



City of Sheffield Rowing Club

Safety Policy & Plan

This full document can be accessed via *Info > Index* on our website
www.sheffieldrowing.co.uk

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Safety Policy

City of Sheffield Rowing Club has zero tolerance for anyone being harmed as a result of our members' participation in the sport.

We believe that harm is not an inevitable consequence of our activities and that incidents that cause harm can be avoided.

We will strive to provide an environment in which the sport can be practiced safely and enjoyably by our members.

We will guide and lead our members in a way that fulfills these aims.

We recognise that our members have primary responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others.

The Club, through its Officers and Committee, will encourage safe practice having due regard for the guidance provided by British Rowing in [RowSafe](#).

The Club has safety rules that it expects its members to respect; these can be found in our [Safety Briefing](#) which is embedded on our Membership Form, and the [Safety Plan](#) which follows below.

Complying with these rules will help to prevent harm.

The Club is also committed to learn from the incidents it becomes aware of and will share this information to help others in the sport to learn too.

We are committed to make appropriate use of [British Rowing's Incident Reporting System](#).

Members are invited to refer any questions and concerns, relating to safety, to the Club's Rowing Safety Adviser (safety@sheffieldrowing.co.uk), the Welfare Officer (welfare@sheffieldrowing.co.uk), or the Committee (committee@sheffieldrowing.co.uk).

Safety Plan

Introduction

City of Sheffield Rowing Club is committed to the safety of its members and guests. Safety should always be the number one priority for everyone whilst engaging in activities around the boathouse, rowing, land training or traveling with the club to and from events.

The aim of this plan is to ensure care for club members, other water users and the public at large by identifying potential risks and to ensure plans are in place to limit those risks.

Responsibilities

All members are personally responsible for and have a duty of care to ensure that their actions, both on and off the water, are conducted in a manner that does not compromise the safety of themselves or others.

All members are expected to comply with the requirements of the British Rowing RowSafe Guide, this Safety Plan and any other instructions issued by the Club, in respect of safety. The complete British Rowing RowSafe guide can be found online:

<https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe>

Activities on the Water

Activities on the water include rowing, sculling and use of the launch.

Permitted Hours

Crews may only use the water during daylight hours and until 12:00 noon on Saturdays and Sundays. Viking Sailing Club have priority on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and we share the water with sailors on Thursday evenings.

Lone Crews (aka 'Solo Rows')

Single scullers are not permitted to go out alone. Larger crew boats may only row alone with the permission of the Captain.

General Health

Rowing is a physical sport and members are asked to inform the Club of any health conditions that could cause danger to themselves or other members. Please let the Welfare Officer or any other club official know if there are any relevant changes to your health.

Swimming Competence

Everyone taking part in activities on the water is expected to inform the Club of their swimming ability and attend any swimming tests as required by the Club.

You should be able to:

- Swim at least 50m in light clothing
- Tread water for at least 2 minutes
- Swim under water for at least 5m

Safety Equipment

Safety equipment provided includes life jackets, buoyancy aids for coxswains and throw lines.

- It is compulsory for all coxswains to wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid. Coxswains of front loading/bow coxed boats must only use manual inflating buoyancy aids.
- It is compulsory for all drivers and passengers on the launch to wear a lifejacket.
- Any rower who has not completed a swim test or declared that they can't swim to the required standard should wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid. This is compulsory for juniors who have not completed a swim test or declared their swimming ability.

Life jackets and throw lines must be checked by a Club Officer (or delegate) every six months, and a record of this must be sent to Comittee@sheffieldrowing.co.uk. Committee will store this record in the Health & Safety folder on the Club Google Drive (Safety Equipment Check: Log). Details on how to check the equipment can be found in the same folder (Safety Equipment Check: How To).

Equipment checks before boating

All equipment is to be checked before use to ensure that it is serviceable and appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended. Do not use a boat that is marked as *not for use*.

Before an outing always check that:

Riggers	Securely attached and top nuts are tight.
Hatches	Closed securely. The boat will not be buoyant if they are missing and the boat could sink if it was to capsize.
Bow Ball	Intact and securely attached. Never use a boat that has a missing or damaged bow ball.
Shoes and Heel Restraints	Securely attached so that when the heels of the shoes reach a horizontal position the feet will come out. Velcro or lace fastenings must be able to be released with a pull on a single strap. Never use a boat that has faulty or missing heel restraints.
Fin	Not bent.
Rudder	(Quads, fours and eights) Operating correctly.

