

**TEES ROWING CLUB**  
**NEW MEMBERS' HANDBOOK**



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## **Introduction**

Tees Rowing Club at Stockton-on-Tees is one of the oldest continuously operated rowing clubs in the world. It is a thriving, open and friendly club with over 200 members. Rowing is available for everyone.

We use up to 14km of non-tidal water of the River Tees. This offers scenic, peaceful surroundings with lots of wildlife.

- VENU: The River Tees Watersports Centre, The Slipway, North Shore, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 2NL
- Rowing is offered to all categories from those wishing to enjoy gentle recreational rowing to elite athletes who have the highest aspirations. We cater for athletes with a physical disability or a sensory or learning impairment, using adapted boats, facilities, and award-winning coaches.
- Junior coaches are qualified through British Rowing and approved to work with children and vulnerable adults.

### **Is rowing for you?**

- Are you 11 to 99 years old?
- Are you able to swim 50m in light clothing?

If you have answered yes to the above questions, then why not give rowing a go? Tees RC runs Learn to Row (L2R) courses for those new to rowing. You can attend a weekday session run by our recreational squad or join the waiting list for our next L2R group course. The sessions are run by qualified coaches and all equipment is provided. The L2R course usually consists of taster session in the gym, followed by six two-hour sessions on the water. The emphasis on these courses is to teach the basic technique and to have fun. If you have had a good time and wish to take your rowing further, then you may decide to join Tees Rowing Club.

## **Rowing Squads**

Tees Rowing Club has a large and active rowing community with the club composed of different squads which cater for all ages and abilities, from the competitive rower to the recreational rower.

## **Rec Rowers**

The weekday daytime Recreational Rowers, called Rec Rowers, pay a lower subscription and row at restricted times. They are a social group of all ages and abilities. There are experienced coaches within the group, but the ethos is to help each other. The aim is to become self-sufficient, learning to row, cox, and coach other newcomers. Some Recs also race with other squads. The Rec Rowers main days are Tuesday (beginners) and Thursday mornings. After a trip up the Tees, they have coffee and cake in the club room.

## **Men's squads**

The aim of the men's squads at Tees Rowing Club is to provide a solid rowing foundation that is sustainable & enjoyable over the longer term. We take members who are both new to rowing and those who have come from other clubs with the aim of integrating them into the most appropriate squad.

We have three senior squads which are differentiated by the level of technical ability in rowing. We aim to move people between these squads as their ability and their aims evolve. We cover every age range and try our best to match crews of similar ages.

## **Women's Squads**

Tees rowing club has a large Women's squad which is currently composed of a women's development squad and two senior women's squads. There are many women also in recreational rowing squad.

The women's development squad is aimed at taking novice rowers and developing their rowing further. The development squad has the input from volunteer coaches whose aim is to improve rowing technique. The development squad is small and friendly and enjoy going out on the river with the occasional cake and tea after outings.

The women's senior squad is a large squad with a mix of ages and abilities and concentrates on competitive rowing in crews. The senior squad has coaching input from volunteer coaches with the aim of improving the racing standard of Tees women's rowing.

### **Adaptive Squad**

Looking for a new challenge? Adaptive rowing is for people with a physical disability or a sensory or learning impairment. The equipment and training are adapted to help you row to your full potential. Whatever your impairment, rowing is a fantastic way to keep fit. Whether you choose to participate recreationally, or to race at Club or National level, it's all here at Tees RC.

Some athletes from this squad have gone on to achieve National and International standards both on and off the water. The squad has its own dedicated coach and several other club members who together will monitor and train you to the goal you have set yourself, and regularly participates in both adaptive and able rowers' events.

With us you'll make real friends who genuinely understand and empathise with your situation, while at the same time equally genuinely not caring about it either. Come and join us, you never know where we might take you!

## **Junior Squad**

Tees has a thriving Junior section with ages ranging from 12-18. They train on the river on Saturday and Sunday mornings in the winter and other evenings during the summer months.

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## **From learn to row to rowing**

When you have completed a L2R course, you should join the rowing club if you wish to continue rowing. Contact the Membership Secretary. You can find the membership form and current membership fees on Tees RC web site ([www.teesrowingclub.co.uk](http://www.teesrowingclub.co.uk)). You can buy your own copy of the L2R handbook from British Rowing ([www.britishrowing.org.uk](http://www.britishrowing.org.uk)). If there is anything you are unsure about, please ask your coaches before you go out unsupervised.

## **Access to club**

The River Tees Watersports Center (RTWC) management will provide you with a key fob (£5 deposit) for entry to the building. Contact [admin@rtwc.co.uk](mailto:admin@rtwc.co.uk) or call 01642 628940.

## **Car park**

The car park is operated by an independent contractor. You should register your car details on arrival at the club each time you visit, or you will incur an automatic fine. The screens for daily entry can be found at the main entrance and riverside entrance. If you join the club, contact [admin@rtwc.co.uk](mailto:admin@rtwc.co.uk) to be added to the list permanently.

