

Strathclyde Park Rowing Club



Safety and Guidelines

Updated

February 2023

Strathclyde Park Rowing Club adopts and fully endorses the advice given to clubs and rowers in the Scottish Rowing Water Safety Code, a copy of which is available from the Downloads page on the SR web site <https://www.scottish-rowing.org.uk/safety>

In addition, members are expected to adhere to the following guidance which is relevant to our particular situation at Strathclyde Country Park.

Common Sense should be applied at all times.

- **Never assume that you have priority – priority is given, not taken.**
- **Never assume that you have right of way over another craft.**

All water-users must be constantly aware of the rights of others who use the Loch. Extend to them at all times the courtesy which you would hope to receive from them yourself.

1. Capsize, floatation and swim test

- a. For someone entering the water accidentally (e.g.as a result of a capsize), the emphasis now is on the ability of someone to float rather than swim, as by being able to float, a person in the water is less likely to succumb to cold shock compared to someone trying to swim. It is important that rowers who find themselves in the water do not panic and are able to respond so that they can keep themselves safe. In effect, this means that they should be able to swim or float. Floating, rather than swimming, is recommended by the RNLI, RLSS and NWSF because it tends to conserve heat and energy when in cold water. All participants in rowing should be competent and confident in the water.

It should be recognised that the ability to swim in a pool does not guarantee the ability to swim in cold, exposed waters.

Everyone taking part in rowing should be able to

Float unaided for at least five minutes.

And ideally

Swim at least 50 metres in light clothing (rowing kit).

Tread water for at least two minutes.

Swim under water for at least five metres.

Those rowers who can only float or swim when wearing a buoyancy aid should also wear such an aid, or a lifejacket if coxing, whenever they are afloat.

- b. Completion of swim and capsize tests is required before a member is allowed to use a fine shell single or pair. For those who have not taken part in a capsize drill organised by the Club, the Board will consider accreditation of prior learning through submission of formal documentation of previous capsize course completion, including experience from other watersports. Approval is at the Board's discretion.
- c. WCS athletes may complete safety training with the WCS coach as an alternative to the main club safety session.
- d. Members who have not successfully completed a swim test may be allowed to use the training singles under supervision (Alden, Glides, or Wintech with floats remaining on). The use of a life jacket or buoyancy aid is strongly recommended for juniors.

2. Boating

- a. All members are ultimately responsible for their own actions, and as such must take responsibility for their decision as to whether they go on the water or not at any particular time. This decision should be based on a number of factors including prevailing weather conditions, competence, confidence, boat type and crew make-up.
- b. Under normal club operating circumstances, the Captain or Vice-Captain is responsible for deciding whether it is safe for boats to be launched.
- c. As NLC have a duty of care for all water users at the Park, the staff at the Watersports Centre may at times give guidance on type of boat or restriction to areas of the loch to be used/avoided. In severe circumstances they may give clear instruction that boats must not be launched. This guidance or instruction must be adhered to.
- d. At sessions where there is no Board member present, seniors must satisfy themselves that it is safe to go on the water. This decision should be based on a number of factors including prevailing weather conditions, competence, confidence, boat type and crew make-up.
- e. At normal training sessions, Juniors may only boat if there is present suitably qualified Coach who has given them permission to do so, having taken into account weather and water conditions, the boat that it is proposed to use and the ability of the young sculler or crew. Permission should be withheld if there is any doubt about the safety of the young people.
- f. A Junior J16 or older who wishes to boat at times when there is no Board member or Coach present must make a formal request to Junior coach. If the junior coach considers the individual to be competent, then the junior coach will seek approval from the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian

approves, then the junior coach will advise the board of the request. The Board will consider the case put by the junior coach and will decide accordingly. This procedure applies to private boat owners as well as to those using club boats. Juniors under J16 will not be permitted to boat at times when there is no Board member or Coach present.

- g. Beginners must not use equipment without prior and adequate instruction and must not boat unsupervised.
- h. Suitable clothing (layered if necessary) must be worn in order to stay warm in cold weather and reduce the risk of heat exhaustion in hot weather. It should be highly visible on the water. A top layer of Day-Glo yellow or orange is recommended.
- i. Any member planning to single should ensure they have a towel and a change of clothes.

