



Club Safety Policy

This policy concerns new members, existing members and those concerned with training novices. Its intention is to make the activities of the Yare Boat Club safe for members, particularly new members and novices. It recognises that rowing and sculling on inland waters are essentially safe activities, but that there are inherent dangers in all activities on or near water.

The Club will fully comply with the latest version of **British Rowing "RowSafe"**. It is intended that nothing in this document should conflict with this.

It is the responsibility of individual members to be conversant with BR RowSafe, Club Rules, Rules of the River and this Safety Policy.

The Club has two categories of member : **Senior members and Novice members.**

Senior Members

Senior Members will be competent scullers or rowers, who are able to:

1. Recognise potential dangers and dangerous conditions.
2. Use the river safely and with consideration for other river users.
3. Know how to deal with an emergency occurring on the water without reliance on others.

Before the independent use of club boats and facilities (including own boat stored on club premises), members must satisfy **coaches designated by the Board** that they have the necessary knowledge and experience to satisfy the three criteria above.

On achieving this, they become **Senior Members** of Yare Boat Club and may use all equipment at any time at their own discretion. BUT NOTE:

- Club boats should only be afloat during daylight hours. If you wish to take out a boat in the dark please see the relevant policy below and follow this.
- Single scullers are solely and fully responsible for their own safety and must follow the appropriate procedures.
- At busy times, club boats may be allocated by the Captain or a Board member.

From Novice to Senior Member

The core skills required of members are grouped under the following five headings:

- Personal safety.
- Technique of rowing/sculling (not dealt with in this document).
- Use of equipment.
- Watermanship and river etiquette.
- First Aid.

Minimal knowledge or skill will be expected of novices, but those involved with the supervision of novices will be expected to have knowledge of first aid and the recognition and management of hypothermia and drowning.

To achieve this level within the club, members will be expected to pass the Single Sculls Competency test. This is overseen by the Club Captain, with specific examiners appointed by the Captain. This will only happen once the Captain has assessed that the member is ready to take this test.

Basic requirements for all members

All Members

Personal safety: Ability to swim to the British Rowing standard i.e. 50 metres in light clothing, tread water for at least 2 minutes and swim under water for at least 5 metres. High viz or at least a yellow top should be worn at all times. (except when actually racing).
Spare clothing and a phone, or at least a whistle, should be carried in a waterproof bag.
The use of sunscreen is also recommended in summer months
It is strongly recommended that ALL members wear a High Viz coloured top when rowing. If you are in a single this is essential. If you are in a crew boat then this is essential for the bow person and recommended for all other crew members as well. White is NOT considered to be high viz

Novice member

Personal safety: Awareness of hypothermia, exhaustion and the necessity for adequate fluid replacement when exercising.
Be conversant with capsizing drill. This will be completed separately in very controlled conditions
Getting in and out of the boat from pontoon.
How to warn another boat of your presence.
Assessing weather and river conditions: wind, tides, temperature, visibility.

Technique: Elementary:
How to stop and turn boat, including emergency stop.
Back down.
Safe position.

Use of equipment: Know how to lift, launch and rack the boat with assistance.
Know how to adjust equipment and check for safety.
Know which boats and blades are suitable for his/her use.
Be conversant with capsizing drill.
Normal fundamental checks should be made to every boat before an outing – bow ball is secure, heel restraints are in place, hatches are closed,

Watermanship: Know the 'Rules of the River' and relevant local bye-laws.
Know how to avoid collision.
Be competent at manoeuvring the boat.
Know how to "read" the water (e.g. direction and rate of tidal stream) and have some knowledge of the local river geography (where the banks are shelving or steep). *E.g. "Safe" areas: frequented areas with shelving banks; "dangerous" areas: out of sight with steep or piled banks and/or rough water.*

First Aid: Ideally, a knowledge of First Aid and the management of hypothermia and drowning.
Note: the club has its own automatic defibrillator which is located in a bag just inside the front Boathouse. If needed, please do not hesitate to use it as it might

well save a life. As it is fully automated it will tell you everything that you need to do to use it.

Senior Member As above but with greater experience and better technique.
Know how to lift, launch and rack a single sculling boat unaided.

Restrictions on members.

Only **Senior Members** will have open access to all boats and facilities at all times.

Novices must always be under the direct supervision of a **Senior** member.

All Members Record time of departure in the outings log book kept in the front boathouse and also sign out when leaving the island.
Record any equipment defects in the log book and inform the Club Captain.

Notes Ideally, members should carry a mobile phone and/or whistle (international distress call is repeated long blasts), particularly if out alone.
In cold weather, spare dry clothing should also be taken in a waterproof bag.
Do NOT go out in thunderstorms (risk of lightning strike).
Members should always wash their hands thoroughly before eating after an outing.

DO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN ACTIONS

If uncertain about ability/competency, **DON'T GO OUT** and **DON'T TAKE UNNECESSARY RISKS**

COXES MUST WEAR A LIFE JACKET

Policy for rowing in the dark or misty conditions

This extra policy defines the arrangements and the actions to be taken by members of Yare Boat Club for rowing in the dark or in misty conditions. All concerned members must have a working knowledge of this safety policy. The Club will fully comply with British Rowing guidelines set in the "Safety Alert – Lights on Rowing Boats (2015)". It is intended that nothing in this document should conflict with this.

Winter is that time of year when there are not enough daylight hours for rowers to be able to row and sometimes rowers might want to start their outing just before sunrise. Darkness brings its own additional dangers to daytime outings. The committee acknowledges that members need water time and are prepared to approve rowing in the dark in club boats, provided that members strictly adhere to the following rules in order to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Rowing in the dark is defined as any outing that takes place before sunrise or after sunset. Generally half an hour before sunrise and half an hour after sunset are light enough to navigate but this is exactly when lights are necessary to be seen by other river users.

General:

- Before starting the practice of rowing in the dark, individual members must seek permission of one of the following members of the Club Board: the Club Captain, the Club Water Safety Advisor, the Club Chair. Only rowers who are deemed competent and who know the River Yare well will be granted permission to row at night.

- Casual, “scratch” and novice outings will not be approved. Rowing in the dark will only be permitted to senior members of known ability on an individual basis as outlined above.
- Boats must comply with the rule of a flashing white light on bow and a steady white light on the stern. If lights are mounted directly onto the hull, rowers must ensure that they are not hidden by the saxboards. Lights must be fitted to the boat and not the rower. Rowers should use their own lights.
- Rowers must wear a High Viz coloured garment above their waist whilst rowing in the dark.
- Rowers must always wear a High Viz top when rowing in misty conditions as lights are not effective at this time.
- If there is more than one boat out, they should not consider racing against each other unless there is natural sunlight (eg on the way back from an early morning outing but never in mist conditions).
- A thorough risk assessment must be carried out before each outing, paying particular attention to weather and stream conditions.

The above rules are set out in order to reduce the risk to an acceptable level and must be followed strictly. A rower who chooses not to follow them, is also choosing to put their own safety and that of others at risk. In the case of non-compliance, rowers will not be allowed to continue with the practice of night-time rowing for a length of time at the discretion of the Board.

In the event of an incident, all night rowing will be suspended until the Captain, Water Safety Officer and Chair have reviewed the situation and are satisfied that night outings are safe to resume.