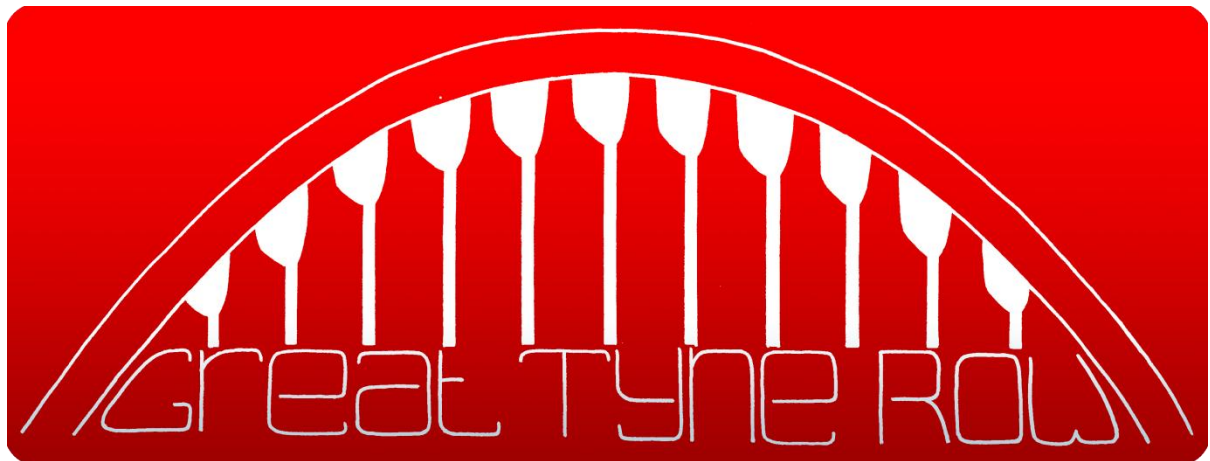


Great Tyne Row

Saturday 23 August 2026

Safety and Emergency Plan



Draft as at 27-04-26



Safety & Emergency Plan

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1.0 Event overview

1.1 Event format

Crews will row from Newburn to Priors Haven, Tynemouth, covering approximately 15miles/25km. Participating boats will start in divisions based on entrant type (women's, mixed and open crews) and boat type (quad, double, skiff, etc). These shall start in maybe 4 roughly equal divisions at 15 minute intervals, each division starting in a fleet racing side-by-side style. Crews will then row in progression along the River Tyne. Crews may overtake. Crews may rotate seats with the coxswain.

1.2 Craft allowed

The boats in use will be a mixture of touring or coastal-going rowing boats with either fixed or sliding seats and all coxed. These rowing boats are much wider and more robust than 'fine' racing boats with the shape and design better for dealing with waves and manoeuvrability in rougher water. The design greatly reduces the likelihood of capsizing or sinking. No fine racing shells or coxless boats will be allowed to enter the event.

1.3 General safety provisions

All crews are expected to render assistance to any other crew they see in difficulties.

There will be marshalling launches at the Start. Safety cover down the course will be provided by launches in fixed locations plus others moving with the fleet with experienced crews who will be responsible in the first instance for the participants' safety. Locations are shown in the Navigation Guide provided to participants and others, but in outline are:

- Newburn to City Centre bridges: 4 club launches with UHF radios
- City Centre to Bill Quay: 3 Sea Cadet (Derwenthaugh) launches, one with UHF & all with VHF radios
- Bill Quay to Tynemouth: 4 Red Seal launches with VHF radio
- Tynemouth: 1 club launch with VHF radio.

There will always be at least one launch trailing the last participating boat fairly closely. To ensure this trailing function happens, there will be a clear handover from Clubs to Sea Cadets (Derwenthaugh) and Sea Cadets to Red Seal (Bill Quay) after the last boat passes through.

Club and Sea Cadet (Derwenthaugh) launches will proceed back upstream to base after participating boats have passed (subject to handovers as per previous paragraph). Red Seal launches will move with the fleet downstream to Tynemouth.

Port of Tyne will provide a lead pilot craft with the Event Safety Adviser on board, from central quayside to Tynemouth. Event Control will be following the rowers on land and will be on Tynemouth headland with VHF radio for the finish/landing to coordinate as necessary.

A Club launch (to Quayside) and then the Port of Tyne vessel will always remain ahead of the participating boats and no boat will be permitted to race ahead.



