

MEMBERS' HANDBOOK



Introduction to Runcorn Rowing Club Members' Handbook

Dear Member,

Welcome to Runcorn Rowing Club.

You will find within this handbook important information about the club and how it works. You will also find information about what you can expect from the club and, importantly, what we expect from you as members. Accepting the information, rules and guidance contained in this handbook is as you will note on the RRC application form a condition of membership of RRC.

The club website www.runcornrowing.com contains much more information and there are key documents which I would like to draw your attention to which can be found at [hyper link to be added].

Please take the time to read this handbook; it is there to provide clarity, policy information and guidance that will help you focus on what you are here to do which is to enjoy your rowing.

Enjoy your rowing.

Yours faithfully,

Chairman RRC

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Club Structure

The points below are taken from the Constitution and the Club Rules which will be helpful to you as you get to know the club and how it works. A copy of the Constitution, the Club Rules and the Safety Rules and guidance can be found on the club website at: <http://runcornrowing.com/html/links.html>
Key roles:

The Chairman:

The Chairman or his/her representative will Chair all general meetings of the Club and all meetings of the committee. He or she shall be responsible for guiding the activities of the Club in accordance with its general policy as expressed by the majority of its members. The Chairman shall represent or arrange for the representation of the Club at British Rowing regional level and at meetings of other organisations. He/ she shall ex-officio be a member of any other committee of the Club. Email; chair@runcornrowing.com

The Club Captain:

Sanctions crews to train for competition in consultation with Coaches and/or Vice-captains.
In consultation with the Vice-captains, approves priority use of any particular boat for an athlete or crews participating in designated prestige events e.g. National Championships or Henley Royal Regatta.
Is responsible (or delegates responsibility) for the allocation of boats and club resources.
In consultation with the Vice-captains will determine the strategy for limiting access to nominated boats in the fleet according to crew experience and weight designation.
In consultation with the Committee, determines the on-going strategy for fleet and equipment purchase as identified within the current development plan.
Is responsible for all operational decision making with the support of the committee. Email captain@runcornrowing.com

The Safety Adviser:

The Adviser will give advice to club officers and club members on safety issues, and where there are doubts regarding safe rowing will assist the Captain, Vice-Captains and Coaches to adopt best practice with regard to safety.
Ensures that safety rules are adhered to and that incidents and concerns are acted upon.
All incidents, collisions and near misses should be reported to the Safety Adviser via email safety@runcornrowing.com & the British Rowing website at: <http://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org/>. The safety adviser will provide regular reports of incidents to the club Committee.
Please read the Safety Rules which are found via the club website www.runcornrowing.com by following the links section.
Please read the RRC Risk Assessment which is found via the club website www.runcornrowing.com by following the links section.

Vice-captains:

There are Vice-captains for men, women, developing rowers and junior members. The Vice Captains ensure that members get the best out of their rowing by organising crews, coaches & boats during the open club sessions. The Vice-captains identify coaching needs and squad needs (and priorities); they support the Captain and Coaches. Contact details for the vice captains can be found on the club website; www.runcornrowing.com

The Club Welfare Officer (CWO):

Ensures that British Rowing policies regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are implemented. She or he will investigate any concerns regarding the welfare of any of our members and is always happy to talk through any thoughts, feelings and concerns you may have.
To contact the CWO please call or text 07733 620116. This is a dedicated phone number and will only be used for welfare issues. The CWO will call you back. Alternatively email welfare@runcornrowing.com.
Runcorn Rowing Club has adopted the safeguarding policies published by British Rowing; details of these policies can be found via the club website www.runcornrowing.com by following the links section.

General Information

Squads

The club is made up of different rowing sections:

- Men
- Women
- Juniors
- Adaptive
- Development (new to the sport)
- Yearning to Row (introduction to Rowing Course)
- Schools Programme (Partnership with local schools)
- Liverpool University Boat Club and Runcorn Canoe Club (who have an affiliation with RRC)

Membership:

A discount of 5% is currently offered on full subscriptions paid before 1st June. It is the responsibility of members paying by monthly Standing Order to have their payment amended for changes in subscription levels, voted in at the AGM, by 1st June and effective from 1st May. All full members of the club may vote at the AGM, which is held in April each year; in the case of family membership ***the member and spouse shall each be entitled to cast one vote but the children shall not be entitled to vote.***

All members are welcome to attend committee meetings as observers.

