



JUNIOR MEMBER AND GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

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Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook is intended as a reference guide for juniors and their guardians joining Gloucester Rowing Club. You won't find everything that you need to know about rowing in this document, instead this provides an introduction as to how the Club is run, how the junior squad is organised and the Club's safeguarding procedures. You will also find links to useful websites for further information. This handbook should be read in conjunction with the Club's Constitution, Rules and Policies found on the Club website: www.gloucester-rowing.org



Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Welcome to Gloucester Rowing Club | 3 |
| | 3 |
| 1.1 Introduction..... | 3 |
| 1.2 Governing bodies and funding..... | 3 |
| 1.3 Organisation of the Club..... | 3 |
| 1.4 Use of the Club equipment..... | 4 |
| 1.5 Competitions and events..... | 4 |
| 1.6 Personal welfare..... | 5 |
| 1.7 Use of social media..... | 6 |
| 2. The Junior Squad | 7 |
| 2.1 Structure of the squad..... | 7 |
| 2.2 Codes of conduct at the Club..... | 8 |
| 2.3 Training | 8 |
| 2.4 Competitions..... | 10 |
| 3. Raising Concerns at the Club | 11 |
| 3.1 Raising serious concerns | 12 |
| 3.2 Less serious concerns raised by a junior member..... | 12 |
| 3.3 Less serious concerns raised about a junior member..... | 12 |
| 4. Volunteering | 14 |
| 4.1 Why the Club needs volunteers..... | 14 |



1. Welcome to Gloucester Rowing Club

1.1 Introduction

Gloucester Rowing Club (GRC) has occupied land alongside the Sharpness-Gloucester Canal since 1846 and is one of the oldest established rowing clubs in the country. The Club is extremely fortunate to row on the canal, one of the longest uninterrupted stretches of water that is useable throughout the year. The success of members past and present at national and international level is demonstrated by the photographs displayed within the clubhouse, which together show a strong tradition of commitment and dedication to GRC and the sport of rowing.

In recent years the membership has increased to the extent that the club has outgrown the clubhouse on Bristol Road near Hempsted Bridge. Following the award of a grant from Sport England in 2014, fund raising by the Club and investment from new partners Hartpury College, Cheltenham Ladies College and the Gloucester Canoe Club, the club is moving into a bespoke facility on land purchased off Dave Hook Way (on the opposite side of the canal). This will become a centre for watersports in Gloucester and the start of a bright future for the Club.

1.2 Governing bodies and funding

British Rowing

The National Governing Body for the sport is British Rowing www.britishrowing.org and under their guidance the Club is able to cater for a wide range of abilities and ages, enabling those who wish to learn to row for leisure to do so alongside those who aspire to compete at, or already have competed at, regional, national and international level. The Club relies on a large body of volunteers to fill the required roles of club officials, coaches and helpers, to stay on top of the administration and to keep the facilities and equipment in good order.

At GRC the safety and wellbeing of club members is foremost and whilst some duties can be carried out by members based on their experience or willingness to perform the role, other duties require members to undertake specific training to oversee that activities are practiced to the latest standards advised by British Rowing. To reinforce those standards, the Club has a set of club rules and policies that members must abide by. These are updated as and when necessary to keep abreast of the latest guidance from British Rowing. The Club also has a Constitution (revised in 2014) which sets out its principle purpose, as follows:

“The sole objective of the Club is to promote the sport of rowing in the Gloucester area and community participation in the same”.



GRC has also signed up to the 'Explore Rowing' initiative www.exploreroxing.org a scheme set up to provide funding for boats in return for clubs opening their doors to the wider community.

Club Members

GRC gains most of its revenue from the subscriptions of its 200 members and fund raising events. There are many ways to help the club raise funds and juniors are encouraged to play their part.

Junior membership is one of six classes of membership offered at the Club, and those who are eligible for this membership must be aged 12-18. Information on membership can be found on the GRC website www.gloucester-rowing.org by following the menu: *Home>Club Information>Constitution* or *Home>Join* or by emailing the Junior Coordinator. Once you have become a member and paid your annual subscription fee the Club Secretary will create an account for you.

