



## ROWING GUIDANCE DURING COVID-19

### Summary

**As of Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020, we moving to the **AMBER PHASE** of traffic light guidance WHILST still staying local within the 5 miles Welsh Government's guidance. However, smaller club boats can now be used, and this will result in certain areas of clubs needing to be re-opened to allow the appropriate access.**

All WSR affiliated clubs and rowers will not currently be able to row Celtic Longboats/Coastal Quads, and in the near future given social distancing requirements (currently 2m).

If you have smaller boats which are private or club boats and are experienced rowers, then you may be able to utilise these, while following the advice as set out by Welsh Government and Welsh Sea Rowing. You should only row if you can launch and retrieve boats without assistance that would result in breaking 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.

### Introduction

The number one priority for all of us is public health - we all have a responsibility to each other to do what is right to help reduce the spread of the virus. Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an unprecedented challenge for the whole of our community, within in Wales, UK and within the rowing community. As such it creates difficulties for the return to rowing.

As a rowing community this means we must listen to the guidance from the Welsh Government and from waterways Authorities. Every club will find their own unique challenges and scenarios that it must work through and apply an appropriate risk assessment to. Please remember that we need to follow the normal Welsh Sea Rowing's safeguarding policies and RowSafe guidance.

Following Welsh Government's announcement on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020, and further clarification, we have revised our guidance for clubs. Please remember that guidance changes on a regular basis and clubs should ensure understanding of the current Government [guidance](#).

Rowing clubs in Wales are run by volunteers, please ensure that club committees are given the time to ensure any rowing is done safely. Everyone wants to be back on the water but be mindful that it may take longer than you would wish to ensure a safe environment.

With the opening of outdoor sports facilities, outdoor sporting activity is now more freely available within Wales, with the exception of contact and team sports.

The law and Welsh Government guidance remain that:

- You must “stay local”, with a suggested distance of 5 miles except for those people who do not have all essential facilities within 5 miles and who are therefore used to defining their locality within a larger distance. This also applies to sporting activity, if you cannot access and also carry out your sporting activity within your local area, then you cannot currently participate. Please note that this is different from exercise you can undertake from and to your home address, in which case you are not restricted to your “local area”; this applies, for example, to cyclists, but we think it is unlikely to apply to many rowers unless you happen to live on a lake or river. Welsh Government has suggested that it intends to lift the “locality” restriction on 6<sup>th</sup> July (subject to the virus remaining at current levels or lower)
- You are permitted to meet people outdoors, but you must keep to a meeting of a maximum of two households
- You must at all times keep to social distancing requirements (currently 2m) (except in an emergency situation)
- You must at all times 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

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.

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

**We all have a responsibility to keep risks as low as possible. Although the emergency services have advised us that they will continue to respond to any water sports incidents, a simple rule of thumb is to consider whether or not you would do the activity if there were no emergency services and whether you are capable of rescuing any capsized/incident without putting others at risk.**

**Do not visit your club if you or anyone in your house are showing any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or whilst you should be self-isolating or shielding.**

## **Traffic Light Guide, how we move out of lockdown in Wales**

As we move out of lockdown, we still need to maintain our social distancing.

Welsh government published “*Unlocking our society and economy*” a link to this document is at the end of this guidance.

The following Traffic Light Guide has been adapted from the current Welsh Government traffic light guidance by Welsh Rowing to help clubs in Wales return to rowing. Please remember we will not move wholesale from one phase to the other.

Welsh Sea Rowing has also adopted this Traffic Light Guide to assist your club’s return to rowing. An outline of the different phases is set out on the next page.

## Traffic Light Guide

Welsh Government Phases	Affiliated Club Activity (subject to change)
<b>Lockdown</b>	No rowing on water / sea or use of club facilities / activities.
<b>Red</b> - Exercise more than once day and visit one other family/ friends within 5 miles	Privately owned single sculls / household larger boats on waterways accessible within the current Welsh Government travel guidelines.
<b>Amber</b> - Greater allowance for travel for leisure - Exercise with another person or small groups with social distancing permitted	Privately owned single sculls and shared club equipment (singles and larger boats from households) can be used. Rowing is only for exercising, not for training. Club facilities (i.e. bars, gyms, changing facilities etc.) should remain closed.
<b>Green</b> - Social distancing still in place	Club in-door facilities can re-open, subject to following strict hygiene measures, in line with Welsh Government guidelines.
<b>Out of measures</b>	A return to activities at pre COVID-19 levels, with additional on-going focus on hygiene measures, in line with Welsh Government guidelines.