In the event of a capsize or a fall into the water:

- get free of the boat so as not to get entangled, but try to keep contact with the boat
- float until the cold shock has passed
- make every effort to get as much of your body out of the water by climbing onto the boat. The boat provides flotation and is more visible than a head in the water.
- Do not leave boat! Use whistle (if you have one) or wave and shout to attract attention.
- Await rescue. In event of rescue boat not coming and if close enough to land or pontoon, swim yourself and boat to safety (do not leave boat unless it's sunk)

3. Navigation

- a. All members must make sure that they are fully acquainted with, and at all times obey, the local rules of navigation specific to Strathclyde Park Loch (see [Circulation Maps](#)).
- b. Rowers must check out at the Booking Office before boating for each outing.
- c. Boats should be launched with their bows facing the Loch.
- d. Before moving away from a pontoon, make sure that a rescue launch is manned.

- e. In coxless boats, the bowman is responsible for acting as lookout no matter who is steering the boat.
- f. All coxswains must learn and use the simple, standard commands for boat control both on and off the water. These commands must be used correctly, clearly and exclusively.
- g. Coaches must ensure that all members of the crews in their charge are aware of appropriate safety procedures.
- h. Coaches on the water must carry a rescue line or throw bag with them.
- i. Adhere to the [circulation pattern](#) for rowing craft - including action to avoid any obstacles which are present - see maps.
- j. Crews must be aware of any other water users in their immediate vicinity, especially at the launch/finish area and the start area – refer to the maps. Do not assume that you have priority or 'right of way'. Be prepared to communicate with crews around you to check their intentions and to make your intentions clear.
- k. Boats heading away from the Watersports Centre towards the body of the Loch must pass under the bridge between the shore and the timing tower.
- l. Immediately on leaving the pontoon, row quickly through the bridge and continue rowing until you have passed the distant end of the presentation pontoons. Do not stop in the area near the bridge.
- m. When rowing towards the Start, keep well away from the lanes. Be aware of the position of obstacles, such as the large circulation buoys the timing pontoons and the water outflows.
- n. Take extra care approaching the 'pinch point' at the water outflow near the 500m marker. Be prepared to communicate with crews around you to check their intentions and to make your intentions clear.
- o. At busy times, all pieces of work being done off the course, heading towards the 2000m start, by crews or scullers must terminate at the 500m mark, dropping to one quarter pressure unless the crew is being accompanied and guided by a coach in a launch/cat or on the bank.
- p. Wide turns onto the course to facilitate long, continuous pieces of work must be undertaken near the 250m marker buoy, or earlier, and only after careful assessment of the on-course situation.
- q. Do any preparatory activities such as taking a drink, removing clothing layers etc. before moving onto the rowing course. Always look around (stopping if necessary), communicate with other craft in the vicinity and be prepared to give way to oncoming craft.

- r. Once in the lanes, be prepared to move off smartly. Do not 'lane hog', especially at busy times. When moving off, be aware of potentially slower crews who may be ahead of you in the lane, and also of faster crews who may be behind you.
- s. Use of the course lane nearest the motorway (Lane 8) should be avoided. This is to provide a safety buffer between crews on the course and those heading towards the start.
- t. Once the crew has crossed the finish line, they must continue in their lane until they have passed the second line of large orange buoys before they attempt to turn towards the pontoons or to go through the bridge.
- u. Care must be taken when manoeuvring in the area between the finish line, pontoons and bridge, as there may be boats turning to return through the bridge toward the start and boats crossing toward the pontoon at the end of their outing. Again, be prepared to communicate with crews around you to check their intentions and to make your intentions clear.

