



Yorkshire Social Rowing League



University of Leeds Boat Club

Yorkshire Social Rowing League Risk Assessment.

Location: Leeds Canal (Knostrop Fall Lock (Leeds Boat House) to Fishpond Lock).

Adapted from: LRC + UoLBC Knostrop Fall Lock to Fishpond Lock Risk Assessment

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The Risk Assessment will be a 'live' document and subject to regular (at least annual) review by UoLBC and the YSRL coordination team. The assessment will be updated as required in light of analysis of reported incidents and emerging risks. All event participants must be familiar with this document before racing.

Hazard	Description	Risk Level	Control Measures	Final Risk
Primary Hazards				
Water	Water levels are subject to change particularly after rainfall. Floodgates and floodlocks are closed prior to expected high water levels	M	Map of navigation available and all race participants required to be familiar with it. Circulation pattern published and adhered to. All boats to keep to the right/ starboard side of the canal (when facing direction of travel I.e `bow side`) All boats to slow down before bends and overtaking forbidden on bends Club Safety Code reviewed and updated regularly. All participants required to adhere to it and to British Rowing `Row Safe` guidelines. All participants and crews informed of potential hazards and action to be taken in event of accident. All participants are required to be able to swim and have undergone regular swim and capsize drills. This is the responsibility of the club to which they belong and not of UoLBC. Throw lines available in the event of a person in the water (carried by coaches). First Aid Kit and	L
Deep Water	The water is deep in places and can be expected to be greater than standing depth particularly around the lock areas	M		L

			<p>Thermal blankets are available in the boathouse and in launch bags and are checked regularly</p> <p>Rowing boats and safety launches not to be within 50m of the two locks and the overflow weir – boundaries will be marked on the map of the waterway at the boathouse as will bends and other hazards.</p>	
Pleasure Craft	Pleasure craft use the waterway and create wash and displace water. They should observe a strict 6mph speed limit	H	<p>All crews to be alert for pleasure craft and to be aware of their limited manoeuvrability Strict observance of the circulation pattern</p> <p>Warning signs will be posted at each end of the regatta course, requesting craft to travel at slow speeds.</p> <p>No racing shall commence when other crafts on the course.</p>	M
Weather				

Temperature	<p>Cold, Ice, Snow, cold may be exacerbated by wind speed</p> <p>Sun, Heat</p>	H	<p>UoLBC must carry out a risk assessment of temperature and likely wind chill factor before all outings and consult with crews.</p> <p>Crews must wear appropriate clothing – see below In inclement weather.</p> <p>UoLBC will consider halting, restricting or cancelling races if necessary.</p> <p>In some weather conditions, it may be possible to allow more experienced crews to race but restrict those with less. This will be ultimately decided by UoLBC.</p> <p>The safety launch must be on the water throughout race times regardless of weather conditions.</p> <p>Crews must ensure they have water bottles available on board and use sun block</p>	L
Wind	High winds may cause capsize if boats become inundated with water, may increase risk of collision by blowing boats of course	H	UoLBC must carry out a risk assessment of wind speeds and will ban rowing if they believe rowing is unsafe.	L
Electrical Storms	Canal is large stretch of open water – risk of lightning strike.	M	30/30 rule will be invoked. If thunder follows lightning by less than 30 seconds then rowing will be suspended and begin 30 minutes after last such occurrence.	L
Light/ Visibility	Rowing is unsafe in the dark Fog can limit visibility increasing the risk of collisions.	H	Strict rules about the timing of outings. Racing will only commence during the day when visibility is suitable. This is to be decided by UoLBC.	L

			<p>Since there is no street lighting, racing may not commence in the dark either early in the morning before sunrise, or in the evenings after dusk – under any circumstances.</p> <p>When there is fog must be able to clearly see 250m ahead, at the new boathouse this is approximately from the pontoon to bridge, if visibility is less then will not boat.</p>	
Rowing Activities				
Collision	<p>With other rowing boats</p> <p>During race</p> <p>With bank, buoys, fixed obstructions or floating debris</p> <p>With Stake Boats</p>	M	<p>Basic competence of coxswains and steersmen. Knowledge of navigation, map available with hazards marked.</p> <p>Strict adherence to circulation pattern.</p> <p>Crews being overtaken must give way to faster crews by moving to the right/ starboard side of the canal (when facing direction of travel ie `bow side`).</p> <p>See actions for Capsize below.</p> <p>All incidents must be reported and logged to UoLBC.</p> <p>Bow Balls must be present and secure</p> <p>Rowing will be limited to sweep coxed fours and eights.</p> <p>Inexperienced crews must row with an experienced cox.</p> <p>All Stake boats to be secured in place at start. Participants to be aware of navigation map and circulation pattern.</p>	L