1.3 Organisation of the Club

Roles and Responsibilities

Rowing clubs have an overriding responsibility for the safety of their members in all activities associated with rowing. The primary responsibility for ensuring safe practice lies with the Club Officers and the Club Committee, comprising a Chairperson, Captain, Treasurer, Secretary and 6 committee members who are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September. Members under the age of 16 cannot vote at the AGM but one of their parents can vote by becoming an Associate member, free of charge.

The Club Committee is advised by a Club Water Safety Advisor and their name can be found on the club website www.gloucester-rowing.org/safety under *Home>Safety*. Other useful information can be found by downloading **British Rowing's 'Row Safe: a guide to good practice in rowing' (2016)**. Every member of the Club has a duty of care when rowing and all accidents must be logged and the action taken recorded in the Accident Log Book pinned on the wall in the clubhouse.

The Club Committee also appoint a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) to oversee that best practice is followed at the club to safeguard the junior members and any members considered to be a vulnerable adult. The direct contact details for the CWO can be found on the Club noticeboard, or by emailing cwo@gloucester-rowing.org. The CWO raises issues at Club meetings and activities, as well as being a point of contact for anyone with welfare concerns. The CWO is a senior member of the Club who has undergone a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) and ensures that the Club follows **British Rowing's 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy' (July 2013)** www.britishrowing.org/safeguarding and the NSPCC **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)**. The CWO also advises on safeguarding training required for club officers and ensures that club members who have regular contact with juniors also achieve an Enhanced DBS clearance via British Rowing.

The Club Committee is supported by a number of working groups and sub-committees, made up of elected and co-opted members. One of these is the Rowing Committee, a forum which sees the heads of the junior squad and senior men's and women's squads working alongside the Club Captain to agree on coaching resources, training sessions, equipment usage, upkeep of the boats and planning the



competition calendar. The other club committees vary according to requirement, but may include Fund Raising, Club Competitions, Safety etc.

Policies and Procedures

The Club has to rely on the goodwill of its members to give their time freely to keep the facilities and equipment in good order and stay on top of the administration. In line with legislation, Clubs have to produce clear procedures and policies for their members to follow and it is important that guardians and junior members familiarise themselves with the website and where this information can be found.

Following the menu *Home>Information* you can then navigate the pages to find the Club:

- ⌚ Constitution ;
- ⌚ Rules; and
- ⌚ Policies and Procedures

1.4 Use of the Club equipment

Both club equipment and privately owned equipment is stored in the boathouses and on the external racks. Every piece of equipment is housed in a specific place. Not all of the Club equipment can be used by every member and some boats and blades are only suitable for athletes of a certain size and level of ability. The Club Captain's permission is required for the use of some higher performance boats.

The Club operates a timetable system for training sessions throughout the week, most of which normally last for about 2 hours. This means that all the squads overlap at some point and squad leaders and coaches are responsible for pre-booking and sharing equipment. Handling the equipment correctly and making sure that it is put away in good condition after use, is fundamental to keeping the Club fleet in a good state of repair.

- ⌚ Before equipment is used on the water all members must check it thoroughly for damage or wear and tear and any repairs needed must be logged in a 'Damages Book' kept in the boathouse. All boats must be signed out in the log book and signed back in at the end of the session by a member of the crew.

1.5 Competitions and events

There is a wide range of local, regional and national events across the country and these are published by British Rowing as a racing calendar, or a list can be found on www.biddulph.org.uk. Most of these events take place over the weekend and the Club tends to favour those held in the south of England. In the summer months the competitions take the form of 'regattas' which are knock-out sprinted heats resulting in a winner in the final round of each category. In the winter there are 'heads' which are longer distance time trials, with the fastest recorded times in each category becoming the winners.



Most of the competition events that the Club attends are organised under British Rowing's Rules of Racing. Although the entry system is quite straightforward, the categories that juniors are eligible to race in and the point system is too lengthy to explain in this handbook.

