing and covering with warm blankets to prevent hypothermia.

Remain with the recovering person until emergency medical personnel have arrived.

### E. Exertional Heat Stroke

Exertional heat stroke (EHS) can be fatal. Prevention and recognition are the two more important things to prevent a serious exertional heat stroke incident.

To help prevent EHS:

- 1) Know that it does not need to be particularly hot outside to suffer from a heat related condition. People often dismiss heat injury symptoms just because it is not a warm day. But wearing layers and exercising on a cool day can also create the right conditions for heat injury, so always be aware.
- 2) Hydrate before, during and after practice. You should pee frequently, and that pee should be the colour of straw or lighter. Even mild dehydration increases heat injury risk
- 3) Learn to recognize the symptoms of EHS. It is natural to be tired during or after exercise. Competitive athletes often react to this tiredness by telling themselves or others to shake it off and keep going. Keep the symptoms of EHS in the back of your mind as you observe others, as they may not be able to see it in themselves:
  - Irrational behavior, irritability, emotional instability
  - Altered consciousness, coma
  - Disorientation or dizziness
  - Headache
  - Confusion or just look “out of it”
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Muscle cramps, loss of muscle function/balance, inability to walk
  - Collapse, staggering or sluggish feeling
  - Profuse sweating
  - Decreasing performance or weakness
  - Dehydration, dry mouth, thirst
  - Rapid pulse, low blood pressure, quick breathing

If you suspect EHS, and it can come on quickly, you are in an emergency situation. Call 999. While waiting for medical assistance to arrive:

- Remove all equipment and excess clothing. Rip or cut it off if you have to do so.
- Cool the athlete as quickly as possible. Take the athlete into a cold shower or if that is not possible move them to a shaded, cool area and use cold, wet towels to cover as much of the body surface as possible. Replace the towels as they begin to dry or warm up.
- Maintain airway, breathing and circulation.
- Monitor vital signs such as temperature, heart rate, breathing rate and the central nervous system (are they exhibiting odd behavior, having trouble speaking, anything out of the ordinary?).

EHS has had a 100% survival rate when immediate cooling (via cold water immersion or aggressive whole body cold water dousing) was initiated within 10 minutes of collapse. But quick cooling is just the start – you still need to call 999 or 112.

## F. Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the most common heat related condition in athletes. It is the inability to continue exercise in the heat due to lack of blood to the heart which causes energy depletion. This is made worse by dehydration, so again be sure to hydrate sufficiently before, during and after each practice. Symptoms include fatigue and weakness. You'll be more than just tired – you can't physically continue. Dizziness, headache, chills (even though your body is hot, it is trying to cool itself), lack of coordination, nausea and irritability in any combination are warning signs of heat exhaustion. The good news is that if it is heat exhaustion instead of EHS, it should respond quickly to treatment. Move the athlete to a cool, preferably shaded area, remove excess clothing, elevate the legs to help blood get back to the heart and cool them with fans, wet/icy towels applied to the body, or ice packs.

It can be hard to tell the difference between EHS and Heat Exhaustion. If you're concerned, opt for safety and call 999 or 112 while cooling.

### **STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Do not go out rowing alone, ever, when the water temperature is below 4 degrees Centigrade. Hypothermia is deadly more quickly at lower temperatures.
- Always row with at least one other boat, or with the coach/safety boat. Even if the air temperature is quite warm, a capsize into cooler waters can quickly bring on hypothermia which can prevent you being able to rescue yourself.
- Always have your mobile phone with you if there is no coach boat, so that you can call 112 or 999 for help. Keep it in a zip-loc bag - then it won't sink!

7<sup>th</sup> April, 2016