



INFINITY BOAT CLUB

SAFETY PLAN

1. POLICY

Infinity Boat Club will use the British Rowing RowSafe¹ and procedures on Child Protection² for our overarching Safety Plan. This is our supplementary local Safety Plan to be followed by all rowers and coaches. It should be remembered each of us owes a 'duty of care' to our 'neighbours' not to cause them injury by our negligent acts and omissions. This equally applies to themselves, other club members, other river users and the general public. This Code applies to all members and visitors to Infinity Boat Club, irrespective of status, and includes users of private equipment.

2. EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

The nearest phone is in Castlegate Quay - Watersports Centre (CQ). In emergencies during working hours, the commercial premises in Moat Street may allow use of their telephones. Be prepared to give directions by road – the address of Infinity Boat Club is Castlegate Quay, Moat Street, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3AZ

Emergencies – 999
Stockton Civic Enforcement – 01642 528439
Tees Barrage Control Room – 01642 633273
River Tees Watersports Centre – 01642 628940
Club Safety Officer – 07956450004
Infinity Boat Club 'emergency contact' mobile phone -

These numbers are on display in the boathouse reception area.

3. EMERGENCIES ON THE WATER

If there is serious injury, medical emergency or major boat damage, the crew should land safely as soon as possible. If the boat has become waterlogged, the crew must stay with the boat and can try to swim with it to the bank. The attached Map of the River shows where telephones and buildings to summon help from are located. Call on other Club members and the emergency services if necessary. These are Reportable Incidents and should be logged accordingly with the Club Safety Officer notified.

NB Personal safety takes precedence over club equipment.



4. EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

- Throw lines and life belts located by the boathouse doors.
- Rescue and Coaching launches equipped with all 'Rowsafe' safety items.
- First aid kit and thermal blankets in launches safety kit
- First aid kit and supply of spare clothes available at 'The Coaches Office' in Reception.
- Buoyancy aids stored in boathouse. These must be worn by all coxswains and people in launches, and are available for juniors, novices and non-swimmers.

5. SAFETY NOTICE BOARD

This Safety Plan and other important 'Need to Know' information is displayed on The Club Safety Notice Board, situated in the reception area. This includes a map of the River, First Aid information including helpful posters on Resuscitation and Hypothermia.

6. INSURANCE

The boathouse and contents are insured against accidental damage. Additionally, the Club has Public and Employee indemnity insurance (Certificates on display in CQ reception). Registered Members of British Rowing, are also covered under their terms of membership

7. USE OF THE RIVER

The Canal and River Trust may close the river, sections of it or impose restrictions on its use. These restrictions must be observed, they will be circulated to Coaches and Staff and will be shown on our website www.infinityboatclub.com

Rowers, Dragon Boats and Canoes have the use of the Barrage Reach: -

Mon. 06:00 - 08:00
Tue. 06:00 - 08:00
Wed. 12:00 - 22:00
Thu. 06:00 - 12:00
Fri. 12:00 - 15:00
Sat. 10:00 - 12:00
Sun. 10:00 - 12:00

Infinity Boat Club members must not take boats downstream of the 'Victoria Bridge' outside of these times.

During official lighting up time club boats may only be out provided that they meet the requirements of the Night Time Rowing Procedure which is included in Appendix A.

All boats must keep right on the river, and use the centre span of each bridge, except where marked on the map. It is important to keep out of the centre of the river, especially at corners and bridges. There should be no racing through the A66 bridge unless officially advised that appropriate safety cover is in place. In all circumstances, crews should be alert to the presence of other boats.

Crews must easy before the booms above the Barrage. The lock channel cannot be used unless part of an officially managed event. Crews should avoid the inlets to the lock channel and canoe slalom.

At times of high flow or strong winds crews should turn well upstream of the Barrage i.e. The University of Durham Buildings.



Inexperienced rowers in small boats should avoid the stretch between The Princess of Wales Bridge and Victoria Bridge, because the vertical banks prevent easy escape from the water in the event of capsizing, and there are frequently large waves.

Rowing beyond Basselton Woods is not recommended because, in the event of an incident, it will be difficult to return safely (hypothermia), and there is unlikely to be anyone on the bank to help raise the alarm.

8. HAZARDS ON THE RIVER

Obstacles such as the Barrage, moored boats, buoys and bridges are shown on the River Map. However, the situation is subject to change.

Crews must be alert and avoid getting swept into potentially dangerous conditions by taking early action. If stopping or turning the boat, do so downstream of, or a generous distance upstream of any obstacles.