Each year the Club produces a calendar of competitions that it aims to enter and this is reviewed on a regular basis amongst the squad leaders. Each squad decides which of those events they would like to enter and co-ordinates with the other squads to share the Club equipment. GRC hosts three competitions each year to include a spring and autumn head and a summer regatta.

Other in-house events are arranged to suit the needs of the Club and may include friendly races, equipment repair days, club tidy days and training camps. All of these rely on members and their families giving their time to help and members are expected to help at a minimum of one event per year. There are many ways to get practically involved without the need for rowing knowledge. Ways to keep informed about what is happening at the Club are by signing up to the BT Yahoo email groups offered to juniors, or following Gloucester Rowing Club on Twitter.

1.6 Personal welfare

First Aid

Rowing is a sport which can result in minor injuries, such as cuts from sharp edges on the boats, blisters formed during training and occasionally wounds or bruising resulting from a capsize or collision on the water. The Club has not appointed a First Aid Officer, but there is a first aid kit in the clubhouse and all qualified coaches are trained in the administration of basic first aid. For more serious accidents every effort will be made to seek professional medical assistance.

- ⌚ Junior members are requested to bring prescribed medication such as, inhalers or EpiPens with them to training, and to inform their junior coach of any medication that they are taking that might affect their training.

Weil's Disease

Waterborne diseases are a potential risk associated with rowing on the canal, although there are no reported cases at the Club. British Rowing have produced advice on Weil's Disease, which is a bacterial infection caught from animal urine in the water, and which can be serious cases if untreated. More information can be found at www.leptospirosis.org. As a sensible precaution the Club advises that all open wounds are covered before water training and whilst on the water juniors are advised not to splash about and to avoid swallowing the canal water. In the event of a capsize the junior will be returned to the clubhouse as soon as possible and asked to shower and change into dry clothes.

- ⌚ It is important that over the following 4 weeks that a doctor's advice is sought if the junior experiences vomiting or flu-like symptoms, or any other symptoms that make them feel generally unwell.

Anti-doping



British Rowing introduced doping tests for juniors in 2015, starting with the main competitions. If selected for testing, a junior is obliged to comply, but must have parental consent and be chaperoned during the test. Testing is via a urine or blood sample and samples will be held for 10 years. If tests prove positive then a ban can be enforced (2 years at least) and this ban can extend to coaches in charge of that junior and anyone associated in the process of a junior taking a banned substance.

- ⌚ Unlike other areas of the sport, the junior is held responsible for their own actions and ignorance of the consequences is no defence.

A useful website is www.ukad.org.uk which has a Clean Sport Toolkit under the banner of '**100%ME**', including an App to download. This site provides information for athletes and lists of whether substances are banned or not, and substances can be added to at any time. Individual ingredients and product brands can be searched. Some off-the-shelf products for common ailments, eg. allergy tablets, as well as prescribed medicines, eg. inhalers, may contain banned substances. If you are prescribed a medicine by your doctor then inform them that you row and BR have signed up to UK Anti-Doping, so that the doctor can advise you if there are suitable alternatives. Otherwise, a TUE (Therapeutic Use Exemption) can be applied for from UKAD before use, or retrospectively within 10 days of being tested. Some national competitions need a TUE in advance.

The production of supplements is not strictly regulated, so they can become contaminated with a banned substance. Often the whole compound is tested rather than the individual ingredients, some of which may be classed as banned. You can Google the information site '**Informed Sport**' which shows brands that have agreed to being tested and which batches of products have been tested. The results are not 100% guaranteed.

The Club endorses British Rowing's stance that they do not support the need for juniors to take supplements. Any junior wishing to take a supplement prior to, or at a competition must inform their junior coach well in advance.

