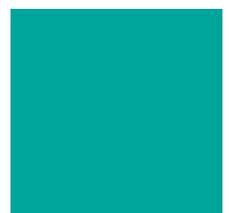
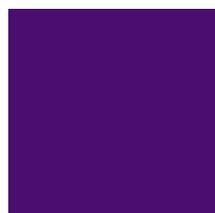
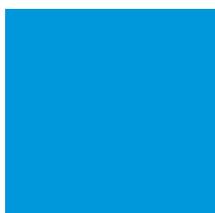


# River Tyne Rowing Club Safety Code

REVISION 2 | OCTOBER 2021



Photo © Naomi Baker



## SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This document is intended to provide relevant information to recreational and competitive rowers in the area between the Redheugh Bridge and Wylam. It is intended to provide information that will assist those river users in enjoying their sport safely, whilst taking into consideration the Port of Tyne General Byelaws, Guidelines to Recreational River Users and British Rowing “Row Safe: Safety advice for rowers, clubs and competitions”, a copy of all three can be obtained from the hyperlinks below.

## DOCUMENTATION

*To view the below documents, click the link below.*

[Port of Tyne General Byelaws](#)

[Port of Tyne Guidance for Recreational River Users](#)

[RowSafe - Safety Advice for Rowers, Clubs and Competitions](#)

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## INTRODUCTION

This Safety Code (hereafter referred to as 'code') is specific to the River Tyne and should be taken into consideration in the area of waterway between the Redheugh Bridge and Wylam. However, this code may also be relevant to those recreational river users between the Port of Tyne Approaches and the Redheugh Bridge. The code should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

1. [Port of Tyne General Byelaws](#)
2. [Port of Tyne Guidance for Recreational River Users](#)
3. [RowSafe - Safety Advice for Rowers, Clubs and Competitions](#)

All clubs, organisations, rowers and coaches are expected to conform to the above documentation and a copy of this code should be held on premises as a hard copy or electronic copy. Clubs and organisations should ensure that new, prospective and existing members, visitors and guests are aware of the code and its contents.

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## DIRECTION OF ROWING

All crews must abide by the International Rules for Preventing Collisions at Sea, commonly known as the 'Collision Regulations or COLREGS'. This includes passing port to port, or in rowing terms stroke side to stroke side.

- Crews transiting downstream (from west to east) should keep to the south bank, the Gateshead side of the river; and
- Crews transiting upstream (from east to west) must keep to the north bank, the Newcastle side of the river.

The above should be strictly adhered to in order to avoid any risks of collision or close quarters situations with any other river users. Careful consideration should also be taken when navigating bends and avoiding shallow areas at low water periods.

The only time these rules may be relaxed is in the event of an organised competition, where the Port of Tyne Authority have issued a formal Navigation Notice to inform other river users.

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## BEST PRACTICE FOR OUTINGS

1. Outings should not commence in adverse weather conditions, further guidance on adverse conditions is contained in page 6.
2. Weather conditions can change rapidly and outings should be terminated as soon as possible if conditions are deemed to be becoming unsuitable.
3. Whenever possible, check conditions at Scotswood in advance.
4. Generally, crews boat and land facing west into the prevailing wind and tidal stream. At busy times, and particularly when there are a lot of other river users, care should be taken to avoid blocking the arches of the Newburn Bridge.
5. All rowing boats are advised to use the centre arches of all bridges.
6. All launches and powerboats must cut their wash when passing other crews and be mindful of the reflected wash from the vertical wall sections of the river banks. Vessel wash can also

damage boats at landing steps. Crews should also be aware that other river users may not be aware that their wash may cause an issue.

7. Coxed boats should make allowances for coxless boats that may be training in the same area, especially on bends. Shout a warning if necessary.
  8. Stationary and turning crews are considered the 'give way' boat. They should be aware of any other crews and either move out of their way or should give a warning in sufficient time for the other crew to take avoiding action.
  9. Don't try and turn a boat under or close to the Newburn Bridge. Beginners should always stay well clear of the Newburn Bridge and the stronger currents in that area. Boats should also avoid turning in the stretch of waterway between Tyne Amateur/Tyne United and Newcastle University steps.
  10. The Port of Tyne Authority has designated stretches of the river as 'speed zones' for powerboat enthusiasts. All non-designated parts of the river have an enforced speed limit of 6 knots (approx. 7mph or 11kph).
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## **BEGINNERS ZONE**

1. Crews and launches should avoid fast training between the Newburn Bridge and the Reigh Burn, which joins the River Tyne just downstream of the slipway at Tyne Riverside Country Park. Beginners use this area which is within clear view of the clubs and within easy reach in the event of difficulty or capsise.
  2. Beginners progress in boats should be considered unpredictable and extra caution should be given to navigation.
  3. This area of waterway is also where boats are landing and leaving the landing steps and slipway, which may include crossing the river.
  4. Experienced crews are asked to respect the needs of learners.
  5. Fast training boats should be ready to slow down, take avoiding action or stop when necessary.
  6. Beginners will use the stretch of waterway between the White House at Ryton and the downstream end of the straight, as they develop skills, usually under the instruction of a coach.
  7. Competitive crews are advised to warm-up and warm-down in less busy or congested areas of the river so as to avoid any conflict with beginners or other craft.
  8. Consideration and care should also be taken into account for other river users and less experienced crews/users. These may include but are not limited to: Sea Cadets at Derwenthaugh, water skiers, sailors, dragon boats, kayaks and canoes. All types of river users can be expected at anytime. The River Tyne is a tidal open access river.
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## **NEWBURN WATER SKI CLUB SPEED ZONE**

1. The designated water ski area extends from the Newburn stream – just downstream of the slipway at Newburn Country Park and some 2.5km upstream to the Ryton Golf Course bend and includes an event and practice area. A maximum size of power boats are permitted and

skiing is for club members only. A diagram of this area is contained within the [Port of Tyne Guidance for Recreational River Users](#).