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At the Finish, the Tynemouth RC club marshalling launch will shepherd crews around the Tynemouth headland into the beach at the club.

2 Event contingencies

2.1 Cancellation

If the event is unable to take place at all due to unforeseen circumstances or is cancelled on advice from Event Safety Adviser due to unsafe water and/or weather conditions, the Event Committee will endeavour to stage the event at a later date. If this is not possible race fees will be refunded after deduction of unavoidable costs.

The Event Control (likely to be but not necessarily the Event Director) on advice from the Event Safety Adviser has the authority to cancel the event on the day if he or she deems the weather and/or water conditions to put the safety of participants and/or event support staff at unacceptable risk. The event may also be cancelled in advance if the weather forecast is sufficiently adverse, to avoid wasted travel by competitors.

2.2 Hold-ups due to commercial shipping activity

The Harbour Master of the Port of Tyne has the authority to restrict the event from continuing past any point, most likely just upstream of Bill Quay (to allow shipping movements at Walker) or upstream of the Tyne Tunnel (to allow shipping at Tyne Dock or Royal Quays). In this event, the Harbour Master shall inform the Event Safety Adviser and Event Control of his decision to limit the event. Times are to be taken at Bill Quay and Tyne Tunnel in any case, so prizes can still be awarded without the need for a possibly uncontrolled sprint after a restart.

Actions shall be:

- Event Control (or in his absence the Event Safety Adviser) shall decide whether the race can be restarted or is concluded (and boats should seek to land at a nearby landing point) or if crews should row back to Newburn.
- Event Control or the Event Safety Advisor shall inform safety launches of the decision, who will then be responsible for passing this information onto event crews.

Crew captains and coxes shall be instructed to continue, make their way to the designated landing point (ref 5.6, pg 8) or return to Newburn.

2.3 Hold-ups due to activities on Newcastle-Gateshead Quayside

Activities to entertain or involve members of the public are held on or operating from the adjoining quaysides and structures from time to time, but more so in the summer. Should such activities be held that might impinge on the running of the Great Tyne Row (and which we would normally expect that we would be alerted by the Port of Tyne) then there will be discussion with the organisers and the Post to ensure that both can run, but safely.



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3.0 Emergency situations

The following situations are deemed to be the most likely and thus covered in this plan. In all cases, the first response by the crew involved or by crews in other boats is to raise the alarm directly with a safety launch or by phone with Event Control. In all cases competitors should be prepared to stop and assist other boats, especially if there are no rescue craft in sight.

3.1 Swamping

This may be of a rowing craft, a safety launch or a marshalling launch. The vessel may be taking on water and sinking due rough water or to a collision or some structural failure. Persons in the water are likely to range from one to six people. The worst foreseeable situation would be the collision of two rowing craft which would result in ten casualties.

Actions should be:

- Those in the swamped boat should stay with the boat if at all possible and await assistance
- The crew involved should raise the alarm
- Any participating crew near the incident should stop and offer help if needed
- Safety or another craft will retrieve any that casualties from the boat or water
- Establish that all persons are accounted for
- Take casualties to agreed landing point (ref 5.6, pg 8) for assessment, treatment or transfer
- Mark, make safe or otherwise retrieve the craft

3.2 Person overboard

A person may fall from any craft into the water. It is likely to be one individual but it is possible that when assisting the recovery of a person overboard another individual falls in.

Actions should be:

- Raise the alarm
- Retrieve the casualty from the water
- Establish that all casualties are accounted for
- Take casualty to agreed landing point (ref 5.6, pg 8) for assessment, treatment or transfer

3.3 Spectator or event staff falling in water

A person may fall in the water from the shore. It is likely to be one individual but foreseeable that when assisting the recovery of casualty another individual falls in.

Actions should be:

- Raise the alarm
- Retrieve the casualty from the water
- Establish that all personal are accounted for



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- Take casualty to agreed landing point (ref 5.6, page 8) for assessment, treatment or transfer

3.4 Fire onboard safety or marshalling launch

Any craft with an engine is capable of catching fire.

Actions should be:

- Raise the alarm
- If possible, make way to nearest landing point (ref 5.6, pg 8)
- Make preparations to abandon the craft
- Other craft should lend assistance and possibly retrieve casualties from water as necessary
- Event Control to reassess risk to event as whole due to loss of craft and take appropriate action

3.5 Mechanical malfunction on safety or marshalling launch

Any craft with an engine is capable of becoming disabled.

