

# TEAM **K**EANE

## Sculling School

### **SAFETY POLICY & EMERGENCY PLAN**

#### **Introduction**

TKSS is committed to the safety of its members and its guests whilst they are engaged in club related activities. The aim of the TKSS Safety Plan is to ensure that all members and visitors are made aware of the safety requirements of rowing, sculling and related activities at the boat club so that they may participate safely. We are based at the University of London Boat house, which is a shared multisport facility.

The Safety Plan is supplementary to British Rowing's RowSafe guidelines, [LINK BELOW](#).

<https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Row-Safe-April-2019-online.pdf>

#### **Emergencies**

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

#### **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 Clubs Safety Plan and any other instructions issued by the Club, in respect of safety.

#### **General Water Safety Requirements**

##### **Safety Equipment**

The Club provides items of safety equipment, which shall be used by its members to accord with the following:

##### **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 members that do not meet the required swimming standards outlined in the declaration form. It is the responsibility of each member or parent to declare swimming ability correctly.
- If a medical condition exists, where a member is considered to be at risk of becoming unconscious or immobile, as a result of immersion, an automatic lifejacket must be worn.

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### **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 in the safety bags along with first aid kits and thermal exposure blankets, provided to all coaches at the club.

### **Thermal Exposure Blankets:**

Any person providing coaching or safety cover from the bank should equip themselves with sufficient thermal exposure blankets. All thermal exposure blankets are in the safety bags along with first aid kits and throw lines.

### **First Aid Box**

First Aid boxes are located at the back of the bay on the shelves, and in the Coaches Safety Bags.

### **Thunderstorms and Lightning:**

All members 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 not go afloat, and remain indoors.

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 40 minutes after the last lightning or thunder, before considering it safe to commence the outing.

### **Condition of Equipment**

Prior to use, all equipment is to be checked to ensure that it is serviceable and appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended. Any concerns over kit condition are to be reported in the damage log kept in the bay and reported to the equipment officer.

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### **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.

<https://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org/>

In addition to the online system, all members are to bring the incident to the attention of the Water Safety Officer ([watersafety@teamkeane.com](mailto:watersafety@teamkeane.com)), their Coach & Captain.

All accidents and incidents will be reviewed by the Water Safety Officer, and these will be reported at rowing committee meeting; 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.

### **Launches**

Launches are to be used only by RYA coastal Level 2 qualified drivers who have been authorized Water Safety Officer and their ability will be checked before they can drive a launch unaccompanied. All drivers and passengers are to wear lifejackets. The driver is responsible for ensuring that a safety Canister / launch rescue kit is carried. Any items used or missing are to be notified to the Safety Officer as soon as possible.

All launch drivers are to ensure that the launches are handled with consideration to other river users and in accordance with the British Rowing, Row Safe Guide and the PLA.

The launches are designed to carry two people, the driver and the coach. In the event of a capsize recovery operation the maximum number of persons on the launch may exceed two persons in order to safely convey athletes to the bank or boathouse.

### **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.

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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 the person providing the direct instruction and supervision.

### **Coaches**

Lead 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 children, 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 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 accompanied by a coach.

### **Navigation**

All members must adhere to the Tideway navigation set out by the Thames Regional Rowing Council and PLA. The full Tideway navigation instructions can be found at [https://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/assets/Tideway%20Code Digital%20\(web\).pdf](https://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/assets/Tideway%20Code%20Digital%20(web).pdf).

### **Rowing and Sculling at Night**

All rowing/sculling boats must show lights after sunset. A static white light, mounted on stern of the boat and a flashing white light on the bow to note the direction of travel. Lights should not be fixed to the riggers as they can be obscured when negotiating bends and turning.

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### **Unescorted Outings**

Outings by individuals and crews outside of the normal club training sessions are to be booked out & with direct agreement with the Water Safety Officer. An estimated return time is to be stated along with crew details. Once the crew has returned they are to notify the water safety officer. Only Club accredited steers are permitted to steer whilst unescorted.