- Motor Boats & Teesside Princess - Ensure you are in a safe place on the river. Light wash: gently turn the bows into the wash and row through. Heavy wash: easy oars, blades on the surface and turn broadside on to avoid shipping water.
- Youths throwing stones or firing air rifles - be wary! Keep away from persons acting suspiciously on the bank or bridges. If in doubt, turn and go away.
- Shallow water generally within 2m of the bank.
- Driftwood – especially following heavy rain.
- Strong wind or stream (see below).
- Choppy water, from opposing wind and stream.
- Fog
- Ice
- Cold, wet, or windy weather - hypothermia risk. Coxes wear warm clothing and waterproofs.
- Fishing Lines
- Swans
- Other Boats - give audible warning, e.g., “AHEAD 4”
- Golf balls from the Golf Course at Ingleby (upstream of the pipebridge)

Coxes and steersmen should keep a good lookout and anticipate the possibility of boats approaching on the wrong side of the river at speed. Also be aware of small craft (e.g. canoes SUP's) cutting the corners.

The CEO and Coaches will be responsible for assessing conditions against their crew's ability, to decide whether adverse weather or river conditions, and their forecasted or possible development, should result in an outing being cancelled. The CEO, Safety Officer and Director of Rowing may decide that conditions are unsafe for a crew, in which case they must not boat. If the stream looks fast, e.g. the flow is greater than 100 cubic metres per second (cumecs), then only experienced crews may boat. No crews may boat if the flow is greater than 150 cumecs.

Coaches, coxes and crews should continually assess conditions by constantly doing a dynamic risk assessment, amending their plans accordingly.

If in doubt, don't go out.

9. ACCIDENT REPORTING

Incidents involving actual or potential injury, both on and off the water, MUST be reported to the Safety Adviser. Incidents are reported to British Rowing by the Safety Adviser as necessary. Any individual may, if they prefer, report any incident directly to British Rowing via their website:

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



10. EQUIPMENT DAMAGE

Any damage to equipment **MUST** be brought to the attention of a member of staff and reported using the designated form. Damaged equipment should not be used to prevent further damage or injury.

If equipment fails during an outing, it is often possible to make temporary repairs and row back using part of the crew. If safe to do so try to retrieve any broken parts.

11. OUTINGS

The Coach will log details of the outing on the designated whiteboard in the boathouse. This will include the date and time of departure, direction, destination / point of turning and anticipated time of return.

Crews and scullers may only use boats and oars that have been allocated to them. The level of supervision required will also be specified. The allocation will be based on experience, competence, and consideration of other users.

Either the stroke / Bow or an experienced cox shall be in command of the crew. If the crew is accompanied by a coach, then the coach has an underlying responsibility for the safety of the crew. Inexperienced coxes may only go out with the launch in continuous attendance.

All rowers, who have not proven adequate swimming ability, all coxes and those in launches must wear buoyancy aids.

To go out on the water, crews should be wearing the right clothing – firstly a few layers of stretchy close-fitting garments. If it's cold then they will need more layers including a light windproof/waterproof top and a woolly hat. If it's hot, a few layers, a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.

During outings, launch drivers, rowers and scullers must not wear headphones.

Beginners must be properly instructed and supervised by their coach at all times. The extent of this supervision will depend on the coach's opinion of the competence of the rower(s) and sculler(s). If the boat will be out of sight of the coach, then the coach must ensure that it is accompanied by at least one other boat. The two boats must stay within sight of each other at all times. Remember if you cannot see the safety / coaching boat they cannot see you.

12. MISSING CREWS & RESCUE PROCEDURE

As a predominately Junior rowing club no crews should boat without a coach in attendance with the safety / coaching launch already in the water. Coaches should have with them a mobile phone in the event of an emergency to contact the boathouse and or other coaches. If a group is late back immediate contact should be attempted by phone. If not contactable, assume that they are in difficulty and send a launch to search and assist.

Whenever an emergency rescue is required:

- Call 999 – who will alert Tees Rescue and other emergency services as required.
- Call the Tees Barrage, who will send a rescue boat if possible.
- At least one responsible person should remain at the boathouse to act as a point of contact, using mobile phone if available.
- If available, take a Club launch with rescue kit, throw line, first aid kit and at least one other person.



If no rescue boat can be sent:

- If known to be between the barrage and the A66, take lifebuoy, rope and rescue kit in a car and systematically search the river (Barrage Reach, Princess of Wales Bridge, Slipway, Millennium Footbridge, Riverside, Victoria Bridge, Old Boathouse).
- If further upstream, ask the barrage to instigate a Police Search, and give guidance, if possible, on where to look from the log details: outing direction, duration, crew and boat type.
- Keep the Barrage updated with the progress of any search, and especially if the crew are found.