4. Sailing craft and Strathclyde Park Sailing Club

- a. Extra care must be taken at times when there are sailing craft on the water. At specific times, Strathclyde Park Sailing Club have priority on the water. This is generally late Sunday mornings (usually from 9:45 onwards). During this time, the sailing club will normally restrict itself to the 'bottom' half of the loch, i.e. from the 1000m mark to the finish line, however keep a look out and be aware of their position.
- b. Sailing boats are generally less manoeuvrable than rowing boats, therefore be prepared to change course or stop to avoid a collision. Again, clear communication between water-users can help to reduce risks.
- c. Crews on the water continuing training should turn off the course at the 1000m mark, turning toward the motorway side of the loch to proceed back to the start.
- d. Crews finishing a session and returning to the pontoons should move off the course prior to the 1000m mark, turning towards the Motherwell side of the loch. These crews should row down keeping near to the island but must not go behind the island – see maps. Care must be taken to keep clear of the sailing boats and stop rowing if necessary. During these designated times (see above) the sailing boats have priority.

Safety and First Aid

Safety equipment, **First Aid** and **emergency assistance** (including AED/Defibrillator) may be obtained from the East Wing boatshed stewards.

A telephone may be obtained at

- Reception in the Watersports Centre (01698 402060), or
- the Scottish Rowing Centre, or
- the East Wing boatshed public counter.

For contact with the Emergency Services, dial 9 9 9 . Before dialling make sure you have ready

- the service which you require (police, fire, or ambulance),
- the location of the incident,
- details of the situation,
- details of access.

All incidents and near-misses which have the potential for damaging equipment or injuring athletes must be recorded on the online Incident Report Form on the Club website -

https://www.strathclydeparkrc.co.uk/incident_form.php

and the Scottish Rowing incident reporting form:

<https://www.scottish-rowing.org.uk/clubsupport/incident-reporting-form>

Hazards at Strathclyde Park

In General

Hazard	Means of Avoidance
Other boats	Look round frequently. Don't stop in narrow gaps. Shout clear warnings to crews which show signs of colliding with you, or to indicate your intentions. DO NOT ASSUME 'RIGHT OF WAY'.
Strong winds.	Keep well clear of leese side obstacles.
Rough water.	Row at a pace at which you can maintain safe control of your boat.
Algae in the water	Avoid the water. Keep your mouth and eyes closed if you fall in. As a minimum, thoroughly wash your hands and face as soon as possible after coming off the water. If possible, shower before you leave the Park.
Weed growth in sheltered margins.	Avoid these areas.

On the Way to the Start

Hazard	Means of Avoidance
The bridge	Look round and make sure of your steering line before beginning to row. Keep your starting speed low.
Large, orange, navigation buoys.	Study circulation map before boating. Look round frequently until you have passed all these buoys. Count the buoys and remember the number.
Level control weirs (3) along the SW shore.	Study the circulation map before boating. Stay away from the SW shore.
Large, white, cubic 250m course marker buoys.	Stay as far from the course as practicable.
Timing pontoons at 1000m and 1500m from the 2000m start plus the Aligner's	Stay as far from the course as practicable.

island at the start.	
Narrow section between 500m and 250m from the 2000m start, including a weir and the 2 marker buoys.	No stopping in this section. No faster than one quarter pressure.
'Repair' pontoon on SW shore.	Stay away from the SW shore.
Boats assembling in the top 100m.	Paddle light and look round.

On the Course

During Racing there should be no hazard ahead of your boat on the course. If a problem arises, the umpire following your race will direct you.

During Practice

Hazard	Means of Avoidance
There may be stationary or slower boats in the lane ahead of you, or crossing your lane. There may even be non-rowers in sailing boats or canoes or kayaks using the loch	Look round regularly and take avoiding action –including slowing down and/or changing lane if necessary. If yours is the stationary or slow boat, give a clear warning shout to any boat bearing down on you. DO NOT ASSUME 'RIGHT OF WAY'
At the end of the course there are 2 rows of medium-sized orange buoys marking the anchorage points of the lane guide wires.	Avoid them. Slow down

Approaching the Pontoons

Hazard	Means of Avoidance
Other boats manoeuvring.	Use only the pontoons allocated for disembarking. Look round. Move slowly. Clearly communicate with other water users.
Strong winds	Approach on windward side of pontoon slowly– allow wind to help but allow

	plenty of space so wind does not push boat onto pontoon too fast leading to potential damage.
Excess speed	Look round. Move slowly.