Volunteering:

Cleaning. There is a clubhouse-cleaning rota where teams of members take turns and work together to keep the clubhouse clean. We expect all members to sign up for this rota. You would normally take a turn about three times a year.

Rowing Events. We hold three events a year. These are a lot of fun, very competitive and are important fund raising events for the club. We expect all of our members to get involved with helping as well as racing at these events.

Fundraising. We are always looking to raise more funds for the club to improve facilities and buy boats. We expect all members to get involved with this.

Café We run a café at the Sunday sessions serving hot drinks and hot sandwiches at 10am. We expect all members to volunteer to help with this wonderful facility on a rota basis. Normally you would take a turn 2 or 3 times a year. The café also helps to provide funds that benefit all our rowers.

Fleet Maintenance

All athletes are responsible for completing safety checks on their boats before and after each and every outing and for reporting any damage or repairs necessary to boats@runcornrowing.com

Competition

No member may enter competitions without a positive balance in their race account to cover race and towing fees and it is their responsibility to know the balance of their race account.

All crews and their supporters are expected to load boats before competitions and unload them on returning when times are arranged.

Crews are responsible for checking their equipment prior to an event so that everything needed to boat legally and safely is loaded. Coaches of junior squads will oversee this process for their athletes. A handy check list is at the back of this document.

Training and water safety:

Remember, you must be able to swim as declared on the application form.

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You must attend any swimming tests and capsizing training as required by the club. You must be able to swim 100m in light clothing, tread water for 1 minute and touch the bottom of the 2m end of the pool.

Take responsibility for your own safety and the safety of those affected by your actions.

You must bring drinking water in a suitable bottle to every training session or outing and a change of clothing should you capsize.

Conduct and responsibilities:

You should arrive for training/rowing sessions on time, with the appropriate training kit, towel and change of clothes.

When representing the Club in competitions you must wear Club kit in line with British Rowing requirements. All athletes are responsible for checking boats before and after each and every outing and for reporting any damage or repairs necessary to boats@runcornrowing.com

At club events or while attending away events as a member and representative of Runcorn Rowing Club, members are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour.

Rowing is a team sport; if you wish to compete at events remember that you need to train regularly to show commitment to other members of your crew.

Other Useful information

RRC kit is royal blue in colour and can be ordered online from approved suppliers. The club orders from more than one supplier and there are discounts when bulk orders are submitted. Please talk to coaches or members of the committee about kit needs.

If a junior member decides to compete then official kit must be worn during the summer regatta season.

Please bear in mind that there are costs involved when any member decides that they wish to compete. The competitor must be a member of British Rowing (Gold membership if an adult or an ordinary BR junior membership), and there are race fees and towing fees. The Treasurer administers a race account for each competitive member as he often has to pay for club race entries in advance. The member must have a balance of funds in their "account" in order for their race entry to be submitted. The Treasurer regularly informs members about their race account balances. If a member is competing in a crew it is very important that their "account" has funds to cover the race as it may mean they are unable to be entered and they let down the rest of their crew.

Role of Parents/Carers of Junior Members

Please share all the information contained in this handbook with your child especially the parts relevant to him/her as a junior club member.

Training:

You must check that an appropriate adult is at the club before you drop your child off. If there is no appropriate adult available you must not leave your child unaccompanied at the club.

Please make sure that your child has appropriate kit and a change of clothes. A junior may not be allowed on the water if they are wearing inadequate clothing for the conditions.

Please collect your child at the agreed time (or let us know if you are running late); coaches and/or other adults should not be expected to stay and provide supervision.

Please let the Coach know if your child will not be attending training; this is especially important for water training where crews need to be formed.

All junior members must complete capsized training.

The club will always ensure that a Coach or appropriately qualified or experienced adult (sanctioned by the committee) supports or coaches your child during these sessions.

Please encourage your child to learn the rules and row within them.

Competitions:

The **parent or carer is always responsible** for their children at competitions including events that may include overnight stays. A parent may nominate another adult to act in loco parentis at an overnight stay. A form obtainable from the Club Welfare Officer/Coaches must be completed in this instance for each stay.

Competition is the result of structured training sessions and junior members are expected to train, to demonstrate commitment to training to take part in a competition crew.

Coaching:

Please remember that the coach is qualified, talented but is only a volunteer. Coaches volunteer their time and talent because of their love for the sport and the desire to teach young people to row well; without them your child cannot row.

Please ensure that your child shows the coach respect and realises that they must do as they are asked for their own safety and the safety of others.

Photographs or video footage are used for coaching purposes. If you do not want this to take place then please contact the respective coach or vice-captain.