- ⌚ Junior rowers should not be using any supplements without medical prescription; rowers under 18 years of age are advised to concentrate on learning and implementing good training, good diet and well-rehearsed recovery strategies. (BR supplement Policy June 2016)

1.7 Use of social media

Social media is used widely by the Club and its members to promote the sport of rowing and their participation in rowing. Juniors should remember that as members they are ambassadors of the Club and they should adhere to the Club's Social Media Policy and be mindful of how the Club is portrayed. Juniors should make it clear that views expressed are their own and do not reflect the views of the Club.

Although the use of social media is a common means of communication, the Club only relies on group email forums to communicate with its members and there is an official Gloucester Rowing Club Twitter account.

The Club cannot dictate to juniors who they accept as friends and who they can communicate with on social media. However, juniors and guardians should be mindful of the following principles which are there to protect your identify and safety:



- ✓ Coaches, adult members and volunteers are discouraged from having direct contact with junior members via social media and are requested to copy guardians in on any form of written communication.
- ✓ Juniors should avoid accepting a direct friend request from an adult member of the Club, either a rowing member, Club Official, coach or volunteer.
- ✓ Juniors are encouraged to only sign up to Club group forums where comments can be openly read by others.
- ✓ Juniors and or guardians are encouraged to inform their junior coach, junior Coordinator or CWO if they are concerned or distressed by any communication that they receive in connection with rowing, either from within or external to the Club.

2. The Junior Squad

2.1 Structure of the squad

GRC is an all-inclusive club that caters for a wide range of rowing needs. The thriving junior squad is run by the Junior Coordinator, who oversees that sessions are led by coaches holding at least a British Rowing Level 2 qualification. Where necessary these sessions will be supported by trainee coaches, experienced



club members and volunteer parent helpers to ensure that there is a high ratio of supervision for juniors training on the water. This is particularly important if there is an incident that requires the lead coach's attention, so that there is always someone available to supervise the remaining juniors. The CWO works closely with the junior squad to oversee that aspects of welfare of the juniors are implemented and addressed.

Training Groups

The aim of the junior squad is to allow an annual intake of beginner rowers each Easter. From this starter group there is a progressive pathway into different groups to either develop rowing skills to become either a competent recreational rower, or a higher performing competitive rower. Each year the Junior Coordinator and the junior coaches meet to review the squad structure and how best to divide the juniors into manageable groups according to age, aspiration and ability. This basic structure requires some flexibility to accommodate the availability of the coaches, who give their time voluntarily at the Club, and also experienced junior rowers who may want to transfer from other clubs. With prior agreement between the squads, older juniors of 17 or 18 years of age can also choose to row with the senior squads. The established groupings at the time of writing this document are as follows:

Mixed J12-13 Dry Start/Wet Start and older beginners?

Mixed J14-16 Development and Competitions

Mixed J16 – 18 Competitions

Mixed J14-18 Supervised Recreational

2.2 Codes of conduct at the Club

It may take time to become familiar with life at the Club, knowing what is expected of you as a junior athlete and what you can expect of the Club in return. Rowing is meant to be an enjoyable and sociable sport, but there are also many aspects that require you to be disciplined and act responsibly. The Club has a duty of care to its members and it is important that all members and all those associated with the Club show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others when at the Club. Added to this is a need to protect the facilities and any equipment stored at the Club from avoidable damage.

- Ⓟ All members, coaches, parents and volunteers must abide by the Club Codes of Conduct as set out on the Club website. If followed, they protect the interests of all parties and ultimately enable the juniors to get the most out of their rowing.
- Ⓟ At all times the welfare of the junior is paramount.
- Ⓟ A Child is defined as anyone below the age of 18
- Ⓟ A Junior is defined as anyone eligible to compete in junior class events and relates to the year in which the junior turns 18.



2.3 Training

Learning to scull with two oars is the principle discipline taught to the juniors, but from the age of 15 opportunities can be introduced to allow juniors to learn sweep rowing with one oar.

The Club is very aware that many juniors have to balance rowing training with other priorities. Not all juniors want to, or can commit to, train regularly enough to develop their rowing and enter competitions and some may just want to row as a sociable pastime or for keeping fit. For those who do want to enter competitions, they still need to be part of a coached/supervised session group and receive a tailored training programme to work towards that and avoid injury.

