



## ROWING GUIDANCE DURING COVID-19

### Summary

As of Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020, we remain in the **AMBER PHASE** of traffic light guidance. Welsh Government have allowed the opening of outdoor sports facilities. Outdoor sporting activity is now more freely available within Wales, including 'low-contact' outdoor team sports.

This update to the guidance is considered to allow a return to training and coaching, moving on from physical activity sessions only. This also paves the way for a return to competition at a local, small level, within Wales, over the next few months once fitness has returned to its usual levels subject to social distancing and family bubbles.

However, there are currently no mitigations in place whilst rowing, and crew rowing does not enable individuals to keep to the 2m social distancing guidelines. Therefore, crew rowing is not currently possible within this version of the guidance.

There is a clearer expectation on processes and mitigations needed if clubs wish to return to group outdoor activity, and this is explained below as we believe it applies to rowing clubs. This version of the guidance builds on our previously published guidance and should be read as an update to those documents. If you require copies of previous guidance please see the following link to previous WSR COVID-19 advice.

You should only row if you can launch and retrieve boats without assistance that would result in breaking extended households and social distancing rules currently in force. A full and thorough risk assessment should take place including Covid-19 and advice from the RNLI, Coastguard and any Local Harbour Authorities should be observed.

If you are able to get back out on the water, then you must remember to check with your club committee that WSR affiliation paperwork is complete for rowers to ensure insurance cover is in place prior to getting back out on the water.

### The law and Welsh Government latest guidance states that:

- You are permitted to meet people outdoors, but you must keep to a meeting of a maximum of two households for now, unless the activity is an **organised, supervised** outdoor activity where:
  - The activity consists of no more than 30 persons which will include those people helping to launch and retrieve

- This (Welsh Government Sport and Recreation) guidance is fully implemented by the relevant national governing body (NGB), for rowing in Wales that is the guidance in this document
- Welsh Rowing as the NGB for rowing in Wales and Welsh Sea Rowing as the governing body for sea rowing provides an action plan for the sport, with activity taking place under the NGB's oversight and following its advice
- You must always adhere carefully to formal hygiene requirements in relation to yourself and items you and others touch
- You and your club must comply with the Trace, Test and Protect programme that is being rolled out
- You should check the current status of any local lockdown measures specific to your location and any local authority guidance that applies

**Rowing in Wales has one mitigation in place currently:** To allow greater numbers rowing on the water, coaching launches can be utilised using masks (if individuals are within 2 metres) to launch and retrieve the craft.

We would suggest marking holding places to provide maximum distance between the individuals moving the craft. Launches should be cleaned before and after each use, and use limited to a small number of people. This is not a safety launch, and only one person at a time should be within the coaching launch.

On the water you must at all times keep to social distancing requirements (currently 2m) (except in an emergency situation). There are currently no mitigations in place whilst rowing, and crew rowing does not enable individuals to keep to the 2m social distancing guidelines. Therefore, crew rowing is not currently possible within this version of the guidance.

Clubs must ensure that members are aware that they must adhere to Welsh Government guidelines both within rowing activity and outside in their wider lives, to prevent risk to other members of the club. There is a wider responsibility on all members rowing to protect themselves, each other, and the general public.

Clubs must abide by the current Welsh Government travel, household meeting (updated from the 3<sup>rd</sup> August) and social distancing guidelines - these are subject to change and clubs should ensure they are informed as to the latest developments. Clubs should be aware that these can change both on a local and national level quickly and should be able to adapt their provision accordingly.

### **Club responsibilities**

- Clubs should appoint a Coronavirus Officer: responsible for oversight of the Coronavirus risk assessments, for ensuring the necessary level of risk assessment and mitigations are in place, and that the club can adhere to its guidance responsibilities within local constraints. This Officer's details should be communicated to Welsh Sea Rowing so that we can ensure this person has the latest guidance. A separate free online training course for up to two club officers from each affiliated club has been previously sent around from Welsh Sea Rowing. We hope that all clubs have taken up this offer to assist with the requirements as set out above.
- Clubs should run a system whereby rowers are free to, without consequence, opt-out of training sessions, and should ensure all who opt-in are signing disclaimers.