Actions should be:

- Raise the alarm
- Assign a suitable craft (with sufficient power and rope for towing) to assist disabled craft
- Tow disabled craft to nearest access point
- If resources permit, have second craft on standby to lend further assistance
- Event Control to reassess risk to event as whole due to loss of craft and take appropriate action

3.6 Craft grounding

The event shall follow the high tide out and the river is scheduled for a small (shallow) tide, therefore there is little risk for craft grounding. However, in the event of craft grounding a quick response is vital as the situation shall progressively worsen with the falling tide.

Actions should be:

- Raise the alarm
- Assign a suitable craft (with sufficient power and rope for towing) to assist grounded craft
- Explore reasonable ways to lessen the weight of the craft with consideration to the well-being of the occupants and float or tow craft off the mud
- If resources permit, have second craft on standby to lend further assistance

3.7 Rough water at finish

If very rough water is forecast before the race starts, then the race as such should be cancelled; a shorter row, returning to Newburn might be possible, but only if safety cover can be provided. If it turns rough during the early part of the race itself, crews may be turned back to Newburn. If water proves to be unexpectedly rough at the finish after the race is well underway then the fall-back position for crews is to land at the large beach just east of North Shields lifeboat station (shown as Option B in the



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navigation Guide). A decision on the latter should be taken before the first boat reaches the finish line, so that warning can be given as early as possible

Actions should be:

- Event Control in collaboration with Event Safety Adviser decides on action and informs all necessary safety launches and others, and through them the crews racing.
- If a return to Newburn is decided on, host clubs there will recall helpers, etc to assist landing.
- If Option B at the finish is decided on, helpers will be ferried round from Tynemouth RC by mini-bus to the beach and trailer drivers at club advised to drive round to pick up boats. Trailer drivers rowing will be ferried back to Tynemouth to get trailers.

4.0 Coordination

4.1 Event Control and Event Safety Adviser

Event Control (probably but not necessarily the Event Director) will be on land at the Start and then at the Quayside for the first hour or so of the event and available on mobile phone, UHF radio and VHF radio. He/she will then proceed to the headland at Tynemouth to be available to coordinate marshalling and safety in the finish area. He/she will act as coordination point for any incident on the water. He/she will be in contact with upstream club safety launches by phone and UHF radio in the early stages and then by phone and VHF once in the launch

The Event Safety Adviser will be aboard the Port of Tyne lead out launch and may be in a better position to coordinate a response to an incident at any time and has the authority to do so.

Any water-based incident could be part of a bigger overall emergency, in which case it is likely that Port of Tyne staff and/or the emergency service would take direct charge.

Whilst Event Control or the Safety Adviser will coordinate actions as far as possible, all safety crews are of course capable of taking actions under their own initiative as necessary.

A full schedule of available communications, including mobile phone numbers for all concerned, will be produced in the week before the event and circulated widely (and placed on the event web site).

5.0 Actions for a major event-related incident

5.1 Overall command

After receiving an alert of an incident that would appear to require help from more than one launch, the initial response would be for Event Control or the Event Safety Adviser to take command (but advised by others as appropriate). The person taking command should alert all launch crews and other key persons and put on stand-by.



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On receiving a report from the first craft on the scene, Event Control or the Event Safety Adviser would then make the decision as to whether any additional resources were necessary and despatch as appropriate. If necessary, the Port of Tyne pilot craft would attend.

Once on site, Event Control or the Event Safety Adviser in liaison with Port of Tyne and/or emergency services:

- Act as liaison between on scene activities and relevant persons on-shore
- Ensure other marine resources were dispatched to the scene
- Control non-emergency aspects of the event
- Issue advice, agree best landing points and advise emergency services as required
- Issue stand-down on completion

5.2 Other safety craft

All safety craft other than the first response should remain on station unless summoned by their own Club, Sea Cadet or Red Seal lead boat or race officials. If directed to attend a major incident they should:

- Follow instructions from on scene commander
- Be aware that in general all participants are fit, active people and would survive for quite some time in the water
- If heading for casualties do so with reasonable haste but consider wash and the possibility of swamping other craft upon approach
- Approach slowly, use paddles or throw line for the final approach and watch for people in water
- When rescuing those in the water, target those who seem in distress or in a state of unconsciousness before those who are faring better
- When returning to landing point or other craft consider wash

6.0 Information

6.1 Record of participating boats

All involved will have received a list of those who have entered in start order before the event. This will show numbers in each boat. On the day start officials will inform Event Control and through him or otherwise all others of any changes in circumstance, especially a withdrawal during the race. GPS tracking may be used and if so the URL for public viewing online will be published on the front page of the event web site.

