

THAMES VALLEY PARK REGATTA

READING TOWN REGATTA

Safety Plan 2026

Rowing Safety

General Statement

The TVP and Reading Town Regattas Committee operate the Thames Valley Park and Reading Town Regattas in accordance with the rules of British Rowing and within the guide of “Row Safe; A guide to good practice in rowing”.

The Committee believes that everyone who participates in rowing on the Thames at Thames Valley Park is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. As such the Committee follows the principles as set out by British Rowing.

Safety Plan

The welfare of all people competing at, or attending, events organised by us is paramount. A Risk Assessment for the Dreadnought Reach/Thames Valley Park site exists for the Regattas organised and operated by the Committee. This is reviewed after each event, and annually, to ensure that we adopt a process of continuous improvement.

The key elements of our Safety Plan are in line with the Row Safe guide and are as follows:

1. A Safety Adviser is appointed for each event with responsibility for water safety at the regattas.
 - 1.1 The Safety Adviser is a member of the Organising Committee.
 - 1.2 Water Safety is an Agenda item at each committee meeting.
 - 1.3 Water Safety is reviewed after each event.

2. A Welfare Officer is appointed and is a member of the Organising Committee.
 - 2.1 Welfare and Safeguarding are regular items at the Committee meetings.
 - 2.2 Welfare and Safeguarding is part of the event review.

3. A Risk Assessment is undertaken and annually reviewed for situations on both land and water including:
 - 3.1 Welfare and safeguarding of juniors and vulnerable adults.
 - 3.2 Welfare and safeguarding issues.
 - 3.3 The risk assessment is reviewed after each event.

4. The course is prepared in advance each year including bank-work to ensure safety of all competitors, Officials, and members of the public during the course of the event.
 - 4.1 This includes a review of water depths at the bankside and vegetation trimming to ensure a good view of the course for all concerned.
 - 4.2 The course is buoyed and clearly marked to ensure the safety of competitors and general river users.
 - 4.3 A Navigation Channel is clearly marked, and Safety Boats patrol the course and Navigation Channel, as well as holding areas at the Start and Finish.

5. A Safety Plan has been formulated based on Risk Assessment.
 - 5.1 The Safety Plan incorporates welfare issues.
 - 5.2 The Committee make the final decision regarding; cancellation of the event due to inclement conditions, rules applying to the event, communications, medical and first aid, the start and finish, race umpires, instructions to officials and competitors, emergency vehicle access, and the plan regarding accident and emergencies.
 - 5.3 The Police, Navigation Authority, Local NHS Hospital, ambulance and first aid organisations are all to be made aware of the event, and where appropriate their role within that.
 - 5.4 It is the role of the Safety Adviser and Race Committee to ensure all Officials are fully briefed on the event and the plan in case of emergencies.
 - 5.5 All emergencies will be controlled from Crew Stewards/Race Control. In the event that this is not possible for any reason, then emergencies will be controlled by the Regatta Committee from the main marquee.

- 6.** First Aid cover will be provided with:
 - 6.1** First aid being in attendance for the duration of competition.
 - 6.2** The location of First Aid will be notified to all participating clubs, via the website, and via signage at the event.
 - 6.3** First Aid can be summoned via Radio or Public Address through any Official or member of the Committee.

- 7.** Safety boats will be provided at the events by a recognised Life Saving Organisation.
 - 7.1** As such they will operate within the British Rowing guidelines but also within the standards as laid down by the Royal Life Saving Society including levels of safety equipment carried etc.
 - 7.2** All Safety boats will be in contact with Officials, via radio and loud hailer devices.

- 8.** Umpires launches at Reading Town Regatta.
 - 8.1** All are fully equipped, including safety equipment.
 - 8.2** All Umpires and launch Officials will be provided with, and wear, life jackets/buoyancy aids.
 - 8.3** In the event of an incident the first duty of the Umpires launch is to the safety of all competitors.
 - 8.4** All launches are equipped with radio communication and loud hailers.

- 9.** Bank Umpires at Thames Valley Park Regatta.
 - 9.1** All are provided with loud hailers and radios.

- 10.** All Officials and competitors are provided with copies of the Boating Instructions, which include a plan of the course and flow pattern.
 - 10.1** Instructions include the location of emergency facilities and telephones.
 - 10.2** All Officials are briefed as to their area of responsibility and duty.
 - 10.3** All Officials and Safety Boats are in place before crews boat for racing.
 - 10.4** Random checks of boat condition will be carried out. Competitors are reminded of THEIR responsibility to comply with the requirements of the Row Safe guide.
 - 10.5** The event is clearly signposted to other river users, including the Navigation Channel they should use.
 - 10.6** The course is clearly buoyed, and the start and finish areas are clearly marked.

11.All marquees will be provided by recognised contractors and meet specifications for public use.

Welfare

The Organising Committee of the Regatta believe that the welfare and well-being of all children and vulnerable adults is paramount. Regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or ability, all have equal rights to safety and protection. All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

A Welfare Officer for the Regattas is appointed annually and is the point of contact for any concerns or allegations. They can be contacted at Race Control.

In the case of any concern being raised to the Welfare Officer, they will inform the Regatta Chair. They will then determine the next course of action which will almost certainly involve the Police being contacted and the matter reported to them and the British Rowing CPO.

First Aid is available over the course of the event and Thames Valley Park Security are also present on the site at all times.

Missing Persons

The procedure for handling missing persons is that it will be reported to, and then handled initially by, Race Control through the Regatta Officials, and Thames Valley Park Security. In the case of an individual being reported missing and not being located within 20 minutes, the matter will then be reported to Thames Valley Police.