			<p>Boats must adhere to Marshall instruction after racing and only turn when told safe to do so. In event of collision, racing must stop and will restart only upon inspection by the Marshals present.</p> <p>Marshall's will be placed with megaphones and two-way radio systems at key points along the course to minimize collision.</p> <p>No crews will be permitted on the race lanes unless racing.</p>	
Congestion in Boathouse area	Risk of collision as greatest concentration of boats as crews go out and return – both on land and on water.	H	<p>Strict adherence to circulation pattern on water. When not racing, boats must be put away. Coxes in charge of boats on land Ensure experienced coxes are with inexperienced crews.</p> <p>Ensure an adequate number of UoLBC land marshals are present to control the running of the boathouse.</p>	L
Boat capsize, sinking or boat unrowable	Rowers and coxes in water, risk of shock Hypothermia and drowning	M	<p>Safety code clear about what to do in event of capsize – must stay with boat and swim with boat to bank. Boats will normally remain buoyant. Coxes required to wear lifejackets.</p> <p>All race participants required to be able to swim Shoe types allow quick escape from boat. Heel restraints must be present and to regulation.</p> <p>Marshals will carry throwlines, All coxes and coaches to carry mobile phones. Lead Marshals</p>	L

			<p>with level 2 certificate to have a current first aid qualification. UoLBC has a Safety Launch but it will not always be in the right place. In the event of capsize crews will follow standard safety procedure and stay with the boat as it will float, but swim with the boat to the bank. Marshals will be able to call safety launch with walkie talkie/ mobile if required, but may also be able to help crew leave water with throwlines. Crew members may be able to help themselves if this will be safest</p> <p>Hatches must be present on boats to prevent swamping, on older style boats without compartments buoyancy bags must be inflated.</p> <p>No Juniors are permitted to partake in YSRL.</p> <p>No Sculling is permitted to participate in YSRL.</p> <p>All incidents to be reported to UoLBC.</p>	
Adaptive Rowing	Where rowers with disabilities may have individual needs to reduce risks.	M	<p>All participating clubs must inform UoLBC of any disability which may need to be adapted for whether it be through equipment or coaching communication.</p> <p>Rowers within the LTA classification may row inclusively within crew boats ensuring coaching needs are met. Those with visual impairment must be suitably guided around on land and water.</p> <p>Rowers within the TA and AS classification must use equipment that meets the FISA regulations.</p> <p>To ensure safe rowing or people with disabilities a BR trained classifier must indicate suitable classification, preference to formally classify when possible.</p>	L

			<p>Be aware that for some boat types and disabilities the boats may not move as fast so reduced wind levels and flow rates must be considered.</p> <p>Where getting into the boat requires transferring on the floor a transfer surface must be used to reduce risks from being on a cold and potentially wet floor.</p> <p>Where rowers do not use all limbs, or have reduced circulation, consider reducing session times/race numbers when cold, they might not be aware getting cold.</p>	
Equipment Failure				
Inappropriate / Unsuitable clothing	Risk of hypothermia if cold, sunburn if hot and potential problems if clothes catch on equipment or on capsize.	M	<p>Clubs and competitors are responsible for checking that participants are adequately clothed for the conditions and prevent those inadequately clothed from rowing.</p> <p>Multiple layers of light clothing are best for cold weather.</p> <p>Cover up to avoid sunburn in hot weather.</p> <p>Avoid loose fitting clothes that could catch oars or get stuck in the slide</p> <p>Avoid bulky fleeces and quilted tops that can absorb water and become very heavy when wet, and clothes that restrict movement when rowing like denim jeans or tops, and hoodies with front pouches/ pockets.</p>	L
Inappropriate / Unsuitable equipment	<p>Failure of equipment may lead to accidents on the water or on land (if trestles collapse).</p> <p>Routine checklist should include:</p>	M	All boats to be signed in and out for each session/race. All boats to be checked before use and any potential problems reported to UoLBC	L