### **OFF-WATER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

#### **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 maneuver, giving clear instructions before and during the lift.

#### **Erg Shed**

All members are responsible for keeping the erg shed clean and tidy.

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 first seek guidance from the Captain or Coach before taking on any activity.

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

The use of any gym equipment by non-members and by guests is strictly prohibited.

#### **No Smoking Policy**

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

#### **Telephones**

TKSS does not have a phone in our bay. Coaches and crew are encouraged to carry a mobile telephone in a waterproof case at all times when training on the water. UL boathouse does have a phone in the back office if needed in an emergency.

#### **Car Park**

No parking is permitted in the UL car park. This area is for staff and trailers only.

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### **The Bay**

Team Keane has the bay 4th from the right. Take care when maneuvering in the bay, space is limited.

No fuel is to be kept in the bay, all tanks are to be kept & locked up in designated lockers outside.

### **The Slipway**

Take care when on the slipway/hard and shoreline. Wear appropriate footwear. It can be muddy and slippery, and various items can wash up on the shore from the Thames so **never** walk barefoot.

### **Disease**

The Thames is dirty! Be sure to wash your hands after being on and around the water, particularly before eating. Should you feel ill within a few days after being around the Thames, consult your doctor.

### **Feedback**

Safety is a key item on TKSS committee meeting agendas, so is reviewed at every meeting.

We are always striving to improve safety procedures. If you have any ideas or thoughts on current safety, or any concerns please arrange a discussion the Water Safety Officer who can then take the appropriate action and bring to the committee.

Miranda Keane, Club Water Safety Adviser, Team Keane Sculling School,

- Tel: 07989535720
- Email: [watersafety@teamkeane.com](mailto:watersafety@teamkeane.com)

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## Appendix A

### Emergency Action Plan

All accidents and Incidents should be reported to the Water Safety Officer. The water safety officer will advise if a British rowing report is also needed.

#### In the event of a capsized

- If out of your depth & 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 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 until rescued to provide mutual warmth and support 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.
- If your head is submerged at any time, you must seek medical advice immediately to check for potential left threatening dry drowning.

#### In The Event Of A Serious Incident

- IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, INCLUDING A CREW MEMBER BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY ILL 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 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 999 call, indicating the closest access location from the list below: Possible serious incidents associated with rowing.

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

#### Hypothermia

The symptoms of hypothermia depend on how cold the environment is and how long you are exposed for. 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.

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### **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 realize 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 breathing. Emergency assistance should be sought immediately and CPR provided while the person is warmed. CPR is an emergency procedure, consisting of 30 chest compressions followed by 2 rescue breaths.

### **Treating hypothermia**



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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.

### **Near Drowning**

The goal is to safely rescue the victim and begin first aid. In a near-drowning emergency, the sooner the rescue and first aid has begun, 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 a boat alongside the 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

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shore while providing special care to ensure a straight head-neck-back alignment especially if you think the person has spine injuries

### **First aid for a near-drowning victim**

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

1. 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.
2. Once on shore, reassess the victim's breathing and circulation (heartbeat and pulse). If there is breathing and circulation without suspected spine injury, place the person in recovery position (lying on the stomach, arms extended at 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 there is no breathing, begin CPR. Continue CPR (30 chest compressions followed by 2 rescue breaths) until help arrives or the person revives.
3. Keep the person warm by removing wet clothing and covering with warm blankets to prevent hypothermia.
4. Remain with the recovering person until emergency medical personnel have arrived.

### **STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Do not go out rowing alone, ever, when the water temperature is below 10 degrees C. Hypothermia is deadly quick at lower temperatures.
- Always row with at least one other boat, or with the coach/safety boat.
- Always have your mobile phone with you if there is no coach boat, so that you can call 999 for help. Keep it in a zip-lock bag - then it won't sink!
- Always remove your Wellies when in a boat without a life jacket.