

Club Safety Plan

Last Updated October 2025

Introduction

The Club Safety Plan complements the [British Rowing Rowsafe guide](#). Safety is permanently on the agenda for all Club committee meetings, and it is the responsibility of all members to ensure that the safety rules and guidelines are adhered to. The purpose of the safety plan is to make Club members think about safety and be aware of what actions they should be taking to keep themselves and other people safe. The plan should be constantly under review and be made available to new members.

Noticeboard

Additional safety information is displayed on the safety noticeboard by the door. A copy of this safety plan and the emergency action plan should also be displayed.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments and safety plans should be produced for all significant Club activities, including but not limited to Club races and training camps, and should be renewed at least annually, or following significant incidents or changes to the activity.

Insurance

The Club's insurance policy is [here](#). In particular, note that only two non-Trinity rowers are allowed to sub without prior arrangement. Outings with at least three non-Trinity sub rowers or one rower and one cox require contacting the insurer in advance.

CUCBC Safety rules

As part of the Cambridge University Combined Boat Clubs, First and Third is bound by their safety rules, reproduced here:

1. That each College Boat Club and each Women's and Men's Captain be required to have a copy of this Handbook for general reference. Further copies are available from the Hon. Secretary of the CUCBC. Any Club not in possession of three copies of this Handbook, a BR RowSafe Booklet/poster and displaying a Ten Golden Rules Poster renders itself liable to a fine.
2. That all coxes must wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid, as approved by British Rowing, which is to be worn over the top of all other garments.

3. That each College Boat Club appoint a Safety Officer and that his or her name be notified to the Secretary of the CUCBC and the CUCBC Safety Advisor at the start of each academical year.
4. That each Club's Safety Officer must submit a written statement to the CUCBC at the start of each academical year confirming the following information:
 - a. The appropriate third party insurance cover is in place for the Club. **NB. It should be noted NO crew or individual from the Club will be allowed to boat when they return for the start of the Michaelmas Term until and unless confirmation that a valid insurance policy is in place has been received.**
 - b. Contact information for the Club's Safety Officer and Senior Treasurer.
 - c. That the Club has a detailed list of the boats it operates, and that each boat conforms to current BR regulations in respect of bow balls, footplates, heel-restraints, registration and buoyancy. *[NB. All boats purchased since 30 April 2003 must have inbuilt buoyancy, as defined by British Rowing. Any boats that do not have inbuilt buoyancy must have it added unless they will NOT be used off Cam, in which case it is advised. Clubs should consult the CUCBC Safety Adviser for guidance on this matter.]*
 - d. That each rower in the Club has signed an individual statement clearly specifying their ability to swim a minimum of 50m.
 - e. That the Club has a recording system in place for the number of outings undertaken by each crew to ensure that all crews meet the CUCBC twelve outing requirement (Regulations for Racing, Rule 18.a).
 - f. That the Club has copies of Ten Golden Rules Poster on display in its Boathouse and that the Coaching Principles document has been distributed to all coaches.
5.
 - a. That any Club that has failed to submit the written statement referred to above by the end of Week 4 of the Michaelmas Term will be banned from using the river until the CUCBC Safety Adviser has confirmed receipt of the statement from the club concerned.
 - b. That any club that has failed to complete and return the BR Annual Safety Audit by the due date will be banned from all CUCBC events (including the Lent and May Bumping Races) until confirmation has been received from BR that the audit has been completed and submitted.
6. That every boat display its BR alphanumeric registration code on both sides of the boat, as defined in the following BR rule: *The Boat ID must be a three letter code, together with a three digit fleet number (including zeros) as determined by the club. (e.g. CUB802). Lettering shall be in capitals, in a regular sans serif (Arial-style) font, with a minimum height 6cm and clearly readable (in a contrasting colour) on both port and starboard bow saxboard or vertical surface.* Failure to do this may result in the disqualification of the boat from racing, at the discretion of the Chief Umpire.
7. That all boats (except tub pairs for coaching purposes) be obliged to carry, securely affixed to the bows, a solid ball of rubber or material of similar consistency with diameter of not less than four centimetres. This protection may be afforded by a specially shaped bow of suitable material.
8.
 - a. That the definition of a restricted boat be as in the BR handbook.

- b. That a clinker-built boat be defined as one with not fewer than five strakes a side, none of which shall exceed four and a half inches (outside measurement).
9. That all College Boat Clubs must have a valid insurance policy to cover bodily injury to third parties and their craft to the level currently recommended by the Environment Agency; all club craft must also be registered as required by the River Cam Conservancy.

CUCBC 10 Golden Safety Rules

The 10 Golden rules condense the rules of the river, and are given here:

1. No College crew may be on the water during the 'Hours of Darkness' and no boat may be on the water without lights in the 15 minutes before lighting up or the fifteen minutes after lighting down.
2. No boat is allowed on the water when the CUCBC flag is red, and only University Crews, first boats and boats in the first two divisions of the May Bump (Men), or first boats and boats in the first division of the May Bumps (Women), or first fours and tub pairs, are allowed on the water when the flag is yellow.
3. Only University Crews, first boats, and any other boats in the top two divisions of the May Bumps may row below Baitsbite Lock.
4. No novice crew may be on the water before 7.30am or within fifteen minutes of lighting down, which ever is later, and all novice crews must be accompanied. In addition, the first outing of a novice eight must be with an experienced cox.
5. Loud hailers must not be used anywhere on the towpath, and coaching from the bank, and the use of cox boxes, should be kept to a minimum anywhere on the river before 7.30am. Coaching from the bank is not permitted at all above the railway bridge before this time.
6. No College crew may be on the water before 11am on a Saturday or Sunday, save when participating in a CRA, BR or CUCBC race, unless the Executive Committee has made an announcement to the contrary.
7. All coxless boats must have a steerer on the bank except for single sculls at any time and experienced pairs and doubles between the hours of 9am and 4pm in Full Term.
8. Boats going downstream must keep to the non-towpath side of the river until after Ditton Corner when they cross over to the towpath side. At the sign after Grassy Corner, they must cross back to the non-towpath side, and stay on that side until Baitsbite Lock.
Boats going upstream must keep to the towpath side until the middle of the Gut when they must cross to the non-towpath side, taking the inside of the corner. At the top of the Plough Reach, they must cross back to the towpath side, and stay on that side until they reach the boathouses.
9. Boats going downstream must give way to boats going upstream, and slower boats must give way to allow faster boats to pass. In addition, whenever a boat eases it must draw in close to the bank to allow other boats to pass unimpeded. Boats must not easy on corners.
10. Unless required for safety reasons, or acting on the instructions of an umpire during a race, boats may only spin at Jesus Lock, the Penny Ferry, between the two posts at the bottom of Long Reach and by the sign in Baitsbite Reach. When necessary, boats must queue to spin, and should only spin when it is clear that no boat is approaching that is likely to be impeded. Once spun, boats must move off immediately or, if pulling in on the Long Reach or Baitsbite, may only do so above the spinning area. At the Baitsbite Spinning area and in green flag conditions only, two crews may spin in tandem, providing they do not impede other crews and move off promptly.

The full list of CUCBC river regulations can be found [here](#)

Responsibilities

All members

All Club members have a duty of care to ensure that their actions do not put others in danger. Everyone is personally responsible for their own safety.

Reasonable standards of hygiene should be maintained to avoid spread of illness. Hands should be washed after outings and before eating or handling food.

A towel and dry clothes should be brought to the boathouse in case of capsize or heavy rain.

Members should be able to swim 50m in clothes, tread water for 2 minutes, and swim 5m underwater, as per CUCBC guidelines. These conditions are stricter than the current RowSafe recommendations. Captains should ensure their squads meet these criteria.

Bank parties should have access to a mobile phone in case of emergency.

Outings in all boats are booked using the boat booking system. All outings should be logged before going out, along with an estimated return time, and should be checked in on returning.

All members should make the Club safety advisor aware of any accidents or incidents within 24 hours.

Club Safety Advisor (Club Captain)

- To report incidents using the BR incident reporting system
- To complete the BR safety audit, and take actions as necessary
- To ensure the first aid kits are up to standard (BS8599-1)
- To ensure the buoyancy aids are in good condition

Coaches

Coaches are to ensure that:

- Crews are aware of the appropriate safety procedures.
- Crews are using 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.
- 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 is taken when appropriate.

Weather and Environment

While Cambridge weather is usually mild, all members should be aware of the forecast before boating. The CUCBC flag should be obeyed, however even when it permits boating members also need to use their own judgement.

Particular weather conditions to be aware of are:

1. Thunderstorms. Outings should not take place during thunder or lightning storms, and any boats already on the water should return as soon as possible.
2. High winds. It is the responsibility of the coach and/or coxswain/steerer to make an assessment about whether it is safe to boat in windy conditions.
3. Fog/Mist/Low visibility. If there is a chance of low visibility lights should be used, and in severe conditions no outings should take place.
4. Cold. Hypothermia is a risk, and while this is usually mitigated through the ensuring of proper attire, it is worth being aware that it can occur despite a person appearing to have sufficient clothing.
5. Ice. Crews should be aware of ice forming on the hard while boating, as it becomes slippery. If the river is significantly frozen over, then it may not be safe to boat.
6. Heat. In hot weather members should be aware of dehydration, sunburn and heat stroke, and take necessary preventative measures.
7. High stream. The Cam is a slow-flowing river, however the stream does increase after periods of high rainfall. Coxes/steerers should be aware of this, particularly when spinning before Baitsbite Lock and weir, as there has been a near-incident in the past.

Water-borne diseases

Members are advised that river water may contain bio-hazards. Sensible precautions include minimising water contact, ensuring drinking water is not contaminated, washing hands before consuming food, covering cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing and showering after contact with water.

- This includes washing your water bottle if it is dropped in the river, before you then use it. In particular, Weil's disease is carried by rats, Symptoms are similar to flu and if after recently rowing you feel unwell you should ask your GP to consider Weil's disease in their diagnosis.

Equipment

Before (as well as after) each outing, a check should be made of the equipment to ensure it is in a safe condition to be used. In particular, checks should be made of the heel restraints, bow ball, buoyancy compartments and rudder strings.

If the equipment is deemed not safe, then it should not be used in that outing.

Any necessary repairs should be reported to the Water Safety and Equipment Officer, Boatman or relevant Captain.

Boathouse

Members should keep the boathouse in a generally tidy and safe condition. All doors (external and internal) and windows should be left closed. If a door is propped open it should be closed before leaving the boathouse.

First Aid Kits

First aid kits are kept in the office/crew room and in the workshop. These should only be used for genuine emergencies, and any items taken should be noted and reported to the Safety Officer so they can be replaced.

Fire

Smoking is not permitted in any part of the boathouse. In the event of a fire, the alarm will sound and occupants should leave the boathouse via one of the fire escapes and congregate outside by 99s boathouse, making sure to leave space for emergency vehicle access. Fire extinguishers are located by the main door both upstairs and downstairs.

Moving 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 (typically the cox, but often the coach if the cox is sufficiently inexperienced) is to be in charge of the manoeuvre, giving clear instructions before and during the lift.

Flooding

Very occasionally the Cam floods to the extent that it risks damaging equipment in the bays. People helping to move the boats in such a scenario should wear wellington boots and take all the normal precautions for moving boats.

Emergency Response Plan

The Club Emergency Response Plan can be found [here](#)