The club has a Facebook and Twitter presence, but social networking between adults and children within the club is actively discouraged.

Keep coaches informed about any allergies, illnesses or special requirements that your child has.

Please encourage your child to speak to the coach or the welfare officer if they have any problems. Everyone at the club wants the junior members to enjoy their rowing.

Please speak to the coach or welfare officer if a situation concerns you or your child at the earliest opportunity.

Talking through situations is the easiest way to resolve them. **See Role of Club Welfare Officer**

Bullying and welfare:

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable.

Anyone who knows or suspects that bullying is happening should tell his or her coach, the welfare officer or any trusted adult.

Accept and respect all individuals without discrimination based on age, gender, ability, race or religion.

It is important you tell someone if you are being treated badly, if someone is making you unhappy or you are worried about another person. You can tell your parents, your coach or your Club Welfare Officer (CWO), or any trusted adult.

Links and resources for young rowers

Welfare and wellbeing: There are a number of telephone lines you can phone for help such as Childline (0800 1111), which is free. Websites such as: -

www.there4me.com

www.donthideit.com and www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk also offers advice.

www.britishrowing.org

Coaches

Please never lose sight of the fact that coaches are volunteers and give of their time for the love of the sport and the satisfaction in the success of others; please be respectful of their decisions.

Coaches are responsible for checking boats used by their squads and reporting any damage or repairs necessary. This does not absolve individuals of their responsibility to report damage to boats via the email to boats@runcornrowing.com

Lead Coaches have coaching qualifications and have undergone all necessary checks for coaching juniors and vulnerable adults.

Juniors never go out on the water unless directly supervised by a coach or another adult under the supervision of the lead coach.

Lone coaching of juniors is discouraged at RRC and every effort is made to ensure that coaching support is proportionate to the numbers of juniors training.

All coaches and adults with coaching experience do not coach unless they have been approved by the RRC committee.

All coaches will display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance.

Coaches sign up to agreed timetables (summer and winter timetables). If coaches wish to coach outside these sessions they must agree the training session with the Vice Captain (or Captain) and the Club Welfare Officer (in the case of junior athletes).

All junior coaches adhere to the "How much how Often" training guide recommended by British Rowing. <http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/Association/Welfare/BritishRowingWG3.2-181110.pdf>

All coaches adhere to British Rowing Codes of Practice and Row safe guidance.

<http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/Association/Welfare/BritishRowingWG1.4.pdf>

Coaches follow all guidelines laid down by British Rowing and the Club.

Coaches complete a risk assessment prior to any outing.

Coaches will take a register of all junior participants each outing.

Coaches recognize that adults and young people may wish to experience rowing at Runcorn Rowing club prior to applying for membership. RRC requires all juniors trying out the club to submit an application form prior to a first session (no money will be requested). The form contains all necessary information regarding a junior athlete and will be kept confidential. If the junior does not take up membership then the form will be destroyed.

Crew Selection

All age-qualified members of the Club may compete for and retain places in all boats and places will be awarded by the coaches on the basis of measured performances, for example ergo meter tests, sculling results, and seat matrix/racing results and by compatibility and commitment. The performance methods are disclosed to the athletes concerned.

The Coaches, Junior Coordinator (or Vice-Captain) and Club Captain will discuss the selections. The Junior Coordinator (or Vice-Captain) will justify and critique the selections to make sure every possible eventuality is discussed and questioned.

If circumstances prevent the Club being able to fully seat races or complete a full pairs matrix that links all rowers, then the coaches will make a qualified judgment on data that they have collected to that point.

It is therefore important to respect and trust the decisions made by coaches, who ultimately have to pass all selections through the scrutiny of their fellow coaches and the Club Captain before the crew is entered for racing.

Disputes and complaints regarding selection.

Any complaints regarding selection policy should take place promptly with the coach concerned, with the Captain and Junior Coordinator (or appropriate Vice-Captain) present. A permanent panel of the trustees of the Club will arbitrate on any unresolved dispute.

Composite Crews

Composite crews are only appropriate for those situations where there are insufficient Club members of the right age and ability.

In no case will a composite crew be formed without the approval and authority of the Junior Coordinator (or the Vice-Captains) and the Club Captain.

Grievances and Complaints:

At the club it is our wish that all our members enjoy this wonderful sport and all the benefits it brings; however, we also recognize that there will be disputes and it is important that we have a clear set of guidelines to help resolve them as they arise.

