

Basic principles

- First authorised 'light switcher', present at the club, as per the schedule in appendix 1, assesses the conditions, documents their decision and sets the river status
- Irrespective of the access lights all participants need to complete their own risk assessment before boating
- Specific safety cover is only provided in Red / Amber conditions. In all other situations unsupervised crews need to be prepared to self-rescue.
- Coaches need to be able and willing to rescue the athletes in their charge
- Coaches need to ensure that there is sufficient cover for the number of rowers / crews in their charge and their competence level.
- Juniors (rowers under 18) may only go afloat with a coach(es) present and in a position to effect a rescue.
- Junior coaches assess the conditions on behalf of their athletes and only allows them afloat if judged competent, irrespective of the light in force unless it already precludes them from going afloat. (e.g. a beginner can't go afloat on amber irrespective of the coaches judgement on competence)
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Green Light

- The club provides no general safety cover
- Beginners or those who have yet to achieve Bronze level are supervised by their coach or assessor who shall have the means to effect a rescue
- Squads are supervised by their coaches who shall have the means to effect a rescue
- Unaccompanied scullers and sweep oared crews may boat if they meet the requirements on Table 1

Amber Light

- The club provides no general safety cover
- Beginners or those who have yet to achieve Bronze level do not boat whether accompanied or unaccompanied
- Squads are supervised by their coaches who shall have the means to effect a rescue
- Unaccompanied scullers and sweep oared crews may boat if they meet the requirements on Table 1
- Circulation pattern amended, no crews below Marlow bridge.

Red / Amber Light

- The club coordinates access through a Duty Safety Officer, DSO for a fixed period after which the river reverts to a Red light
- All participants need to complete their own risk assessment before boating
- Those who choose not to go afloat based on their own risk assessment do so without consequence.
- Beginners or those who have yet to achieve Bronze level do not boat whether accompanied or unaccompanied
- Only crews with a significant level of competence and experience to go afloat.
- No juniors to boat except those J17/J18 who are significantly more competent than the adults allowed to boat.
- The only section of river to be used is between Temple and Marlow locks. The river below Marlow lock remains on Red.
- Circulation pattern amended, no crews above the garages at Temple or below Marlow bridge.
- The decision to switch to red-amber can only be taken by a 'Senior Light Switcher' as per the schedule in appendix 2.
- Senior Light Switcher
 - Checks conditions and makes the decision to switch to red-amber

- Records the conditions assessment and risk assessment before the water session
- Ensures that a competent DSO is appointed

- Ensures that the red-amber protocol is followed
- Ensures that the river is switched back to red at the end of the session

➤ The DSO

- Will be competent to run the red / amber procedure as nominated by the Senior Light Switcher
- Will control access to the river for all launch drivers, coaches, scullers and crews in line with Table 1 and is the club's final arbiter on who may boat
- Will confirm whether the river is to be used by one crew with two launches or a number of crews with three launch cover
- Will be in contact with and coordinate those launches on the river and any other emergency service as required.
 1. Will confirm which radio channel is to be used as a safety channel
 2. Will conduct a shore based radio check with the launch drivers and have mobile numbers to use as a fallback
 3. Will confirm with launch drivers when they reach their station
 4. Will conduct a periodic radio check when crews are afloat, minimum every 30 minutes.
 5. Will trigger a safe abandonment if radio communications fail
 6. Knows how to summon assistance from the emergency services
- Will remain on the shore and coordinate activities from shore
- Will brief the crews and coxes ahead of them going afloat
 1. Everyone needs to do their own Risk Assessment
 2. No consequences for anyone who chooses not to go afloat
 3. Keep the turning areas clear for boats turning – at Temple and particularly as they come below the White House to land
 4. Crews to turn in good time to turn and land without going below the bridge
 5. Remain with/on boat if there is a capsized (unless it is patently not safe to do so)

➤ Launch drivers

- Will be from the club's list of approved, RYA2 qualified drivers
- Will be competent to drive in the conditions
- Will do their own Risk Assessment before going afloat
- Will ensure that they have a launch safety bag and that their launch is fully fuelled and equipped.
- Will be experienced rescue drivers (MRC Rescue driver training tbc)
- Will be accompanied on their launch by an assistant capable of effecting rescue
- Will check in with the DSO by radio on arrival at their station

➤ Launch Rescue Cover will either be

- Crews in Procession

1. One launch following the procession of crew(s) and the second launch on weir cover
 2. The moving launch will follow crew(s) for the entirety of the outing.
 3. The crews will remain in a group and in close proximity to the launch such that the launch can provide safety cover for any crew getting into difficulty.
 4. Crews will not break away from the main group.
 5. No other crews will boat during this period.
 6. A second launch will be afloat and running to provide weir cover as crews go afloat, as they land or to provide assistance should the first launch be called on to rescue a crew.
- Many crews
1. Two launches will leave the club ahead of those crews that boat and remain on the water until the last crew lands.
 2. One launch will cover the Bisham Abbey straight and the second launch will cover the Sailing Club Straight, both either stationary or moving very slowly so as to create no wash.
 3. The circulation pattern will be as per Amber light.
 4. The third launch will be unlocked, untied, afloat and running to provide weir cover as crews go afloat, as they land or to provide assistance should teither of the other two launches be called on to rescue a crew.
 5. The third launch will only leave its station if there is no risk or a crew or launch being carried towards the weir.