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cracked/ damaged hull ● Bowball ● Hatches ● Heel restraints ● Slides and seats ● Riggers, topnuts, swivels and gates ● Steering mechanisms ● Collars on blades 		<p>before the boat is taken out. See checklist opposite for basic minimum.</p> <p>Any damage or equipment failure to be reported on maintenance section of boat signing in /out log/.</p> <p>Orange out of action tag to be affixed to any boat judged unrowable.</p> <p>All incidents to be reported to UoLBC. In case of para-rowing within TA & AS classification strapping, support and floats must be present and within FISA regulation</p>	
Safety Launch Failure	Essential for crew rescue if accident/incident	M	<p>Ensure launch bag is properly stocked (See BR Row Safe guidance) and in launch.</p> <p>Ensure pair of paddles in launch.</p> <p>Petrol tank full and strapped into launch, not loose.</p>	L
Within Event				
Food and Drink	<p>Litter/waste can be hazardous.</p> <p>The attraction of wildlife</p> <p>Potential trips and slips</p> <p>Create economical and environmental problems</p>	L	<p>Bags/Bins for litter will be provided and signposted accordingly throughout UoLBC. Participants have a responsibility to to use these.</p> <p>Strictly no litter to be thrown into the canal.</p>	L
Public congestion around boathouse	<p>Too many observers can create issues when loading/unloading</p> <p>May restrict access in the event of a health and safety incident</p> <p>Parking access to public</p>	L	<p>Areas for the public to stand and observe will be given on the site map. This must be strictly followed.</p> <p>Parking is only allowed in designated parking areas provided by UoLBC. No responsibility is taken for vehicles parked both in the car park or on Thwaite Lane.</p>	L

			It is the responsibility of UoLBC to make these areas available.	
Event Barbeque	Burns and cuts Trips and Slips Dietary issues Hygiene	M	The designated cooking area will be set aside from unloading/loading and only members of UoLBC are permitted to cook and handle the food. The correct equipment must be used and a Food Hygiene Certificate provided where necessary. Those handling food must wash hands before and after. First Aid on site.	L
Marque and tented structures	Wind Damage Structural Failure	L	Structures only to be erected by those who are trained. To be checked upon erection Structures only to be erected when weather permits. To be decided and agreed by UoLBC.	L
The Water Environment				
Weirs	There is an overflow weir on canal just upstream from Fishpond Lock, protected by a weir boom to prevent access by vessels	M	See mitigation for Water/Deep Water above.	
Vegetation	In places vegetation may overhang the canal, restrict access and egress from the canal and restrict sight lines. This is a particular problem in the summer months	L	Coxes and Crews to be alert to this possible navigation hazard and report and incidents to UoLBC for dissemination to all participants.	L
Limited sight lines	In places sight lines can be restricted particularly at bridges and close to bends and moorings	M	See plan of navigation. Crews required to familiarise themselves with plan and adhere to circulation pattern.	L

Fixed Structures	Bridges, Locks or protruding walls can be a hazard that leads to collision.	M	All steers persons aware of navigation and fixed hazards on the water.	L
Wildlife	Water is a habitat for swans/geese and other wildlife May stray onto course resulting in collisions/damage	L	Duty of the Marshals present to ensure that the race course is clear before each race commences	L
Other Water Users				
Freight Traffic	Freight vessels require deep water particularly when loaded and will therefore remain in the deep channel and may be unable to pass other canal users port to port. Freight vessels create a large bow wave and wash. Water displacement will be much greater than standard leisure vessels and will affect other craft. Freight craft generally operate between 06:00 - 21:00 Monday to Friday and 06:00-12:00 Saturday but can operate at other times day or night by prior arrangement with Canal & River Trust.	M	All crews to be alert for freight craft and to be aware of their limited manoeuvrability and the possibility that they may not be able to keep to one side of the canal. Strict observance of the circulation pattern. All freight vessels contact Canal & River Trust to book passage usually with 12 to 24 hrs notice. Canal & River Trust N.E. Admin team will provide details of freight passage times to LRC/UoLBC and if necessary rowing will be curtailed. All freight vessels can be contacted on marine band VHF radio on channel 74 when on the canal system.	M
Other manual powered craft	Other manual powered craft such as kayaks maybe present on the canal and could be a hazard	M	Must be vigilant on sticking to the circulation pattern and aware that some water users maybe in smaller boats and harder to see.	L
Fishermen	Fisherman may be hard to see on the bank and have lines out into the water which blades can get caught on.	L	Keep a look-out on the banks for fishermen. If fishermen are seen move closer to the middle of the canal whilst being aware for other water users and following circulation.	L