Shell	Has no holes. Never use a boat that shows signs of serious damage.
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Minor repairs such as replacing missing rigger nuts and washers, replacing or tightening shoe screws or replacing heel restraints should be carried out by crews before or after an outing; leave your boat in the state you would wish to find it. There is a stock of nuts, washers etc in the blue hoppers on the wall above the workbench in the backroom of the new boathouse. Ask a more experienced rower if you are not sure what to do.

If a boat or other equipment is worn, damaged or not fit for use after an outing, you should email boatman@sheffieldrowing.co.uk, ideally with a picture of the issue. You can also alert your Squad Leader and/or Committee so that others are aware and problems can be sorted out. You should also report any items which are running low or 'out-of-stock' (eg nuts and washers).

Signing out system

Before boating, a member of each crew must use the Signing-Out Book to record who is in the crew, which boat is being used and the start time of their session. After landing, a member of each crew must also sign back in (recording the end time of their session). The Signing-Out Book is located at the back of the new boathouse. The last crew to leave the boathouse must check the Signing-Out book to ensure no crews are still on the water prior to locking up and leaving Damflask.

Navigation and Circulation Pattern

Local navigation rules apply to all boats including the launch as shown on the plan in [Appendix A](#). Boats must launch with the bows facing towards the neck of the dam and follow an anti-clockwise circulation pattern. Crews and launches should not use the middle of the dam. All users need to be aware of other boats and be prepared to give way or stop suddenly. If you see an oncoming boat straying into your path – shout out to make them aware.

Completing race pace or other work pieces is not a reason to ignore the circulation pattern. Repeated failures to follow the circulation pattern by crews and launch drivers could lead to disciplinary action.

Do not cut corners when turning at the dam wall and be aware of approaching boats when turning at either end of the dam; they might not realise you have stopped. If you turn anywhere other than at either end of the dam except in cases of emergency such as ill health, injury, worsening weather conditions or equipment failure, wait until approaching crews have passed and keep a constant lookout until you have completed the turn.

Static drills or coaching instructions should be performed at either end of the dam or in the bay, out of the path of other crews.

Use of the launch

The launch is to be used only by drivers with an RYA Level 2 Powerboat certificate. Drivers are required to wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid, and must carry a mobile phone.

The driver is responsible for ensuring that the launch rescue kit has the required items and that a paddle and boat hook are present. Any damaged or missing items are to be notified to the Club Committee as soon as possible (committeeplus@sheffieldrowing.co.uk). All launch drivers are to ensure that the launches are handled with consideration to other water users and in accordance with the British Rowing RowSafe Guide and the Environment Agency Regulations.

Other Water Users

All boats must endeavour to stay at least 25m from fishermen and not stop or perform static drills directly in front of them. Be polite, but report any incidents of abuse or threatening behaviour.

Sailing boats have right of way during shared sessions. Be aware that sailing boats may change course suddenly and be prepared to stop. Shout if you think a sailor has not seen you.

Coxswains and Steerspersons

In all coxed boats, the coxswain is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and crew. In coxless boats, the person occupying the bow seat or the person controlling the rudder (when fitted) is deemed responsible for the overall safety of the boat and the crew. The only exception to the above being when the coxswain or steersperson is a beginner, in which case responsibility will be transferred to the coach or to the person providing the direct instruction and supervision.

Coxswains and steerspersons may be asked to demonstrate their competence before being allowed out without supervision.

Coaches

Ideally all coaches are to be British Rowing qualified with Instructor Award (IA) or UKCC Level 2 as the minimum standard. Coaches are to ensure that:

- Crews are aware of the appropriate safety procedures.
- Crews use safe rowing and sculling equipment.
- The outing is conducted appropriate to the prevailing weather and water conditions.
Colder conditions need more consideration
- Consideration is shown to other water users including sailors and anglers.
- Crews, particularly juniors and coxes, are appropriately dressed for the session.
- The coach is to be particularly alert for symptoms of hypothermia, dehydration and heat stroke.
- 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 and loud hailer is taken when appropriate.

Juniors

Junior rowers may only go on the water when the Junior Coach or other designated club member is present.