Red Light

- No water access above or below the lock.
- There a set of circumstances where the Marlow section is on red due to a swimming event and the Cookham section open. This needs extensive communication and control of light switching.

Table 1 - Water Access

Signal Light	Visibility	1x	2x	2-	4x	4x+	4-	4+	8+	Comment
Green	Daylight	Bronze SPA	Bronze SPA	RSC Appd + Bronze CSPA	Bronze SPA + Bronze CSPA	Bronze SPA + Bronze CSPA	RSC Appd + Bronze CSPA	RSC Appd + Bronze CSPA	RSC Appd + Bronze CSPA	Hi viz clothing recommended
	Fog / Mist	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	Flagpole test
	Night	Silver SPA	Silver SPA	RSC Appd Silver SPSA	Silver SPA	Silver SPA + Silver CSPA	RSC Appd + Silver CSPA	RSC Appd + Silver CSPA	RSC Appd + Silver CSPA	Lights and hi viz Clothing required
Amber	Daylight	Gold SPA	Silver SPA	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	Silver SPA + Gold CSPA	Silver SPA + Gold CSPA	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	Hi viz clothing recommended
	Fog / Mist	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	Flagpole test
	Night	Gold SPA + Buddy – No Lone Sculling	Gold SPA + Buddy – No Lone Sculling	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	Gold SPA + Gold CSPA	Gold SPA + Gold CSPA	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	RSC Appd + Gold CSPA	Lights and hi viz clothing required
Amber / Red	Daylight	No access	No access	No access	Gold SPA + Gold CSPA +DSO	Gold SPA + Gold CSPA +DSO	Gold CSPA + DSO	Gold CSPA + DSO	Gold CSPA + DSO	Hi viz clothing required
	Fog / Mist	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	Flagpole test
	Night	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	
Red	Daylight	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	
	Fog / Mist	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	
	Night	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	No access	

The above is the minimum requirement. All going afloat need to assess the conditions and complete their own risk assessment

Buddy

Scullers permitted to boat provided they 'buddy up' with a second sculler.

The buddies must stay in close proximity and be able to support rescue/ raise alarm as required

SPA

Sculling Proficiency Award Scheme - Scullers need to have been certified to the level listed to boat

CSPA

Coxing and Steering Proficiency Award Scheme - Coxes and steers need to have been certified to the level listed to boat

RSC Appd

Requires the permission of a member of the Rowing Sub Committee to boat in these conditions

DSO

Requires the permission of the DSO on the day to boat in these conditions

Lights and clothing

Requires lights and high visibility clothing to boat as per Night Time Sculling & Rowing Procedure

Flagpole Test

Requires flagpole to be visible as per Fog / Mist Procedure

General Guidance on Lights

(Subject to conditions on the day and the Risk Assessment completed by the authorised light switcher)

Visibility

- Flagpole in Higginson Park not visible top to bottom for at least five minutes – red light (watch for lifting then falling fog)
- Night – between dusk and dawn. If the streetlights are on its safe to assume night rules apply

Other River Users

- Swimming event – unless there is a physical barrier between rowers and swimmers – red light
- Others – as per RA

Flowrate

(As guidance, use the flowmeter at Maidenhead, watch for flotsam from rising river, local conditions with weir opening etc). There can be times when the river is between the Amber flow conditions but the river is judged to be generally unsafe to row, so flagged red.

- Below 65 m³/s - Green (see above)
- Between 65m³/s and 120m³/s - Amber (see above)
- Above 120m³/s - Red (see above) red-amber allowed depending on the risk assessment
- Above 140 m³/s - Red (see above) red-amber not allowed – review 1.10.2020

Temperature

(This recognises the issues around cold water shock and the potential for hypothermia for those who may capsize)

- Above 8C, no adjustments to the access lights
- Between 3C and 8C lights at least move to Amber
- Below 3C no 1x, 2x or 2- or any other boats judged to be a capsize hazard.

Wind

(Take account of direction, speed and gust speed)

- Wind against stream – white horses - move at least to Amber light
- Other as per risk assessment

Appendix 1 – Authorised to Switch Lights

Authorised light switchers.

- Switch between red or amber or green
- Document the switch made and the conditions at the time of switching and any other relevant risks considered
- If in doubt, ask for help or switch to red.

Authorised Light Switchers

- Laurie Tilbury
- Ruth Naylor
- Penny Thatcher
- Lisa Knill
- Enya Meadows
- Thomas Hughes
- Mike Parsons

Appendix 2 – Authorised to Switch to Red-Amber

Authorised red-amber light switchers.

- Switch between red and red-amber
- Document the switch made and the conditions at the time of switching and any other relevant risks considered
- Complete the risk assessment for the conditions
- Ensure that the red- amber procedure is correctly put in place
- If in doubt, ask for help or remain on red.

Authorised Light Switchers

- Ruth Naylor
- Thomas Hughes
- Mike Parsons