- Clubs should have a risk assessment in place and a Covid-19 action plan, communicated regularly to members as it is updated and detailing what is being done to reduce the likelihood of transmission.
- Clubs should have protocols in place for people becoming symptomatic in the training environment.
- Clubs should display guidance messages on hygiene, and advice on keeping within Welsh Government guidelines on social distancing.
- Clubs should have clear protocols to support the Welsh Government's Test, Trace, protect strategy and the associated GDPR implications of keeping these records.
- Clubs should consider what advice they give/what provision they make for people who are currently [shielding](#), which permits leaving home to exercise outdoors with people from up to one other household applies as long as social distancing rules are strictly adhered to. These people will not be able to attend larger group sessions until the 3<sup>rd</sup> August.
- Clubs must carefully risk assess their venues and waterways to decide what is an appropriate number for their club. Welsh Government now permits groups of up to 30 socially distanced within organised settings, where there is a responsible person (must not be a junior as defined in rowing) in a supervisory role. For paddling where it is not part of an organised session, the 2 (extended) households' regulation still applies until the 3<sup>rd</sup> August. Areas where social distancing is harder to achieve with large numbers - boat bays, landing stages and car parks should all be carefully considered when deciding on the number that the club will allow to congregate.
- Where multiple clubs use the same facility or waterway, we would advise that together the number present at one time in the facility or on the water does not exceed 30. Welsh Government has suggested considering whether an aerial view of the facility or waterway in use would appear to break gathering guidance when planning for this.
- Anyone at the club or closer to it than social distancing rules would permit, will count towards the total number people considered to be gathered for the organised outdoor activity, where a limit of no more than 30 persons applies. This includes parents, spectators, and other helpers.
- Indoor facilities, apart from toilets and through-ways should be kept closed.
- The person responsible for the session should ensure, upon arrival, that participants have completed a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms. Activity should be refused to anyone who is unable to provide assurance that they have done so and that to the best of their knowledge it is safe for them to take part. Anyone refused entry to the activity on this basis must be instructed to self-isolate immediately and to follow the steps set out for those displaying symptoms of COVID-19.
- Participants should be made aware of any increased risk associated with taking part in activity, based on the assessment undertaken by the club. They should also be strongly advised to follow Welsh Government advice on how to protect yourself and others from coronavirus outside the sports setting, to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when they do attend.
- Clubs should strictly limit the time spent congregating at a venue before activity begins. Social and physical distancing measures must be applied at such times.

Session slot times should reflect this. This includes arriving changed and ready to begin the warmup, if possible, to minimise time spent waiting.

- Where equipment is shared, clubs should ensure equipment is cleaned to the appropriate standard before use according to the latest Government [cleaning](#) advice before use by another person. All equipment should be cleaned before and after each person has used it.
- Clubs must have entry and exit and parking arrangements to venues that ensure social distancing can be maintained with larger numbers now in attendance.

### **Participant responsibilities**

- All rowers, officials, volunteers, and spectators must undergo a self-assessment for any COVID-19 symptoms before attending the venue.
- All activity attendees should follow best practice for travel including minimising use of public transport and limiting car sharing, if they can walk or cycle to the activity. People from one (extended) household can travel together in a vehicle.
- Water bottles or other refreshment containers should in no circumstances be shared. Participants should be advised to bring their own, in a named container.

### **Future Developments**

As set out above, non-household crew boats are not currently within the scope of the government guidance, due to the close distance constantly present between rowers throughout a training outing. Several team sports are returning with no or low contact versions of their sport, and some with mitigations in place for temporary breaches of the 2m guidance. Welsh Sea Rowing will continue to work closely with Welsh Rowing who are working with Welsh Government, WSA and the Home Nation rowing NGBs to determine how and when we may be able to return to crew boat rowing.

Outdoor gyms are allowed to reopen from the 20<sup>th</sup> July. Clubs should consider carefully risk assessing the risks associated with the moving in and out of equipment, and the possible transmission issues from this.

Indoor hospitality (bar and café areas) subject to conditions allowing and strict protocols being in place will be allowed to reopen and up to 30 people will be able to meet outdoors regardless of how many households they are from on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August. More may be able to meet indoors from 15<sup>th</sup> August with gyms and leisure centres able to reopen from 10<sup>th</sup> August. Clubs should follow the guidelines [here](#) for these areas of their facilities.

[Welsh Government Guidance](#)

[British Rowing Guidance](#)

If you have any questions, in the first instance, please email [chair@searowing.wales](mailto:chair@searowing.wales)