Weather

All members should be aware of the local weather forecast when planning outings, particularly when thunderstorms have been predicted. Seek advice from a more experienced member if you not sure that conditions are safe for your crew.

Wind

Windy conditions can make the water choppy and make rowing and maneuvering difficult. Do not

go out if waves are breaking (“white horses”) and return to the landing stages if conditions worsen during an outing. If you turn early before the dam wall to avoid choppy water, take additional care to avoid collisions with other water users.

Thunder and Lightning

If thunder and/or lightning is heard or seen by crews already out on the water, they should return to the landing stages as quickly as possible while observing the circulation pattern. Extra care must be taken if turning early to avoid collisions with other boats.

Crews or coaches planning on going out, should use the ‘30 - 30 Rule’. Count the time from seeing lightning until hearing the thunder. If it is 30 seconds or less, seek ‘proper shelter’ – see below. If you can’t see the lightning, just hearing the thunder is a good back-up rule for it being time to seek ‘proper shelter’ – see below. Wait a minimum of 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder before leaving shelter.

On average a typical storm moves at about 40 km/h. If the time between seeing lightning and hearing thunder is less than 30s the storm will be about 10km away, giving approximately 15 minutes to seek ‘proper shelter’. This is a long enough time for any crew to get from the furthest part of the dam back to the boathouse.

Proper shelter means inside the boathouse or other building or inside a vehicle. Avoid using electrical appliances or plumbing such as water taps, sinks, showers etc

Proper shelter is not:

- Open spaces - fields, lake or dam.
- Underneath canopies, small rain shelters, trees, umbrellas, tents or marquees.
- Close vicinity to the tallest structure in an area.
- Near metal or carbon objects - riggers, boats, blades, trailers, launches, etc.

Fog

Fog can sit over the dam at certain times of the year. Visibility needs to be at least 200m before crews go out which means you should be able to see the opposite bank from the boathouses.

Ice

Sheet ice will form on the dam during cold weather and can damage fine boat hulls. It can float just under the surface of the water and may not be easily visible. Sheets of ice will drift, so what may be a clear route to start with may become dangerous later in an outing. Crews should not go out if there is a danger from ice.

Hot Weather

Hot weather can cause dehydration, sunburn and heat exhaustion or sun stroke in extreme cases. Always use sunscreen and apply in good time before your outing. Wear hats or caps and polarised sunglasses to avoid glare from the water. Make sure crew members have water and take more frequent hydration breaks.

Waterborne Diseases

There is a small risk of becoming ill from microbiological or chemical contaminants in the water such as Leptospirosis (Weil’s Disease) or Cyanobacteria (Blue-Green Algae). Simple, routine precautions should be taken to reduce the risk of infection:

- Always wash your hands after rowing and before eating or drinking
- Cover minor cuts and scratches with waterproof plasters before going afloat
- Wear suitable footwear to avoid cuts to your feet when launching or landing boats
- Clean open wounds such as blisters or calf abrasions with antibacterial products

- Shower if you have capsized or been splashed
- Do not splash dam water on yourself to cool down
- Wash and thoroughly dry any contaminated clothing before using again

Leptospirosis symptoms are similar to flu and typically develop 7 to 14 days after infection. See your GP if you think you might be infected and say that you have been rowing.

Blue-green algae blooms can form during extended periods of warm, settled weather and mainly occurs in mid to late summer. The blooms produce toxins that can kill smaller animals such as sheep or dogs. In humans they can cause eye irritation, dermatitis, joint or muscle pain, or more seriously, gastro-enteritis, pneumonia, liver damage and certain neurological conditions.

Activities off the water

Boathouse and Surroundings

All members are expected to keep the boathouses and surroundings clean and tidy.

Slips, trips and falls can be avoided by keeping the floors of the boathouses clear of riggers, oars, seats and other pieces of equipment. This is particularly important when unloading after events away from the dam.

Life jackets and buoyancy aids should be hung up neatly on the hooks provided or stored in bags provided.

Food should not be left at the boathouse unless it is in closed containers as it attracts rodents.

Rubbish must be taken away or placed in the recycling or waste bins provided in the backroom of the new boathouse. Do not leave rubbish or litter outside.

Boat Care and Handling

Rowing boats are delicate and expensive pieces of equipment and must be treated as such. Bystanders and people lifting and carrying boats can be injured if not done correctly and with care.