OTHER CLUB PROCEDURES

- All members Parent(s) / Guardian(s) sign a declaration on behalf of their child of good health and swimming ability.
- Regular swimming tests and capsize drill to be conducted at Thornaby Pool
- Regular checks of boats, by Safety Officer and Coaches
- Regular checks of buoyancy aids, launch, trailer, first aid kits and other equipment
- Guidance for coaching Juniors to be given during staff induction
- Risk Assessment – Updated when new risks are identified.
- Adaptive Risk Assessment
- Night-time Rowing Risk Assessment. As a rule, unless under exceptional circumstances, all crews will be off the water before sunset. Sunrise and Sunset times displayed on home page of website

14. WATERSPORTS CENTRE SAFETY

- Smoking / vaping at Castlegate Quay Watersports Centre is prohibited.
- Care should be taken when moving around in the boathouse when lifting and carrying equipment to avoid getting hit by riggers, boats etc.
- All lifting should be done using correct methods - back straight, bend legs.
- Sensible footwear must be worn at all times.

15. WATER-BORNE DISEASES

To minimise the risk of infection, river users should:

- Cover all wounds with waterproof dressings.
- Wash any new cuts, broken blisters with clean water.
- Avoid contact with river water, mud etc., especially swallowing and in the mouth, nose and eyes
- Wash hands before handling food and drink
- Wash damp kit immediately.

Weil's disease (Leptospira) is rare but serious Please see poster on our safety noticeboard.

The first stages are flu-like symptoms in 2 to 20 days: if these appear and you require medical attention, mention to your doctor that you have been in contact with river water.



16. USE OF EQUIPMENT

Crews must take care when handling boats, oars and seats. Boats should be lifted, not slid, off the racks, and placed correctly on trestles and racks so the weight is taken by ribs and not by the skin or riggers. Oars should be placed face upwards to minimise damage. All equipment should be checked before use.

Boats must be washed down before being put away. When the conditions are sufficiently cold to create a risk of ice forming additional care must be taken to avoid any water spillage by simply wiping boats down with a damp cloth. Do not use a hose pipe or a bucket of water in freezing conditions. Do not drain water from launches on the ground - either leave it until there is no risk of it freezing or bail it out into a bucket and dispose of it directly into the river. Oars should be stored in the correct rack. All seats should be left in the boat and secured with bungee clips where fitted.

Drivers of launches must either have been trained (Club course or RYA) or be accompanied by someone who is so trained. The maximum allowable speed, unless accompanying a crew or performing a safety duty, is 5 miles per hour (walking pace). Drivers should be aware of and considerate to all other river users. In particular, they should move through the passage in Stockton centre at low speed to avoid creating excessive wash due to the hard embankments. Launches must be booked prior to use. When the launch is being used for safety purposes, due consideration should be given to the number of crew. In most circumstances a crew of two would be most appropriate. Launches may travel above the river speed limit (5 mph) provided they are "directly engaged in safety duty, training, coaching or umpiring of vessels powered by oar"⁴. It is judged that "directly" means within 10 lengths. If the training launch meets other river users, a lower speed may then be required to avoid swamping them.

Other river users who are especially vulnerable to wash are SUP paddlers and kayakers who also need to be given plenty of room when being overtaken.

17. BOATING

Before boating, the boat should be placed on trestles and checked for loose nuts, free seat movement, functioning safety straps on shoes, presence of a bow ball and that the boat buoyancy is functioning. Buoyancy may consist of sealed under seat compartments, bow and stern sections or additional inflated buoyancy bags. Generally, the bow and stern sections of singles, doubles and pairs and sealed under seat compartments in fours and eights are adequate to prevent sinking in the event of being swamped. (See sections 3 and 8)¹. For outings or races on tidal and wide rivers, only fours and eights with either sealed under seat compartments should be used.

Boats should be placed on the water with bows pointing upstream. Boating will take place from the main pontoon. When moving a boat from the boathouse forecourt to the river, care must be taken when manoeuvring within the compound paying attention to obstacles, other boats and people. If whilst boating a motorboat wash approaches, the boat must be held firmly clear by at least 2 people. Sequence for boating is: bank side blades in, hold riggers, river side in, blades in and rest on water, cox in, bank side one foot in together and push off. The crew should push off and row clear of the pontoon before putting feet in if another crew is waiting. Do not fasten the shoes too tightly as this may prevent release in the event of capsize.