### Guidance for Red Phase

- Privately-owned single sculls/household larger boats on waterways accessible within Welsh Government travel guidelines

In practice, this means:

- Clubs should remain closed, including any compounds which are not open access to prevent transmission through items such as gates or locks.
- Privately-owned singles or household boats accessible within current travel Welsh Government travel guidelines.
- Boats can only be launched from publicly accessible slipway/waterways access with permission of the landowner.
- Privately-owned multi-person boats can only be used by people living in the same household.
- Carry out a Covid-19 specific risk assessment, in addition to your usual risk assessment, ensure no measures contradict each other.
- Check your boat thoroughly to ensure its safety after a period of inactivity.
- Maintain 2m from all people outside your household whilst launching, rowing, taking your boat off the water and storing your boat.
- Avoid what may be deemed a 'gathering'- adhere to Welsh Government guidelines on meeting other households.
- Arrive in your rowing kit and avoid any changing outside of your house. Bring your own drink and do not consume food whilst rowing.
- Ensure you do not leave any belongings behind.
- Follow public health guidelines on hygiene, including hand washing regularly and straight after rowing to prevent Weils disease.

## Guidance for Amber Phase

Subject to changes in Welsh Government advice, to be revised as more guidance is released:

- This is not a return to normal club activity, there will need to be changes made to ensure the safety of your members.
- This activity should still be *exercise*, not training. We would not expect coached sessions.
- Travel in accordance with the current Welsh Government guidance and exercising with another person or small groups with social distancing permitted.
- Rowing - Shared club equipment (singles and larger boats for households) can be used following hygiene guidance.
- Club indoor facilities, i.e. bars, indoor gyms and changing facilities, should remain closed.

In practice, this means as a minimum, the club will need to:

- Clubs can re-open compounds and boat bays to allow access to boats and oars.
- Deep clean of boat bays to be carried out before access permitted.
- Oars are to be disinfected, particularly the handles before and after use. They should have been aired and be completely dry before the next person.
- Consider what PPE you will need to provide to your first aiders/first responders in the event of an emergency or CPR is required.
- Boats must be thoroughly cleaned in their storage locations after use to avoid touching the boat again after you have cleaned it. The boat must then be ventilated for 30 minutes before the next person.
- You must be able to launch your boat by yourself or with members of your household.
- Arrive in your rowing kit and avoid any changing outside of your house. Bring your own drink and do not consume food whilst rowing. Avoid the usage of hatches for storage. Take all of your own clothing into the boat with you.
- Clubs should implement a one-way system in the boathouse, toilets and on any landing stage.
- Where possible, mark out 2m gaps along the wall of the boathouse to remind members to keep 2m apart.
- Clubs should consider putting limits on boats on the water, and in areas of the boathouse to ensure social distancing.
- Any shared surfaces - padlocks, gates, keys should be cleaned before and after usage.
- Groups should be limited to stay within government guidelines and social distancing of 2m apart should always be maintained.
- Safety launches should have 2 people as per RowSafe, so will not be possible to use unless in an emergency.

It is important to remember that this guide will assist clubs to set out what may be possible, at each phase of the traffic light system, introduced by the Welsh Government. Individuals and clubs need to be cautious in the implementation of these stages, please always apply sensible decision-making based on the local situation. Welsh Sea Rowing will continue to monitor the situation and will update this document as more information is provided by the Welsh Government. It is important that this document is always read alongside the Government guidance which often will provide more details on the general precautions required to help control the virus.

It will be some time before rowing whether on the sea or along rivers is back to normal, whatever normal may be in future. Please be aware it could be a rocky road to get there and Stay Safe!

## **Advice for Rowing Clubs**

Rowing clubs will have to change the way the club operates, to help control the spread of coronavirus.

A link to UK specific advice for sports sectors is at the end of this guidance. Please use this link alongside the Welsh Government advice and remember the decision for reopening the rowing club, has to be right for your club, do not rush into reopening before the club is ready.

Clubs must abide by current Welsh Government travel, household meeting and social distancing guidelines- these may be subject to change and clubs should ensure they are informed as to the latest developments

Privately owned and shared club singles and larger boats for households only can be used within strict hygiene procedures. We suggest that at all times soap and soapy water is available and their use required of those entering and leaving storage areas, and also required for use before and after use of any rowing equipment whether or not persons have entered the storage areas

Club indoor facilities, i.e. bars, indoor gyms and changing facilities, should remain closed. You must consider any restrictions on any water ways/coastal areas.

Please remember that this situation does not change the club's responsibilities towards safeguarding or safety. Your safeguarding policy and club safety plan must form a key part of your club's planning. At every stage, your club should not feel pressured to allow anything you are uncomfortable with.