Throughout the year the Junior Coordinator and junior coaches meet on a regular basis to ensure that the squad functions as a whole and that everyone is practising according to **British Rowing's 'How much and how often' guidelines (2010)** <https://www.britishrowing.org> advising how much training juniors should undertake. However, working within these guidelines, the lead coach of each group is given free rein to determine the number of sessions that they will run, when those will take place and to train and monitor the performance of their group according to their own preferred methods.

Getting Started

What surprises many juniors new to the sport of rowing is that learning the skills required, and developing yourself physically to perform those skills, involves as much time training on land as it does spent in a boat on the water. For beginners the learning process is broken down into two phases:

First Phase - Dry Start, is the process of teaching a beginner how to achieve the correct posture and rhythm of the stroke on land and is a good way of instructing the basics of what will happen in the boat on the water. For many beginners there is an understandable fear of the boating tipping over and becoming trapped underneath. Therefore, a capsize drill undertaken with a boat in a swimming pool forms part of the initial training to prepare juniors for their progression onto the water. Any junior that has not satisfactorily completed the capsize drill will be required to wear a life jacket when on the water. Juniors will be asked to complete routine capsize drills throughout their time at the Club.

Second Phase - Wet Start, is the transition from land onto water and this can be exciting for some and difficult for others. It is usual for juniors to be put into crew boats that are designed to be more stable whilst they are gaining confidence on the water and developing skills in boat manoeuvrability and navigation of the canal. The process of teaching a junior the basics of how to row competently and in a safe manner can take up to a year. It requires co-operation, patience, commitment to practice and the ability to listen to and follow instructions from the coaches and helpers. By the end of this process you will have learnt about the care and handling of the equipment on and off the water, how to row in a range of boats, the different roles of rowers in crew boats and how to navigate the canal safely.

The British Rowing website has a wealth of information on rowing technique and equipment, but these are aspects that will be gradually taught by the session coaches. It is more important in the early stages that junior athletes arrive at the Club properly prepared for their sessions.

Kit for Training

Please make sure that you refer to the checklist below for what to bring with you for training:



- ✓ **Health:** inform the coach if you are taking medication and if necessary bring this with you. Sun cream is essential. All open cuts or grazes must be covered.
- ✓ **Water:** always bring a container of water or still drink that is small enough to fit in the boat. Fizzy and energy drinks are not encouraged.
- ✓ **Change of clothes and a towel:** to be left in the clubhouse in the event of a capsize.
- ✓ **Headwear:** a hat or cap to prevent loss of body heat when it is cold, or protect the head and shield the eyes from the sun.
- ✓ **Upper body:** preferably a combination of fitted, thin layers that can be adjusted depending on the workload and to protect from wind, rain, sun and cold. It is important that tops cover the lower part of the back, but are not so long that material or ties could get caught in the seat fittings.
- ✓ **Hands:** avoid jewellery as this can cause blisters. Blisters are a common problem and can be associated with holding the blades too tightly, but wearing gloves to avoid that is not recommended as this reduces your ability to handle the blade properly. The hands are susceptible to the effects of cold weather and some people invest in 'pogies' which are fleecy mittens designed to fit over the hand and blade.
- ✓ **Legs:** as with the upper body, a combination of layers on the legs suits most people. These can comprise shorts, leggings or tracksuit bottoms.
- ✓ **Footwear:** sports shoes are desirable. They are removed before getting into the boat and will be left on the landing stage where they might get muddy.

Once you have decided whether rowing is the sport for you, there is an option to buy club kit. This is a collection of sports clothing designed for rowers in the Club colours of black, red and white and with the Club logo. Once or twice a year the Club places an order with their supplier Godfrey <http://www.godfrey.co.uk> who offers discounts for bulk purchases. Juniors will be advised by their coaches when the order sheets are posted in the Club.

