

Alnmouth community rowing – managing risks

Rowing on the sea is subject to a range of hazards and risks, which are mitigated by various factors.

There are some core factors that apply to the mitigation of most risks:

Competent cox

Gain experience over time, gradually in more demanding conditions – experienced crew on board when inexperienced cox

Cox self-assesses against checklist

Review weather forecast and forecast sea conditions

Familiarity with route

Check crew is competent and suitable for rowing conditions

Discretion to refuse crew members

Discretion to alter or cancel row – if any crew member or cox not happy

Brief crew on row, conditions and what is expected

Check crew comfort during row

Competent crew

Crew self – assess against checklist and attend periodic training

No non-swimmers or at very least crew comfortable with being in the sea.

No injuries or illness – colds or flu

Wear suitable clothing – light non-baggy windproof layers, gloves, hats

Always wear life jackets

Warm up before rowing

Regular practice of bailing techniques, man overboard, crew member taken ill, launch and recovery through surf

Familiar with emergency messages on vhf radio

Respond to cox directions, be aware of condition of sea and other crew members

Seaworthy skiff

Pre row checks - condition of hull and external fittings . All equipment loaded (tiller arm and rudder, footboards and foot stretchers, oars , wooden oar pins , lifejackets)

Fenders if mooring

Drainage bung in place

Regular equipment checks – life jackets, vhf radios, including transmission test on ch71, e- bag equipment

e-bag contents – torch , first aid kit ,high energy bars ,foil blanket , compass ,flares – orange smoke and starburst

at least 2 bailers secured to skiff

anchor secured to skiff

rope for towing / man overboard

Table of hazards, risk and procedures, with additional factors over and above core factors identified above

HAZARD	RISKS	COX	CREW	SKIFF
Weather: Poor sea conditions Heavy wind Lightning Fog	Capsize Loss of control Broaching Sea sickness Hypothermia Crew tiredness Injury Drowning	CORE	CORE	CORE
Water hazards: Flotsam and jetsam	Damage to skiff injury	Alert to hazards on water	Alert to hazards on water	
Weather: hot or cold conditions	Hypothermia Exhaustion Dehydration Heat stroke Injury	CORE	CORE	CORE plus Extra water and sun factor cream
Carrying equipment to and from skiff	Trips/ falls/ injury Back strain Hit by oars	Supervise crew	Warm up Lifting techniques Avoid strain Be aware of crew around you to avoid hitting them	

Towing and road trailer - lifting on and off trailer	Damage to skiff and trailer Loss of equipment Injury Collision damage to third parties	Experienced tower with insurance and suitable towing vehicle Brief crew Tower in mobile phone contact with cox.	Crew aware of how to strap and unstrap skiff secure the oars , and stow equipment in the skiff hull / in the boot of the towing vehicle Correct use of winch and positioning of skiff on trailer Fix number plate on trailer	
Launch and recovery from moorings	Damage to skiff Damage to other craft Injury	Brief crew Supervise approach and tying up Fenders in correct place Tide and wind effect Mooring ropes and knots		Adequate number of fenders
Launch and recovery from beach	Injury to crew Taking on water Broaching and capsize	CORE Plus Launch Load as quickly as possible Bow into the waves – rowers help Launch through set of smaller waves and power through Recovery Look for channels , lack of sandbanks	CORE Plus Awareness of waves and direction of the skiff. Ability to row to counteract effect of waves Aware of risk of crabbing or falling over in the boat Get in and out of the skiff quickly when requested to do so.	CORE plus Balers after launch if through rough surf

		Keep seaward side of a wave as long as possible If overtaken by wave and surfing keep boat at right angles to wave with oars Move out of surf asap.		
Man overboard	Hypothermia Drowning Lack of full rowing crew	Mayday message ch 16 Best way to recover man overboard might be feet first in the middle of the boat with crew counterbalancing extra weight	Familiarity with man overboard procedure	
Crew taken ill	Hypothermia Lack of full rowing crew	Mayday message Crew member to tend to ill person Strongest rowers to row subject to balance of boat	Familiarity with procedure Use e-bag kit as appropriate – flares , torch	
Sinking or capsizing	Hypothermia drowning	Mayday message ch 16 Crew to stay with skiff	Use e-bag kit as appropriate – flares , torch	
Juniors and vulnerable adults	Injury Possible litigation	Cox aware of polices and identity of club child protection officer. Copy pinned to boathouse notice board	On shore - At least one adult crew member for each two juniors or vulnerable adults. Rowing - Crew will always have 3 experienced adult rowers	Ensure life protectors correct size for juniors
Onshore repairs and maintenance to skiff	Dust Splinters Burns Cuts electrocution		Briefing and supervision by works leader	Facemasks gloves Plastic sheets