### **You may want to consider:**

- Does the club have the right number of people with the right knowledge to plan and operate the club at each phase?
- Do your club volunteers and/or staff have up to date training and checks (e.g. first aid, SPC and DBS)?
- How might your club replace any volunteers and/or staff who might not want to return either on a temporary or permanent basis?
- Contacting people who have not returned, or you have not heard of to check in with them and double check they do not require any help

### **In practice, this means for clubs:**

- You must as a first step and a "blueprint for action" review your current risk assessment, to ensure that the risks associated with Covid-19 have been adequately assessed and to ensure measures are comprehensive and effective, and especially to ensure no measures contradict each other. Consider the risks associated with clubs having been closed for some time: e.g. Legionella risks, expiry dates of emergency equipment, servicing of emergency items
- You may subject to strict safety measures re-open storage compounds to allow access to boats and oars
- Consider areas of your club that need a deep clean before coming back into general use
- All indoor facilities - clubrooms, social areas, gyms, changing rooms, should remain closed
- If you choose to reopen your toilet facilities, the toilet and hand basin should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use. Hand towels should not be shared

- Oars are to be entirely cleaned, before and after use
- Clubs should consider implementing a one-way system in the boathouse, compounds, and on any landing stage
- Consider what systems and procedures you will use to ensure (e.g. by staggering slots/timetables) members are not at risk of meeting more than one other household
- Clubs should regularly remind members to ensure they maintain physical distancing in line with the current Welsh Government guidelines
- Coaching within the overarching Welsh Government guidelines is allowed, within safeguarding policy restrictions, be aware that the coach makes up one household of the two that can meet

## **Managing your club's coronavirus plan**

This process is not going to be a fast process and may take many months. Have a 'reopening committee', this may include several members of your main club committee but separating the groups will allow you to properly examine the detail required around this process.

- 1) Make a list of tasks.
- 2) Plan how these will be completed and by which member.
- 3) At each stage of the journey you will need to update your risk assessment to include any specific Corona virus risks.

Please remember that the advice from Welsh government take priority over any rowing specific advices. Clubs may wish to look at other information provided by British Rowing and Welsh Rowing, to identify ideas of what is needed for the club to be reopened. For clubs with employees, you must provide a safe COVID 19 environment for them.

The following has been attached as separate documentation for your use.

- Signage poster templates for use in clubs in future phases
- Example risk assessment for coronavirus considerations

## **Advice for Rowers**

- Think carefully in advance about what you need to do when accessing the club and using equipment, to stay safe yourself and keep others safe, both generally, and from the virus in particular. Acquaint yourself properly with club requirements. Plan! This includes:
  - anti-covid-19 measures of behaviour, distancing, and hygiene
  - safety issues which apply anyway, in relation to your rowing equipment and your personal fitness and capacity to undertake strenuous rowing and related activity
- Check your boat thoroughly to ensure its safety after a period of inactivity
- Maintain social distancing guidelines from all people outside your household whilst launching, rowing, taking your boat off the water and storing your boat
- Avoid what may be deemed a 'gathering' - more than two people from outside the same household
- Arrive in your rowing kit and avoid any changing outside of your house. Bring your own drink and do not consume food whilst rowing
- Ensure you do not leave any belongings behind
- Follow public health guidelines on hygiene, including hand washing regularly and straight after rowing to prevent Weils disease. To protect yourself against illness

from any source you should shower on return home and within a short time after rowing; do not delay!

- Return to activity gradually, both fitness and skill level may have faded over the lockdown period, especially core/back strength.

Rowers must also consider that risk assessments are key to getting back out on the water and staying safe. Touch points on equipment and cleaning after use is imperative for rowers to prevent any potential spreading. Clubs may wish to adopt checks on health and temperature checking process prior to any rowers accessing club equipment. Any symptoms do not go out and risk spreading. Remember keep communicating with club officials at all times and follow government guidance on numbers.

When using equipment at launch and recovery stages the weight of boats/equipment compared to the number of rowers and cox if present should be appropriate to manoeuvre the boats/equipment without lifting excessive weights which could lead to straining or injury. Please observe social distancing measures at all times.

The cleaning of private and club equipment using soap and soapy water is suggested but you may wish to use diluted bleach. If using diluted bleach this must be carefully considered. Bleach is a corrosive liquid and the use of diluted bleach (1:50 ratio) on hard surfaces offers the best method of cleaning such surfaces. However, when using such cleaning methods, you should avoid runoff of any liquids or run-off into any watercourses.



Follow social distancing guidelines at all times

Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds

Respect the rules set out by your club and help yourself, your clubmates and the public stay healthy

Take it easy getting back on the water, your body may need to get used to rowing again

Respect other water users, remember for some people the water is their home

Follow any rules set out by your club to keep equipment and facilities clean

Walk, cycle, run or drive to your club - do not use public transport

Look after your hands – you will probably find you get blisters once you are back on the water again

Be kind - your club's committee are giving up their time for free to ensure you are all safe

## Useful Links

Welsh Government (unlocking our society and economy):

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-05/unlocking-our-society-and-economy-continuing-the-conversation.pdf>

UK Government (specific advice for sports sectors):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation>

For more information on (Covid-19) we recommend visiting the following websites.

NHS Wales (coronavirus information):

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Welsh Government latest information on (Covid-19):

<https://gov.wales/topic/980/latest>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.