Always have a suitable number of people lifting boats; generally, the same number of people as will be rowing or sculling. The cox, a coach or other competent person should 'call' when lifting or carrying a boat so that everyone knows what to do.

Head torches or other adequate lights must be used when moving boats and equipment into or out of the boathouses if it is dark. This is to avoid trips and head injuries caused by riggers and oar racks.

Use firmly positioned stools to reach boats that are stored high up. Do not use stools that are damaged.

When lifting a boat that is upside down e.g. off a rack or trestles, always hold the saxboards. Never lift using the riggers or any other part of the boat. When lifting a boat that is the right way up off the water or trestles, always hold the saxboards or an internal structural part of the boat, never hold the seat, seat rails, foot stretchers or riggers.

When carrying the boat, watch that the riggers do not hit people or other objects. Be aware of where the bow and stern are too, especially when turning. Be aware of slippery conditions and trip hazards such as trestles, oars, rocks or mud. Take extra care in winter when it can be icy, particularly on the landing stages.

provide a trailer loading plan and communicate that to the participants. Loading is to be strictly in accordance with this plan and the driver is to check compliance with the plan prior to departure. The driver is to ensure that all boats and equipment are safely secured prior to departure and that the necessary requirements for front/rear projections and lighting are observed.

After unloading riggers, seats and other items, equipment must be stored neatly to prevent slips, trips and falls. Always use head torches or other suitable lighting if it is dark.

Incident Reporting

See [Appendix B](#) for what to do in an emergency.

All members are responsible for reporting all accidents, incidents and near incidents that they have knowledge of or witness. Reports should be made within 24 hours of the event via the British Rowing online incident reporting system to satisfy the requirements of the British Rowing RowSafe Guide.

A link to the incident reporting system can be found at: <http://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org/> or search for 'British Rowing incident reporting'. You don't have to be a member of British Rowing and reports can be made anonymously.

You are also encouraged to alert the Club Rowing Safety Adviser, your coach, Squad Leader, a member of the committee, Welfare Officer, or any senior rower. You can ask them to report an incident to British Rowing if you wish.

All accidents and incidents will be reviewed by the Club Rowing Safety Adviser and these will be discussed at committee level. This will help us to build up a picture of any issues and put additional control measures in place if necessary which may include testing competence of steering or coxing.

Emergency Services are to be contacted by the best means possible as appropriate to any accident or emergency situation. Call 999 from a landline or mobile phone.

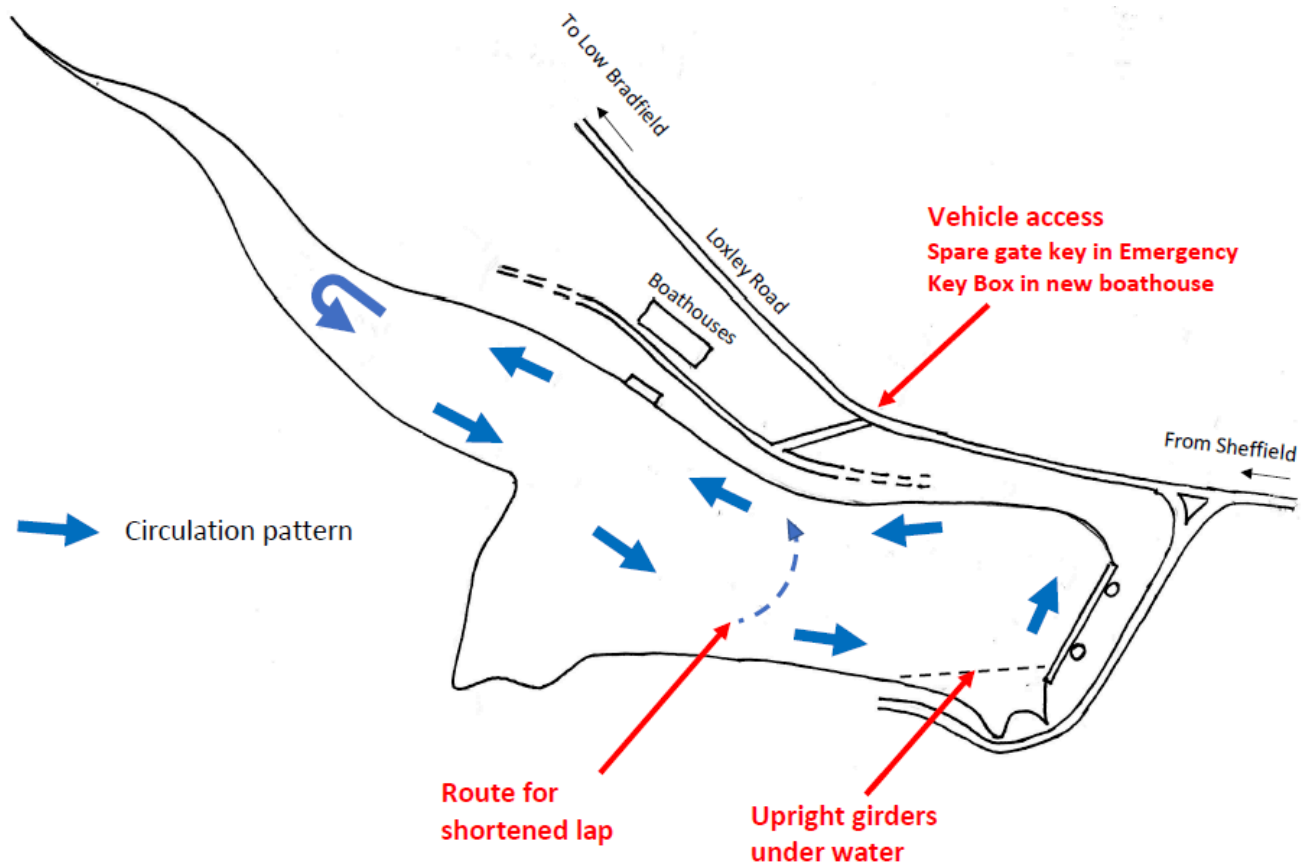
The boathouse address is:

Damflask
Loxley Road
Sheffield
S6 6SQ

A key for the gate padlock can be found in an Emergency Key Box near the sink in the new boathouse.

Appendix A: Circulation Pattern, Hazards and Emergency Access

Please see diagram below:



Appendix B:

Emergency Action Plan

Serious Incident/Cardiac Arrest

IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, INCLUDING A CREW MEMBER BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY ILL OR BECOMING UNRESPONSIVE, IMMEDIATELY PHONE 999 FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.

RAISE THE ALARM WITH A LAUNCH OR WITH OTHER BOATS IF AVAILABLE.

Call 999 in an emergency

If you come across someone who is not breathing or breathing erratically, the most important thing is to dial 999 and if you know how, start CPR to keep the blood flowing around the body until medical help arrives.

The boathouse address is:

Damflask
Loxley Road
Sheffield
S6 6SQ

Grid reference: SK 27887 90985

A key for the gate padlock can be found in an Emergency Key Box near the sink in the new boathouse. Someone should stand at the gate to guide emergency vehicles to the boathouse.

The nearest A&E Department is approximately 15 minutes drive from the dam:

Northern General Hospital
Herries Road
Sheffield
S5 7AU

Use S5 7AT for Satnavs

The First Aid Kit is located in the cupboard above the sink in the back room of the new boathouse.

The nearest defibrillator is Nags Head Inn Stacey Bank, Loxley Road, Sheffield, S6 6SJ (public access available 24/7 according to www.defibfinder.uk)

Remember to log an [Incident Report](#) after the event.

Capsize

All members should complete a capsize and swim test. The following guidelines should be followed if a capsize occurs:

- Only attempt to right the boat and get back in if you know you can do it on the first attempt. Repeated attempts will cause you to tire quickly.
- If possible, wade to shore taking the boat with you. If you are out of your depth stay with the boat and use it to keep you afloat.
- Get as much of your body out of the water as soon as possible, draping yourself over the upturned hull and try to attract attention immediately. Paddle to the shore if possible.
- If you have to stay in the water, retain warmth by keeping arms and knees tucked into the body.
- Stay calm and breathe deeply.
- Other boats in the vicinity should fetch help or a launch if one is available.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESCUE FROM ANOTHER ROWING SCULL - you are likely to capsize too, putting more people in the water with no one to get help.

Remember to log an [Incident Report](#) after the event.

Cold Water Immersion

Cold water immersion is the result of entering cold water below 15°C from a capsize or fall from the bank etc. It should not be underestimated – IT CAN KILL as breathing and circulation are immediately affected before hypothermia sets in.