2. Water skiing is only possible and permitted up to 3 hours either side of high water. Unlike rowers, the ski club can only use their allocated area and they will normally ski there on summer evenings and at weekends where the tide is at an appropriate state. A large number of rowing boats may make it impossible for the water skiers to operate safely.
  3. The Water Ski Club will display a warning flag affixed to the red and white speed limit sign at Newburn Country Park when their powerboats are on the water. Rowing boats are asked to avoid this area when the ski club are on the water.
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## ROWING AFTER DARK

When rowing in hours of darkness, the following must be followed:

1. All craft on the river must show a white light visible through 360°;
  2. Boats should be clearly lit both fore and aft for the duration of the outing;
  3. Crews are advised to wear bright, white and visible kit;
  4. Crews planning a night outing should ensure that a minimum of 50% of the crew and cox are experienced in rowing/sculling and also familiar with the River Tyne; and
  5. All persons involved in rowing in hours of darkness should be 18 or over.
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## OTHER GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. There is a second designated high-speed zone downstream of Derwenthaugh Marina, east of the Scotswood Road Bridge. This part of the River Tyne is more exposed to weather conditions.
2. Sailing races are an occasional event, launching from Newburn Slipway. The Port of Tyne Authority will publish Navigation Notices which are received by Water Safety Advisors prior to the event.
3. Any powerboat, jet ski or other craft seen speeding outside of the designated zone pose a risk to navigation and should be reported to the Port of Tyne Duty Assistant Harbour Master for action. Photos and details reported of the craft are useful to identify those involved.
4. Crews are advised not to go any further downstream than the Redheugh Bridge unless accompanied by a launch that is able to assess condition further downstream prior the transit of the boat.
5. If proceeding downstream of the Scotswood Bridge, single scullers are advised to be in a group of at least three;
6. Any significant debris or obstruction should be reported to your Water Safety Advisor, who will in turn notify any other user and the Port of Tyne Authority who will try and clear the obstruction. There is a particular chance of debris after heavy rainfall.
7. Crews should be aware of extensive mud flats downstream of Newburn Bridge, especially at Stella bends at Lemington Gut and just east of the Scotswood Bridge. These will not support the weight of a person trying to cross them and they may also not be visible in hours of darkness.

8. Steps and parts of slipways below the high water level may be wet, muddy and slippery. These areas are also prone to icing in the winter and algal growth in the summer.
  9. At low water and ebb tides, the river can be very shallow. As a guide, do not start to row upstream of the White House at Ryton unless on a rising tide and complete your outing within 1 hour of high water. The tide level marker on the north side of the river opposite the White House must show a minimum of 4 metres height on a rising tide, 4.5 metres on a falling tide for you to have sufficient water to row upstream.
  10. Do not row upstream of Dial Cottage (George Stephenson's birthplace) and the power cables which cross the Tyne at this point. The river condition and geographical constraints are unsafe.
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## WEATHER CONDITIONS

Clubs and organisations should define and set parameters, which are risk assessed and easily accessible to their members and appropriate for their activity type, time and competence of crew. Conditions can change instantly and crews should be prepared for any eventuality.

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## INCIDENT REPORTING

Incidents should be reported to your Water Safety Advisor or the appropriate responsible person for your club or organisation. All incidents should be reported to British Rowing as per the British Rowing Incident Reporting System.

In the event of any serious emergency or marine casualty (as defined by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch), such as an incident which requires a 999 call, stranding/grounding, immobilisation, pollution, collision/contact, injury or machinery/loss of control/damage to equipment, this should be reported to the Port of Tyne Duty Assistant Harbour Master as soon as practicable.

Any noticeable trends in incidents/accidents should also be reported to the Port of Tyne Authority.

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## PORT OF TYNE

### Duty Assistant Harbour Master

Tel : 0191 257 2080 (Option 1 or 4)

Email: [tynevt@portoftyne.co.uk](mailto:tynevt@portoftyne.co.uk)

VHF: Channel 12 or 16 (reception may vary in the upper reaches of the Tyne)

### Port of Tyne Authority – Harbour Masters Office

Tel : 0191 257 0407 (Monday to Friday). Calls out of hours will be diverted to the Duty Assistant Harbour Master.

Email: [harbour@portoftyne.co.uk](mailto:harbour@portoftyne.co.uk)



# SPEED LIMITS AND RECREATIONAL ZONES



Scan for Port byelaws or visit [www.portoftyne.co.uk](http://www.portoftyne.co.uk)

## KEY - Speed restrictions and recommended locations/activities

-  Bridge
-  Slipway
-  6 knot speed limit applies
-  Relaxed speed limit - all other byelaws apply