Training Sessions

The majority of water based sessions take place at the weekend during term time, but may continue into school holidays if a junior coach is available to run them. Easter and summer training camps are again dependent upon the availability of junior coaches to run them. Juniors are not permitted to row after dusk and therefore any evening training during winter months is confined to land. Certain weather conditions can cause sessions to be altered or cancelled, such as strong winds, fog and ice, and occasionally the canal may be closed to normal traffic for events taking place in the Docks.

The format for all sessions typically starts with a warm up to prepare the muscles for the activity and ends with a cool down to stretch those muscles. Supervised recreational sessions on the water will largely be determined by the number of juniors that arrive to take part and what combination of boats is most suitable to allow everyone to row. Coached sessions on the water will be carried out according to a



session plan prepared by the junior coach. Juniors are asked to arrive at the Club no more than 15 – 30 minutes before their session starts, but in good time so that the session can begin promptly. Upon arrival, the coach reserves the right to send home any junior that they do not consider is fit to take part in the session, or has not brought the appropriate kit for the session. The session ends when all the equipment has been put away.

Coaches are required to stay at the Club until the last of their group have been collected. Guardians are advised to collect juniors from the clubhouse as coaches cannot be held responsible for juniors once they have left the grounds of the Club.

- Ⓟ Guardians are requested not to leave a junior unattended at the Club outside of normal session times, when their junior coach may not be available, unless that junior has volunteered their time as part of an organised Club activity.

Crew selection

The junior squad has not adopted any formal procedures for crew selection and instead prefer to allow crews to come together naturally through discussion and training. The Club is committed to finding opportunities to enter events for those who want to, and the junior coaches aim to take into consideration the wishes of individuals as far as is practically possible.

2.4 Competitions

Overview of Entering

At GRC juniors are encouraged to enter competitions as a way of progressing their development and providing goals to aim for. Competitions are advertised on the websites of hosting rowing clubs as 'Race Posters' normally posted a couple of months in advance of the race. They will list all the categories of the races they are running, the costs of entering and the cut-off dates for receiving entries.

Junior categories tend to be for single sex crews, although a female rower can row as part of a predominantly male crew. Clubs are permitted to row together to form a composite crew. Some race event organisers also allow individuals to enter multiple race categories.

Before the entry cut-off date, the junior coaches must decide which category to enter the juniors into and then they will submit the details to the Club Captain, or other Club Official, who is responsible for making the entries online via British Rowing. The Club Captain may require alterations to the entry details if equipment sharing amongst the club is an issue, or they have a reason to question the category being entered into. Categories may also be altered by the hosting club if there is insufficient interest from entries received.

A Provisional Draw of entries will be published on the hosting club's website in the week preceding the competition. Normally, up until a specified date, crews can be withdrawn with a full refund and a limited number of athlete substitutions can be made before the race. Withdrawal of crews after that deadline cannot expect to receive a refund, unless the reason for their withdrawal is because they don't have any opposition.



Essentials for Entering Competitions

- ✓ **British Rowing Race Licence:** juniors must become a member of British Rowing to obtain a race licence and be eligible to race. The licence has to be renewed annually and must be valid for the period leading up to and including the date of the race.
- ✓ **GRC Racing Colours:** juniors must purchase, or arrange to borrow, purpose designed racing clothing in the Club colours. This will be either a racing vest combined with shorts or leggings of your own choice, or an all-in-one combined vest and shorts.
- ✓ **GRC Racing Fee Account:** juniors must have opened a race fee account with the Club Treasurer and have sufficient funds in the account to cover the cost of the entry fee and a share of the towing costs of transporting equipment to and from the event.

Entering competitions places greater expectations and requires higher levels of commitment from juniors, junior coaches and guardians than those previously outlined for normal training sessions and are in addition to the Codes of Conduct. These are laid out below as a series of 'points to note'. Their aim is to avoid misunderstandings and to ensure that proper lines of communication are followed and above all else, that everyone involved is treated considerately.