18. LANDING

Approach the pontoon, when possible, against the prevailing conditions; this is usually upstream unless there is a strong tailwind. Stop and take feet out before attempting to land. Row in at fixed seat. When close to the steps, place oar handles forward to river side, step out of boat and hold riggers whilst the rest of the crew disembark. When closing in on the pontoon the bank side should hold the boat off the pontoon and then step out of the boat.



19. CASTLEGATE QUAY SECURITY

The Water sports Centre must always be kept locked when unattended. Launches, trestles and other equipment must be put inside, and the doors shut and locked. Report any break-in discovered to a member of staff and the CEO. Take steps to secure the building as soon as possible.

All lights and taps must be turned off before leaving, internal doors to the workshop / boat racks and the office should be locked, with the intruder alarm set.

Avoid leaving items visible in cars parked outside the Centre and within the compound.

20. TOWING

Drivers who tow trailers must be authorised by the Club. When drivers are authorised, they are supplied with the British Rowing Guide to Towing and the Infinity BC Towing Guidance Note. The information that these documents contain includes details on car and trailer weights and projections.

21. ROWING AT OTHER CLUBS OR LOCATIONS

When rowing at other clubs, members should make themselves aware of the local rules and conditions applicable to the locality.

There are supplementary rules that must be obeyed by crews rowing on the Tideway. These rules are set out in the booklet "Rowing on the Tideway" published by the Port of London Authority and the Thames Regional Rowing Council.

Please refer to IBC Risk Assessment.