Further Notes to Officials;

Safety Provisions

- First Aid Boxes are located at Race Control in the Finish area, the Waterside Centre and on all launches. There is also a First Aid station located next to the main marquee – First Aid can be summoned via any radio on the main Umpire and Safety channel.

- The Upstream safety boat will moor at the Finish when not patrolling.
- The Middle safety boat will moor on the bank mid-course when not patrolling.
- The Downstream safety boat will moor near the Start when not patrolling.
- Emergency Telephones are located at Race Control and the bar area. Help can also be summoned by contacting any Official, or member of the Committee.

Emergency Action Plan

- If there is an incident on the course during racing, the Umpire in charge of the race will assess the situation and, where appropriate, will ring the bell, wave a red flag and **all racing will stop** until the incident is cleared. The *safety* of competitors, river users and the general public at large *is the number one priority* at all times.
- If there is an incident in any area between the TVP Rowing Club boathouse, upstream of the finish, and the end of the race assembly area below the start, the nearest Official will take control and determine the necessary action required. This can include the suspension of all racing / boating until the incident has been cleared.
- Any Official can ask the Starter to suspend racing due to an incident **anywhere on the river** in the vicinity of the event.
- Racing will not continue unless safety boats are present on the course.
- **Only the Race Committee Chair can authorise racing to recommence.**
- In the event of lightning, the '30-30 rule' will be applied. All racing will stop, PA announcements will be made and proper shelter taken. Racing will not recommence until at least 30 minutes have passed following the last lightning occurrence.
- There is also a Major Incident and/or Cancellation and Postponement Procedure in place for the event.

Incident Anywhere on the river

1. Nearest Umpire or Official

a. Call for radio silence whilst the incident is dealt with. Halt all racing if required, and any boat movement, until the incident is cleared and ask the Starter, via radio, to suspend racing.

b. Call, via radio, the nearest safety boat and First Aid. Notify all Officials of incident via radio.

c. Conduct headcount to ensure no crew member is unaccounted for.

d. The nearest Umpire or Official is responsible for managing the incident and updating the RCC until the incident has been resolved. It is their duty to also inform the RCC when it is safe to continue racing, allowing the RCC to give their agreement and racing to resume.

e. In the event of a suspected cardiac attack to a person on site, the **nearest Official is to take control until** Safety / First Aid / Medical professionals are present. If a suspected “Cardiac arrest”, then an **ambulance is to be called by First Aid personnel to the site** – Wokingham Waterside Centre Car Park, **RG6 1PQ (Grid Ref; SU 736 740)**. A **defibrillator is available at Wokingham Waterside Centre (RG6 1PQ) in the cupboard opposite the main office.** There is **also one at the event First Aid point** on the lawn by the main marquee.

f. Following an incident Officials should **Complete an Incident Report Form** and return it, *at a suitable point*, to Race Control.

2. Umpires/Marshals

Inform all crews ‘*We have temporarily suspended all racing due to an incident on the river*’.

a. Start - Do not allow any further races to start until the incident is cleared by the RCC.

b. Boating area - Do not allow boats to boat or travel towards the direction of the incident until it is cleared. If there has been a major incident, instruct boats to circulate away from it. The landing stages in the Finish area should be used for any casualties requiring ambulance, or First Aid, assistance.

c. If one of the safety boats or an umpires launch is bringing the casualty ashore, clear space at the landing stage to allow the safety boat to land and access the First Aid facility.

d. Control Commission - stop boating until incident is cleared. If the incident requires an ambulance to attend, work with First Aid to clear appropriate space, especially from the car park at the Waterside Centre for easy access to the boating area.

e. Race Committee Chair - when incident is cleared, to authorise the recommencement of racing.

3. Safety Boat

a. Attend incident.

b. If crew member is able to re-boat, assist and take to the nearest area where this is possible *i.e.* bank or landing stage, if required.

c. Inform Umpires when the crew member is re-boated. **Complete an Incident Report Form** and return it to Race Control/Registration, *as soon as possible*.

d. If patient requires First Aid, take in safety boat to the landing stage at the Finish. Notify First Aid during transit. Notify the Officials of progress and report to Race Committee Chair when the incident has been taken off river.

4. First Aid

a. Attend landing stage, if required. **Call** an ambulance, if required, and instruct them to attend **“Wokingham Waterside Centre car park, Thames Valley Park, end of A3290, Reading, RG6 1PQ, Grid Ref; SU 736 740”**.

b. Attend incident and **fill in an Incident Report Form**, returning the completed form to Race Control, *as soon as possible*.

Incident in the Trailer Park / Boating Area / Waterside Centre

Nearest Official

a. If minor, direct to First Aid near the main marquee.

- b. If a major incident**, call First Aid via radio, who will summon an ambulance if required.
- c. Complete an Incident Report Form** and return it to Race Control, *at a suitable point*.

Reporting of incidents

Should an incident occur on the river or in the trailer / boating area witnessed by any Official, crew etc, then these should be logged, at the time if possible, on an Incident Report Form. Copies of these forms will be at Race Control and are to be filled in and returned to Race Control for the attention of the Safety Adviser, as soon as possible on the day. British Rowing also have an online incident form on their website which can be completed by any person who witnesses the incident. All incidents should also be reported to the British Rowing Thames Regional Water Safety Adviser following the event – responsibility for this lies with the event Safety Adviser and Race Committee Chair.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Thames Valley Police – 999 for emergency
- 101 for non emergency
Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading – 0118 322 5111
Environment Agency – Incident hotline 0800 807060

A R Champion
RCC, Safety Adviser & Welfare Officer for TVP & Reading Town Regattas
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