Preparing for Competition

- Juniors will only be entered into a competition if they want to be and their junior coach believes that they have the necessary skills to look after themselves and the Club equipment away from the Club and under racing conditions.
- Juniors should be prepared to commit to the training programme prepared by the junior coach.
- Juniors can request that their entries be withdrawn prior to a competition, provided that they discuss this with their coach.
- Coaches can withdraw the entry of a junior prior to a competition, provided that they have discussed this with the junior and can explain their reasoning.
- Coaches should give the juniors a briefing about the competition and if possible the course and expected weather conditions.
- Coaches should satisfy themselves that in preparation for the competition the juniors have read and understood the Competitor's and Safety Information posted on the hosting club's website.
- Coaches should where possible agree the travel arrangements between the Club and the competition venue with the guardians before the competition.
- Guardians should give their permission for a junior to be entered into a competition and this will be taken as confirmation that the junior is available on the date of the competition, except in the event of injury, illness or unforeseen family circumstances.



- Guardians are expected to transport their junior to and from events, or discuss alternatives with the junior coach if this is not possible.
- Guardians are requested to discuss any issues, or queries, that they may have regarding entries with the junior coach as the first point of contact and secondly with the Junior Coordinator. The Club Captain may be consulted to give a final decision if agreement cannot be reached.

Attending the Competition

Competitions can be challenging as well as exciting events. Summer regattas can turn into long days progressing through heats and semi-finals to final rounds. Juniors will always be accompanied by a junior coach, or a nominated experienced member of the Club, who will be the junior representative for that competition. The junior coach is the point of contact for welfare issues and deals with the race administration and crew queries. They also oversee that the equipment is taken off the trailer and put together correctly and they ensure that competing juniors are fit and ready, and are in the right place at the right time for their races. It is important that juniors listen to their coach's advice when it comes to resting between races, eating and drinking sensibly, sheltering from the weather and preparing themselves for racing. Guardians are welcomed at competitions to offer support and encouragement. Below is a checklist of what take:

- ✓ British Rowing Race Licence
 - ✓ GRC Racing Colours
 - ✓ **Clothing:** at least a change of clothes in case of a capsize and a variety of top and bottom layers and hats to deal with a range of weather conditions.
 - ✓ Sun cream, medicines, plasters and safety pins
 - ✓ Healthy foods and non-fizzy drinks, or money to buy refreshments
- ✗ Please do not take valuables unless they can be left in a secure place**

Entering crews for competitions requires a lot of preparation and time dedicated voluntarily by the junior coach and helpers. Their reward is to see those juniors that they are responsible for coaching and helping put into practice what they've been taught and gain something from the experience. For the juniors it is about taking part, sportsmanship, gaining confidence to face challenges and at times disappointment, supporting others and hopefully coming away with a sense of achievement.



3. Raising Concerns at the Club

The Club is largely run on goodwill by volunteers offering their time freely with a common aim of members being able to enjoy their sport. It is a competitive environment catering for a wide variety of needs and occasionally there are conflicts of interests, issues that need to be highlighted, or situations that require the intervention of official members.

At GRC the established practice is to encourage those who have issues (not concerning the welfare of members) to try and take a step towards resolving them by talking to the person(s) involved. However, it is recognised that this is not always an easy step for junior members to take on their own, especially where the other party is an adult. Juniors can raise their concerns by involving their guardians, junior coach or other club official. Similarly, concerns about juniors will usually result in the junior coach, Junior Coordinator or Club Welfare Officer contacting the guardians.

3.1 Raising serious concerns

There are some occasions when a Club Official should automatically be involved, such as:

Concerns about the safeguarding and welfare of a junior member

In all cases where there are concerns of this nature about a junior member, the first point of contact is the Club Welfare Officer cwo@gloucester-rowing.org. The CWO is the person responsible for ensuring that those members who have regular contact with juniors have undergone safeguarding training. Their role is to listen to the nature of concerns without judgement, record the details, report them if appropriate to British Rowing and follow their advice on the appropriate course of action to take. The CWO can be contacted direct, or via the junior coach, Junior Coordinator or Club Captain. All communications are treated confidentially and involve only those parties that the concern relates to.