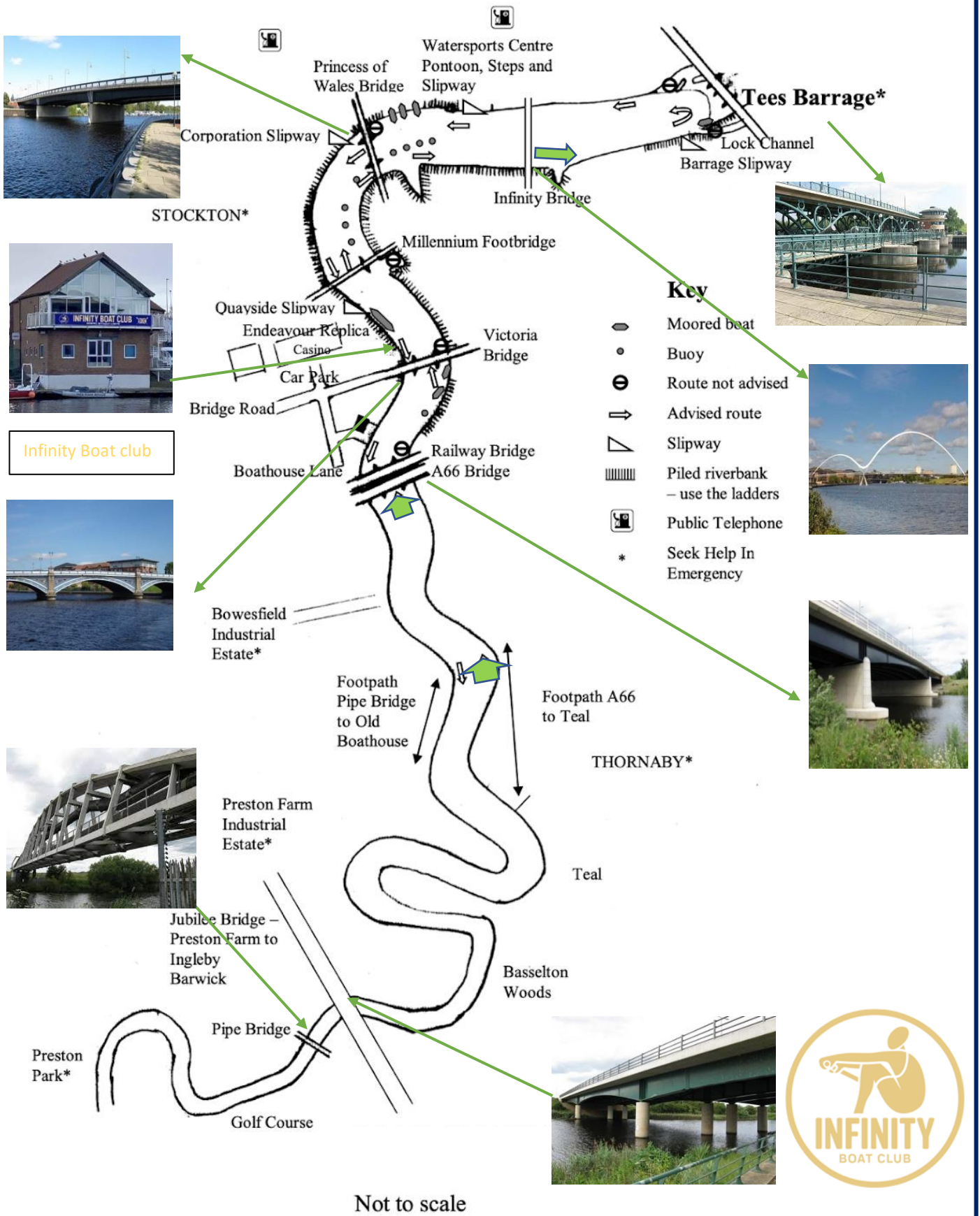
22. HOSTING OTHER CLUBS/ATHLETES

If another club or athlete is planning on rowing from Infinity Boat Club, a member of staff should be appointed (or self-appointed) to make the visitors aware of the local hazards and procedures, including this document, and to make sure they have access to IBC in case of an emergency.

Keith Brown
Safety Advisor
Infinity Boat Club Mobile phone:
Mobile: 07956450004
Email: kbrown@infinityboatclub.com

REFERENCES

- British Rowing 'RowSafe'
<http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/>
- British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy
<https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding/>
- Infinity Boat Club - Risk Assessment.
www.infinityboatclub.com
- Canal & River Trust - River Tees Guidance Notes
<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/31933-river-tees-guidance-notes.pdf>





Appendix A

Safety Plan Additions – Cold Water Immersion.

Working assumptions

- *Infinity Boat Club will publish their safety plan and risk assessments which will be regularly reviewed.*
- *Safety Plans for all river users should contain advice regarding actions to be taken following CW Immersion*
- *Infinity Boat club will have own strategies for ensuring members and Staff are risk aware and actions to be taken following an incident, in particular at induction.*
- *IBC will have notice boards where safety plans are displayed.*

Emergency Action Plan following cold-water immersion

In the event of cold-water immersion;

- Try to keep calm in the first minute and keep head out of the water away from the direction of wind/waves to prevent breathing in water and being unable to breathe (**cold shock response/gasp reflex**) which can last for a minute
- If out of your depth & unable to wade ashore following a capsize 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 AN unstable boat in particular from a rowing scull - you are likely to tip over, putting more people in the water with no one to get help.

- Dial 999 if carrying a phone and ask for assistance (Police, Ambulance, Fire, Tees Rescue)

Possible serious incidents associated with cold water immersion.

The following gives guidance for recognizing and treating possible serious incidence associated with cold-water immersion.

Hypothermia.

The symptoms of hypothermia depend on how cold the environment is and how long you are exposed. 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. If they cannot stop shivering it is moderate to severe.

Mild Cases

In mild cases, symptoms include:

- Shivering
- Feeling cold
- Low energy
- Discomfort at higher temperatures than normal
- 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 realise 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 be breathing. Emergency assistance should be sought immediately and CPR provided while the person is warmed. CPR is an emergency procedure, consisting of 30 chest compression followed by 2 rescue breaths.

Defibrillator.

A defibrillator is installed in the Coaches Office in reception adjacent to the metal shutter.

Treating hypothermia.

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.
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- **Rewarm the body slowly**
 - 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 using a hot shower, 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 begin, 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 stable boat alongside the victim and tow the victim to shore.

Do not haul the victim into an unstable 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 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. 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.

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 the 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 compression followed by 2 rescue breaths) until help arrives or the person revives. Keep the person warm by removing wet clothing and covering with warm blankets to prevent hypothermia. Remain with the recovering person until emergency medical personnel have arrived.

STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hypothermia is deadly quick at lower temperatures: so, risk assess, be risk aware.
- Consider buddying up 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-loc bag - then it won't sink!



Key Telephone Numbers & Emergency Locations.

Nearest A&E Hospital:

University Hospital Of North Tees.

Tel: 01 642 617617

Fax: 01642 624089

Address: Hardwick Road, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, TS19 8PE

Website: <http://www.nth.nhs.uk>

Email : communications@nth.nhs.uk

You are located at;

Castlegate Quay, Moat Street, Stockton on Tees, TS18 3AZ

All Coaches are advised to carry a mobile phone when out on the water.