The effects of the cold water mean that even healthy individuals, who are good swimmers, can still drown within a short period of time, often only a few feet from the bank. Any of the following may occur after immersion:

- Cold shock response where blood vessels in the skin close causing a rise in blood pressure and the heart having to work harder and can induce a heart attack; a 'gasp' response which can cause water to be inhaled; a feeling of panic and struggling to stay afloat. The effects do pass so you should try to stay calm!!.
- Dry drowning where inhaled water causes a spasm in the airways and prevents oxygen reaching the lungs.
- Cold incapacitation and swim failure.
- Circum-rescue Collapse which can occur immediately before, during or after rescue. This is caused by the body's lack of ability to maintain proper heart function, blood pressure and core temperature under the stressful conditions of cold water immersion and/or the demanding physical requirements of the rescue itself.

Adopt the "1 minute 1 degree rule" so you know and can plan a rescue time. ie if the water temperature is 10°C you have 10 minutes to usefully get out of the water.

Remember to log an [Incident Report](#) after the event.

Hypothermia

Symptoms

The symptoms of hypothermia depend on how cold the environment is and how long you are exposed to it. Severe hypothermia needs urgent medical treatment in hospital. Although hypothermia is defined as occurring when the body temperature drops below 35°C, mild hypothermia can start at higher body temperatures.

Early signs of hypothermia include:

- shivering
- cold, pale skin
- slurred speech
- fast breathing
- tiredness
- confusion

If body temperature drops to 32°C or lower shivering usually stops and the person may pass out. This is a sign that the condition is getting worse and emergency medical treatment is needed.

Treatment

As hypothermia can be a life-threatening condition, seek medical attention as soon as possible. Hypothermia is treated by preventing further heat loss 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:

DO

- Move the person indoors, or somewhere warm, or protect them from the cold ground with a blanket, towels or coats. Foil blankets and spare clothes are kept in the cupboard near the sink in the new boathouse.
- 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.
- If possible, give the person warm drinks (not alcohol) or high energy foods that contain sugar, such as chocolate, but only if they can swallow normally.
- Once body temperature has increased, keep the person warm and dry. It is important to handle anyone that has hypothermia very gently and carefully.

DO NOT

- Put the person in a hot bath or shower
- Massage their limbs
- Use direct heat such as heating lamps or pads
- Give them alcohol to drink

These actions can cause cardiac arrest.

Remember to log an [Incident Report](#) after the event.

Appendix C:

Club Officials, First Aiders & Key Holders

Club Officials (City of Sheffield)

Name	Position	Contact Details
Catherine Webb	Captain	captain@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Piers Turnbull	Vice Captain	vicecaptain@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Meri Middleton	Chair	committee@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Olivia Murray	Secretary	secretary@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Ian Ripley	Treasurer	treasurer@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Steph Long	Membership Secretary	membership@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Lizzie Ribey	Entries Secretary	entries@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Catherine McDougall	Social Secretary	social@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Donald McDougall	Fleet & Facilities Officer	boatman@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Lizzie Ribey	Women's Squad Leader	womenssquadleader@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Mike Luckham	Men's Squad Leader	menssquadleader@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Jodi Garth	Junior Squad Leader	juniorsquadleader@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Karen Millar	Recreational Squad Leader	recsquadleader@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Olwyn Paxman	Welfare Officer	welfare@sheffieldrowing.co.uk
Meri Middleton (interim)	Club Rowing Safety Adviser	safety@sheffieldrowing.co.uk

First Aiders

Name	Qualifications
Janet Vickers CSRC	QA L3 First aid at work QA L2 Basic Life Support AED
Alice Kears CSRC	Emergency first aid Capsize recovery

Cat Webb CSRC	Advanced life support
Maggie McKenna CSRC	Basic life support
Emily Stedman CSRC	Basic life support

Boathouse Key Holders

Requests for a key can be made to committee@sheffieldrowing.co.uk.

If you need to contact a key holder, the quickest way to do this is via the Club WhatsApp Group (invites are sent by your Squad Leader, or you can send a joining request to chair@sheffieldrowing.co.uk). Alternatively, you can email club@sheffieldrowing.co.uk

Appendix D:

Risk Assessments

[Risk Assessment: Whole Club](#)

[Risk Assessment: Single Sculling](#)