			Warning signs will be posted at each end of the regatta course, informing the public about the race.	
Health				
Biological Contamination	Leptospirosis other waterborne pathogens and contaminated needles may be present. Avian Flu	M	Cover all wounds with waterproof dressings Wash any new cuts, broken blisters with clean water Wear suitable footwear when launching boats Avoid contact with river/ canal water, mud etc., especially swallowing and in the mouth, nose and eyes Do not splash face or boats fittings with river water Wash/shower after race/capsize Wash hands before handling food and drink Wash damp kit immediately Swans will be removed from the pontoon and any waste will be removed/cleared prior to the event starting. Weil's disease (Leptospirosis) is rare but serious. The first stages are flu-like symptoms in 2 to 20 days: if these appear, report to your doctor.	L
Medical Emergency	Urgent and/or major treatment required	M	Procedure for calling Emergency Services in place and known by all coaches and crews and set out on Club Safety Notice Board. All Coaches trained in basic CPR. First Aid Kit and Defibrillator at boathouse. See Safety Notice Board. Safety Launch to be deployed if needed.	L
Illness or injury	Treatment required, Possible emergency	M	Procedure for calling Emergency Services in place and known by all coaches and crews and set out	L

			<p>on Club Safety Notice Board. All Coaches trained in basic CPR. First Aid Kit at boathouse. See Safety Notice Board</p> <p>Safety Launch will be available but see comment about capsize above.</p> <p>Declaration of relevant existing illness a requirement of membership and coaches informed, with consent of rower.</p>	
Land Based Hazards				
Slips Trips & Falls	<p>Pontoons and launching areas may be wet.</p> <p>The canal banks in places are steep and uneven, access may be difficult.</p>	H	<p>All crew members instructed in safe handling of boats. Coxes in charge of coxed boats. No uncoxed boats permitted. Throwlines available in case of fall into water. First Aid Kit available. Coaches instructed not to approach too close to edge of bank.</p>	M L
Petrol	In portable metal tanks for safety launch – risk of fire	L	Petrol tank strapped to floor of launch when in use and in locked metal cabinet when not in use.	L
Anti Social Behaviour	Anti-social behaviour may be experienced at various locations along the river, canal and associated structures.	M	Coaches and coxes to be alert and aware. All incidents to be reported to UoLBC. Call police or community liaison officer if required	L
Falling Objects	Objects can be dropped or thrown from bridges	M	Coaches and coxes to be alert and aware. All incidents to be reported to UoLBC. Call police or community liaison officer if required	L
Dogs in water	May cause accident/ collision/ capsize	L	Notice to public to keep dogs on lead in boathouse area.	L
Other users on canal side	Various people use the navigation paths and bridges including walkers, runners, cyclists and anglers	L	Access to boat launching areas around boathouse restricted with members of public not allowed. Coaches cycling along towpath warned to be aware of potential risk to other users.	L

Towpath and riverside vegetation	Invasive and toxic plants including Giant Hogweed may be found on canal banks. Vegetation overhanging towpaths may be a problem in rural areas and in summer	L	Coaches cycling along towpath warned to be aware of potential risk to other users. Incidents to be reported to club for dissemination to all coaches.	L
Access & Egress	The canal banks vary in type and construction. Canal banks can be vertical; freeboard will vary and can be expected to be in excess of 0.5m	L	No need for coaches or crew to access or leave water away from boathouse unless capsize. Either coaches or marshals will assist with throw lines or Safety Launch will retrieve crew – see comment about capsize above.	L