## **Safety on the water**

Tees Rowing Club takes safety on the water very seriously and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are safe on the water. It is recommended you join British Rowing which provides education and insurance. The British Rowing

document “Row Safe” is available on the British Rowing website.

<https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/>

It is important to make yourself familiar with the information.

You should also make yourself aware of where throw ropes, panic alarm and defibrillator are located in the club. Locate the safety board, which has information on navigation, keeping a good lookout, and first aid.

### **Health and safety**

You must make the club aware of any relevant health problems. Rowing clubs are not qualified to give you medical advice, so you should raise any concerns with your doctor. However, clubs are often able to make provisions for health difficulties, allowing you to take part safely.

### **Swimming competence**

You must be able to swim 50 metres in light clothing, tread water for two minutes and swim underwater for five meters. If for any reason you are unable to meet this requirement, then a buoyancy aid must be worn.

### **What to wear**

You should wear close fitting garments made of stretchy material that won't restrict your movements. You should wear more rather than fewer layers of clothing as it's no fun being cold. You can always remove a layer. A woolly hat or cap will also help to keep you warm. Long hair should be tied to avoid entanglement, particularly in the event of capsize.

### **What not to wear**

You should avoid wearing loose fitting clothes that could catch your oars or get stuck in your slide. Do not wear bulky fleeces or quilted tops that can become very heavy when wet, or clothes that restrict your movement when rowing, like denim jeans.

### **Capsize instructions**

Capsize practice is arranged periodically for all club members. In the event of a capsize, the golden rule is to **stay with your boat**, using it to get your body out of the water and off the water as soon as possible. Summon assistance if you can.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcPE8-gENLo>

Familiarise yourself with the effects of cold water shock and hypothermia described in the <https://www.rowhow.org/course/view.php?id=165>

### **Check your boat**

Before getting in a boat, check the boat and all its moving parts, particularly:

- Bow ball (rubber and blunt, to avoid body penetration)
- Heel restraints (tied approx. 5cm to enable escape at capsize)
- Hatch covers (closed to prevent water entry and sinking)
- Rigger nuts and bolts
- Steering

### **Young people**

If you are under 18, you will need consent from a parent or carer before starting to row. The British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy is available to download at: [www.britishrowing.org/safeguarding](http://www.britishrowing.org/safeguarding)

## **Getting out on the water**

### **Coached sessions**

Beginners Sunday 10.00am. For rowers who have completed a L2R course.

Recreational Rowing (Recs) Tuesday 8.30am



A second session for beginners is usually arranged for a weekday evening in the summer.

In the winter there are often gym/training sessions that all club members can attend.

When you are ready to leave the beginners group, several of you will move together to form a new group or you will move into one of the existing squads.

**Unsupervised sessions**

If you join the club, you can come down at other times. You will need to book a boat to go out. You will be responsible for you own safety.

It is always better to go out with other people. Either find someone to go out with or go out at time when other people are on the river.

Put your name in the signing out book stating the time you go out, the boat you are using and your expected return time. Take a mobile phone in a waterproof case so you can contact someone if you get into trouble. We sometimes get problems with the local youths. There are phone numbers on the board for people that can help.

**Police control**            01642 326 326  
   01642 607114

**Stockton Enforcement Team**  
   01642 607943 01642 528 989 24 hour line

If trouble occurs round the club, there are panic buttons located in the boathouse.

## **Booking boats**

At this stage you must only use the L2R boats (singles and doubles with floats) or the L2R quads. If you use the quads, you must find three other people to row with and a cox. A list of boats and boat bookers can be found on the club website.

<https://www.teesrowingclub.co.uk/boat-bookers-list/>

## **Care of boats**

You are responsible for the boats that you take out. When you remove the boat from its rack, make sure you do not scratch the hull on the riggers of the boat above.

Chock up the boat above when necessary but remove chocks when the boat is back.

Put the boat on trestles before the outing to check it is river worthy (for e.g., heel restraints, rigger nuts, bow ball and hatches). Details of boat checks are given in the L2R handbook, which can be purchased from British Rowing. Take care when you put the boat in the water. Do not put the boat down on the fin. If a boat gets damaged, report the damage by email to the Equipment Manager and put a 'boat damaged' sign on it.

## **Navigation and outing rules**

You need to make sure you know the club rules, particularly those concerning where you should be on the river. The basic rule is to keep to the right of the river. There are several bridges on the river. You must make sure you go through the correct arch. Right and left is determined by the direction of boat travel.

A summary is given below, but more details can be found in the Trip up the Tees section of the club web site <https://www.teesrowingclub.co.uk/a-trip-up-the-tees/>

There is also a map of the river on the wall in the Club Room.