6.2 Landing and boat recovery locations

The following areas have been designated as landing points for casualties, boat recovery, etc. As at the time of writing the contact at each site are yet to be confirmed, but have been agreeable in the past.

Name	Postcode	Contact with mob no
Derwenthaugh Marina	NE21 5LL	TBC a week before
Newcastle City Marina Pontoon	NE1 3AL	TBC a week before



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Friars Goose Water Sports Club	NE10 0QH	TBC a week before
Royal Quays Marina Pontoon	NE29 6DU	TBC a week before

In an emergency there may be other facilities that can be utilised. As a minimum requirement these access points would facilitate the transfer of a casualty into the care of emergency services.

6.3 Tide and sunrise/sunset times

All times below are shown in local British Summer Time (BST).

Tide and sunrise/sunset times for Sunday 23 August 2026 at North Shields are:

Tide time	Height in m	Sunrise time	05:55
12:20	3.87 (high)	Sunset time	20:20
18:30	2.23 (low)		

N.B. Add 20 minutes for tide times at Newburn

6.4 Event schedule outline (timings after start approx, based on previous years, may be updated)

Time	Activity
12:00 onwards	Participating boats to launch from Tyne ARC steps and, as necessary, Tyne United RC steps and Newburn Country Park slipway. Safety boats on water beforehand.
12:45-13:15	START, in 4 divisions, 15 minutes apart (but may change depending on numbers)
13:00-13:40	Derwenthaugh (5km)
13:24-14:07	Boats pass through central Newcastle Gateshead Bridges (10km)
13:51-14:33	Boats pass Bill Quay (15km)
14:13-14:46	Boats pass Morston Quay near Tyne Tunnel (20km)
14:35-15:20	FINISH – Boats pass finish line at North Shields
14:50-15:35	Boats arrive at Tynemouth RC, Little Haven
16:00	Any boats not finished will be directed to nearest access point

6.5 Safety launches and radio availability

Name	Crew	Comms
Port of Tyne pilot boat	PoT + Safety Adviser	Mobile Phone & UHF & VHF
Start marshalling launch (Club)	2	Mobile Phone & UHF
Safety launch 1 (Club)	2	Mobile Phone & UHF
Safety launch 2 (Club)	2	Mobile Phone & UHF
Safety launch 3 (Club)	2	Mobile Phone & UHF
Safety launch 4 (Club)	2	Mobile Phone & UHF
Safety launch 6 (Sea Cadets)	2	Mobile Phone & VHF & UHF
Safety launch 7 (Sea Cadets)	2	Mobile Phone & VHF
Safety launch 8 (Sea Cadets)	2	Mobile Phone & VHF
Safety launch 9 (Red Seal)	2	Mobile Phone & VHF
Safety launch 10 (Red Seal)	2	Mobile Phone & VHF
Safety launch 11 (Red Seal)	2	Mobile Phone & VHF



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Finish marshalling launch (Club)	2	Mobile Phone & VHF
Event Control (land)	n/a	Mobile Phone & UHF & VHF
Tynemouth RC (land)	n/a	Mobile phone & UHF & VHF

6.6 Event Safety Adviser & Event Control contact information

Location	Function	Name	Mobile phone
Port of Tyne pilot boat	Event Safety Adviser	John Mulholland	07740 078023
Start/Quayside/Finish	Event Control	Colin Percy	07985 003304

6.7 Rowing clubs contact information

Boat House	Contact	Phone	Postcode
Tyne ARC	Colin Percy	07985 003304	NE15 8NL
Tyne United RC	Jonty Reid	07720 251204	NE15 8NR
Tynemouth RC	Claire McGuire	07811 879447	NE30 4DG

N.B. An updated list of all available numbers will be published in immediate run-up to the event and placed online at the event web site, so please refer to that list on the day rather than these ones, which may be superseded.

The event is based at:

Tyne Amateur Rowing Club
Water Row
Newburn
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE15 8NL

Colin Percy

GTR Event Director for Northern Rowing Council

Mob: 07985 003304

Email: eventdirector.gtr@outlook.com (or colinwpercy@gmail.com if that is unusable for any reason)