A grievance/complaints procedure is required for any club member/s who feels that they have been unfairly treated by another member or by the club. This procedure may also be used if a grievance is regarding a situation where the club is thought to have been brought into disrepute. The terms "complaint" and "grievance" are deemed to be the same for the purposes of procedure.

In the first instance we would expect you to talk through any concerns you have in a mutually safe and open environment with the hope of an agreed outcome.

If you feel that this is not possible you should put your grievance **in writing, or email** and address it to the Chair of the club. The club will then follow the grievance and disciplinary procedure as outlined in the club Constitution at Section 17

"An individual or member with a complaint about treatment by the club should set out their grievance in the first instance to the club Chairman in **writing**. The club will seek to deal with complaints in a fair and timely manner, with reference to British Rowing's Guidelines on Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures in Rowing."

If the complaint is a welfare matter then in the first instance speak to or text the Club Welfare Officer on 07733 620113 or email welfare@runcornrowing.com This is a dedicated contact system and only used for welfare issues.

Vulnerable Adults:

Vulnerable adults are those athletes who require the support of others in aspects of their life that others take for granted; this could be a physical disability or a psychological or learning disability.

The coaches will:

Treat vulnerable adults fairly, give them as much time as other athletes and be realistic about their training needs.

Be encouraging and build trust.

Keep a safe and public relationship with the athlete.

Be risk aware during each outing or training session.

Never ignore allegations of abuse or bullying.

The Club Welfare Officer is appointed to support the needs of adult athletes as well as junior athletes.

If you would like to know more about the British Rowing policy and procedures regarding vulnerable adults please go to <http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/Association/Welfare/BritishRowingWG1.14.pdf> and <http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/Association/Welfare/BritishRowingWG1.15.pdf>

Rowing during a River Stoppage

From time to time during bad weather or when the river flow is high, the Canal & River Trust will issue a Stoppage Notice.

This is issued by the Waterscape Supervisor, posted on the Waterscape website and phoned through to RRC's Captain and Safety advisor.

After discussions with the C&R T and our insurers, the following is clarification of the position:

The local Waterscape Supervisors in Northwich have clarified that stoppages are advisory notices and any decision to use the river during a stoppage rests with the club.

This means that we can use our skill and experience to judge the conditions; however, it also means that we will have to be able to demonstrate that we have considered and assessed any risks and properly briefed any rowers that are participating in the sessions.

They strongly advise that if we do decide to utilise the navigation then we do not go beyond Sutton swing-bridge. Our Insurance Broker advises; "no novice rowing, no nighttime rowing". He feels we should "review where boats should turn ... in case this is normally by a weir, for instance, which would then make it hazardous. Basically, provided common sense prevails during these periods then the Club will remain covered by the terms and conditions of the policy"

At the Committee meeting held on 5 Feb 2013 it was decided that during poor weather and high flow as experienced outside the Club (*but not covered by a Stoppage Notice*):

A decision will be made by at least 2 Club committee/official members that the river is safe to row and this decision would be made for each session as the flow of the river and weather conditions could change quite quickly.

A full written risk assessment will be completed and retained in a file by the senior coach present.

A crew briefing will then be held in the clubhouse before any rowers go on the water. Instructions should be consistent and include: - a caution whilst traversing the river at the first split - an instruction not to stop until all boats are beyond the white sign upstream of the first split -a direction that on the way past the first split to stay nearer to the Runcorn bank than one would normally, as one enters the stream at the first split (taking care to keep an eye out for any other traffic adhering to the normal rules of navigation).

If a Stoppage Notice has been issued:

A full written risk assessment must be completed and retained in a file by the senior coach present.

A crew briefing will then be held in the clubhouse before any rowers go on the water. The briefing must include details of the stoppage notice i.e. High water, Strong flow, etc.

If the notice is for high water or strong flow, only the Weston Canal should be used i.e. the section from Sutton Weaver swing bridge to Weston Docks. This is approximately 3,000m which is more than many clubs have

Boat Safety Checklist

1. Check that the hatches are secure or that any buoyancy bags are adequate in number and are inflated.
2. Check that the Bow Ball is securely fixed.
3. Check that the riggers are securely attached with screw tight.
4. Check top nuts are secure
5. Check that the seats are sliding properly.
6. Check that there are no holes and that the hull of the boat is sound.
7. Check that the steering works.
8. Check that the shoes are properly attached with the strings the legal length. The heels of the shoes must not pull higher than the lowest fixed part of the shoe.
9. Check that the stretchers are secure.