## **Going up stream from the club**

Princess Diana (Lady Di): large middle arch

Millennium Bridge: large arch

A66 Bridge/railway bridges: small right arch. **LOOK FOR CREWS COMING THROUGH IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.** Stay close to the bank until just before the bridge so you can be seen by crews coming in the opposite direction.

Jubilee Bridge at Ingleby Barwick: large arch

#### **Coming down stream returning to the club**

Jubilee Bridge: large arch

A66 Bridge/railway bridge: middle arch **LOOK FOR CREWS COMING THROUGH IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION**

Millennium Bridge: large arch. Stay close to left hand.

Princess Diana (Lady Di): small right arch

Look out for and avoid the Teesside Princess as it cannot manoeuvre easily. It will hoot if it sees you.

#### **Flow Rate**

Do not go out if it is too windy or if the current is running too fast - above 100 cumecs for novices and above 150 cumecs for experienced crews. You must check the rate if there has been significant rainfall. See link to the live flow rate on the club website or <https://scada.canalrivertrust.org.uk/scadanext/teesport/client/>

Make yourself familiar with the Safety Notice Board.

Assess the conditions before you go out and if in doubt ask a more experienced rower. Do not go out if you cannot cope. Think what would happen if you fell in, got blown into the bank or went over a floating object that damaged the boat. There is little chance of falling in if you are using boats with floats, however it could happen, so weigh up the risks before deciding to go out.

The Tees RC Google group circulates information about river closures and any safety information, so you should make sure you join this and read and abide by the safety advice. Contact the Membership Secretary to join the email circulation list.

**You will now be making the decisions about whether you go out or not. You will be responsible for your own safety and that of others. You should have joined British Rowing - it gives you personal insurance.**

Further information on safety can be found via British Rowing:  
<https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/>

## **Incidents**

Any incidents should be reported to the Safety Officer, usually via the electronic incident reporting system and to British Rowing, if appropriate. It is not essential to be a club member to make a report. Any damage to a boat should be reported to the Equipment Manager and Safety Advisor.

## **Membership Fees**

Membership forms and current fees can be found on the Tees Rowing club website.

## **Volunteering**

Tees Rowing Club is a volunteer run club and members are asked to give some of their time to help make the club function effectively. By volunteering your time, no matter how little, you will make a difference and help the club to continue to be successful and welcoming. The club only works if people are prepared to help. If you can help in any way, let the Club Captain know. Volunteers are needed for pretty much everything. This includes tasks to take boat bookings, maintain and clean all equipment including painting and mending oars, boats and launches, washing

towels, sponges, and emptying boathouse bins. Please help to keep the club clean and tidy. If you see something that needs done, it is generally fine to get on and do it. Volunteers are also needed on regatta day in May and the small boats head race in September with tasks ranging between driving launches to baking cakes.

## **Useful tips**

### **Signing boats out**

When taking a boat out you must sign out in the signing out book, and sign back in again, reporting incidents or damage to the Safety Officer and/or Equipment Manager.

### **Oars**

Remove oars carefully and carry no more than two at a time, blades first. Replace in correct named slot, with blades at right angles to the wall. Do not use blades which are allocated to another boat unless specifically advised so to do. Wash mucky blades, especially if there is blood on the handles.

### **If I have an incident/injury, what do I do?**

There may be a first aider within the boathouse. First aid information is on the safety board. Get first aid advice | St John Ambulance ([sja.org.uk](http://sja.org.uk)) or use the lifesaver app.

Consult the Safety Officer or a club official who will guide you regarding the incident reporting procedure. You do not need to be a member of British rowing to report an incident. A QR code for the reporting link, is on the safety board. There is also a link on the club website.

### **The shutter doors**

- Take care when opening and closing the shutter doors.
- Keep control of the chain.
- Secure the chain when door is up or down with the staple provided,
- Slip the floor bolts out before raising the shutter door and slide the bolts back securely after the shutter door has been lowered.

### **Information on rowing technique and instructions**

Rec Rowers' Handbook can be found at [www.teesrowingclub.co.uk/club-documents](http://www.teesrowingclub.co.uk/club-documents).

There is also information at [www.britishrowing.org](http://www.britishrowing.org).

### **Links:**

[www.teesrowingclub.co.uk](http://www.teesrowingclub.co.uk)

[www.facebook.com/teesrowingclub](https://www.facebook.com/teesrowingclub)

[www.twitter.com/TeesRowingClub](https://www.twitter.com/TeesRowingClub)

[www.britishrowing.org](http://www.britishrowing.org)

### **Tees Rowing Club contacts:**

Captain: [captainteesrc@gmail.com](mailto:captainteesrc@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary: [membershipsecteesrc@gmail.com](mailto:membershipsecteesrc@gmail.com)

Safety Officer: [safety@teesrowingclub.co.uk](mailto:safety@teesrowingclub.co.uk)

**River Tees Watersports Centre (RTWC) contact:** [admin@rtwc.co.uk](mailto:admin@rtwc.co.uk)