Concerns about an aspect of health and safety at the Club

All cases should be reported to the Club Committee, who will then seek advice from the Club Safety Advisor. The Committee can be contacted via the junior coach, Junior Coordinator or the Club Captain.

Formal complaint about the Club, a member or a volunteer

Any member should set out their grievance in writing to the Club Chairman. The Chairman will decide who else in the Club to involve in order to deal with complaints in a fair and timely manner and with reference to Club's Constitution, Rules and Policies and with reference to British Rowing's 'Guidelines on Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures in Rowing'.



3.2 Less serious concerns raised by a junior member

Juniors who have concerns about the behaviour of another club member or volunteer should speak to their junior coach. If this is not appropriate then the concerns should be directed to the Junior Coordinator, who may in turn advise the Club Captain. Either the junior can talk about their concerns direct to any of these people, or they can ask to arrange a time for this to happen with their guardian present. If the problem persists, reoccurs or escalates it is advisable to record conversations or emails and when the problems occur and to raise the matter again. The CWO may become involved if the other club officials consider that the concern involves an aspect of safeguarding or welfare.

Juniors who have concerns about an aspect of their training may be able to resolve this by talking directly to their junior coach, either with or without a guardian present. If the issue persists then they should contact the Junior Coordinator directly.

3.3 Less serious concerns raised about a junior member

The junior coach responsible for training a junior member is the primary contact for other club members wishing to raise concerns about the behaviour of that junior member. The first step would be for the junior coach to have a private conversation with the junior involved, to listen to their account, gain an understanding of the situation and set out standards that are expected. If the behaviour persists and/or deteriorates then the second step is for the junior coach to inform the guardians and the Junior Coordinator. From this point the parties will work together to establish the cause of the behaviour and to devise an action plan to support the junior in modifying their behaviour to an agreed standard. The junior will be set a period during which their behaviour will be monitored and reviewed. The outcome of each case is treated on an individual basis. The Club will weigh up what action to take according to what is in the best interests of the individual, against the effect that the behaviour is having on others.



4. Volunteering

For members unfamiliar with the sport of rowing, life at the Club may seem confusing and a bit daunting. Even without knowledge of the sport, guardians and volunteer helpers often have a wealth of skills, or even just a desire to learn, that can be really beneficial in helping the Club function on a day-to-day basis. More information can be found on the British Rowing website by downloading their predecessor **Amateur Rowing Association's 'The Volunteer Helper Guide' (2008)**

4.1 Why the Club needs volunteers

Training sessions

Sessions for the juniors undoubtedly run smoother if guardians or volunteer helpers are on hand. The rowing environment and use of the equipment all take time to get used to and an extra pair of hands can help enormously; either on the landing stage to assist juniors with their boats, or on the towpath as an extra pair of eyes and to accompany the junior coach.

Building and equipment maintenance

Moving to a new club facility will alleviate many of the current problems that the Club face in keeping the fabric of the old building together. However, there will always be cleaning and DIY jobs that require help to do.

Anyone with good boat repair skills could assist with many of the minor repairs that are routinely required to keep the Club boats up to a usable standard. The same applies to renovating and repainting the club blades or servicing the coaching bicycles regularly.

Helping at events and fundraising

The Club hosts three events each year, needing an army of volunteers to make and serve refreshments, undertake duties in running the event and help set up and dismantle visitor and boating facilities.

The Club welcomes new initiatives for raising income for the new boathouse and to invest in new equipment. Contacts with businesses willing to offer sponsorship for races at the Summer Regatta are in short supply.

Towing

Anyone with a towing vehicle and experience of towing trailers, caravans or horse boxes may be asked to tow a trailer carrying boats and equipment to competitions. The websites www.direct.gov.uk www.dvla.gov.uk and www.britishrowing.org all provide useful information on safety and regulations of towing a trailer, together with practical tips for driving. Also useful is a **DVLA Factsheet INF 30 'Requirements for Towing Trailers in Great Britain'**