

## Safety Report for AGM 2024

Members continue to make regular reports via the British Rowing online system and there have been 27 reports submitted since the last AGM. As usual there have been plenty of simple capsizes along with a range of other incidents. Like many other clubs we have experienced a number of incidents of antisocial behaviour. Several of our reports have been included in the monthly briefing sent out by the British Rowing Hon. Rowing Safety Advisor, ensuring that other clubs can learn from our experiences. On a more positive note, there have again been examples of club members assisting members of the public.

Early in January we experienced the highest water levels in memory, so high that water reached inside the boathouse. This created a new 'island' at the entrance to the basin and left a significant amount of silt on land. An impressive clean-up effort from the whole club ensured that we were back on the water quickly after the level fell but we have been left with restricted access to the basin entrance and very shallow water in it. This means that we now have to manage traffic in and out of the basin very carefully, but so far, apart from a few groundings, this has not caused significant problems. Anne, Liz and Fiona have been in discussions with various parties about dredging and we can only hope this proves to be viable. We now have a supply of sandbags in case the water rises to similar levels again. Heavy rainfall and flooding are likely to continue to be one of our main safety challenges in the future.

Another ongoing issue is likely to be water quality. In September I did some sampling as part of Earthwatch's Great British Waterblitz. I was not surprised to learn that the water we row in is in poor ecological health. I am awaiting more information on some samples I took for additional testing by Imperial College. A summary of the results across the country are available in this [article https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/21/uk-rivers-chemicals-stimulants-phosphates-nitrate-endangering-aquatic-life](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/21/uk-rivers-chemicals-stimulants-phosphates-nitrate-endangering-aquatic-life) These results suggest we should continue to be careful with post outing cleaning, of ourselves as well as the boats

I would like to thank everyone who has supported the club by spending time on the bank supervising crews, removing silt or tackling the island after the flooding or any of the many other tasks contribute to the safety and wellbeing of club members. With sustained high membership numbers and lots of people out on the water, especially in singles it is more important than ever that we continue working together to keep everyone safe.

Sally Horrocks  
24 Oct 2024