

## INTRODUCTION

This Safety Plan provides information and guidance on how to use the facilities at Lancaster John O'Gaunt Rowing Club (LJOG) and Lancaster Schools' Rowing Association (LSRA) and how to keep safe whilst enjoying the sport of rowing. This plan is compiled following a series of risk assessments based on the activities at LJOG/LSRA and is updated in light of current good practice, following incidents and changes to the club and its activities. A review is to be undertaken at least annually.

Rowing is a very safe sport with very few injuries. However, activity on water does carry with it serious, if rarely occurring, risks. LJOG/LSRA actively promotes safety and this plan outlines the requirements that all members and guests and visitors follow when using the club facilities. The plan states the methods in which the clubs' activities are undertaken to ensure they are done so safely.

LJOG/LSRA has a responsibility for the safety of its members and the general public. The club actively promotes a good safety culture by adopting the minimum standards of safe practice within the British Rowing Row Safe Guide, a copy which can be found at [Policies and Guidance - British Rowing](#). All members should make themselves familiar with this Safety Plan and the BR Row Safe guide. British Row Safe <https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/>

All club members are responsible for their own health and safety, and for the safety of other club members and members of the public who may be affected by their actions. All club members have a Duty of Care and must act responsibly at all times and must comply with this plan.

The Club carries Public Liability and Member-to-Member Insurance in the event of injury.

Breaches of the Club Safety Plan should be reported to the Club Captain, Club Chair, Club Safety Officer or another member of the committee.

**All incidents, including *potential* incidents which have, or could have, resulted in an injury, are required to be entered on the **British Rowing Website Incident Report** <https://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org/displays/show> within 24 hours and reported to the Club Safety Advisor and the Club Captain as soon as possible**

## FURTHER INFORMATION

This is a working document and will be adjusted, as we become aware of new hazards. Any member who thinks that we need to add/change this document should contact the Club Captain or the Club Safety Officer.

## **SWIMMING ABILITY**

All rowers, coxes and launch drivers must be in good health and must be able and confident to swim in light clothing a minimum of 50 metres, under water for a minimum of 5 meters and tread water for at least 2 minutes. A declaration to this effect on the club membership form must be signed and returned to the club membership secretary upon joining. In the case of junior members, this must be signed by their parent or guardian.

Any member of the committee or a coach has the authority to prevent anyone from going afloat whom they believe cannot swim.

Coxes must wear a life jacket at all times whilst on the water. Coxes in front loaders must only use manual inflating life jackets.

Coxes who are required to carry weight in races should ensure that the weight is not attached to them.

Life jackets can be worn by rowers, if they so choose.

## **LEARNING TO ROW**

All beginners and new experienced rowers of any age must receive an induction programme from the Club Captain or Coach, which takes them through the requirements of this Safety Plan and includes:

- a clear explanation of the local hazards
- navigation rules of the river
- how to lift, carry and handle boats and equipment
- what to do in an emergency and how to report an incident.

All rowers must wear a life jacket until they have completed a capsized test

## **JUNIOR ROWING**

A junior is defined as a rower who is under 18 years of age.

A competent adult member must supervise junior rowers at all times.

All juniors must wear a life jacket until they have completed a capsized test.

Before any rowing activity is undertaken, written consent must be gained from the junior's parent or carer. Written consent must be gained to act 'in loco parentis' for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical attention if the need arises.

All junior members are required to provide emergency contact telephone or mobile phone numbers.

## **NAVIGATIONAL RULES OF THE RIVER LUNE**

If you are new to the water, familiarise yourself with the river and any hazards by looking on the map of the river on the Safety Notice Board in the gym. **The hazards are marked in red.**

No rowing is allowed in the hours of darkness, fog or mist.

During normal day light items of high visibility/bright clothing to be worn by person at bow, and single scullers. Cox should also wear high visibility/ bright item of clothing which can be clearly seen.

Motor boats and rowing/sculling boats must adhere to the navigational rules in place on the river.

These include:

1. Beginners will only use the bay in front of the boathouse if the water level is below the level of the wall around the weir and below the red buoys.
2. When boating, crews/scullers must beware of any boats approaching downstream on the Halton side. Leaving the landing stages, boats must cross to the middle of the river outside the boathouse then row parallel to the Halton bankside until well clear of the weir at least by the Sea Scouts landing stage before crossing over to the Lancaster side of the river and proceed upstream.
3. Once agreed and installed the line of red buoys will be in place to mark the side of the weir, and are not there as indication of the route to be rowed. Crews heading upstream are required to comply with the navigational pattern for the river
4. Because of the increased risk of capsizing whilst learning to row, all inexperienced crews/scullers outside the boathouse bay must use the "buddy" system to look out for each other, remaining within close contact with each other.
5. Keep on the right-hand side of the river.
6. Pass through the third arch of the aqueduct (heading upstream.) Second arch (heading downstream,) Always counted from the Halton side. **Never use the Lancaster side arch of the aqueduct.**
7. When being overtaken, keep to the side to allow overtaking craft on the port side, towards the middle of the river
8. The overtaking crew is responsible for collision avoidance.
9. Do not stop anywhere on the river unless you can be seen by other crews approaching for at least 100 metres in either direction.
10. If you do stop, pull to the side out of the middle of the river.
11. Do not turn and remain facing the wrong way; cross the river to face the correct way.
12. Do not turn in front of other crews.
13. If you think that an approaching boat may not have seen you, shout loudly and clearly "Look Ahead"
14. Motor launch drivers must slow down approaching other river users and minimise their wash and disturbance to other boats.
15. Show respect to the other river users including anglers.

Further instructions to rowers have been issued (see appendix 1).

## **BOAT STEERING/COXING**

Any person steering a boat must communicate effectively with the crew and adhere to the navigation rules of the river so as to ensure the safety of the crew at all times.

Be aware of the position of other boats on the river, so as to avoid collisions and subsequent damage to the boat or injury to the crew.  
Look out for debris on the river and anglers or other river users, so as to avoid an incident.

## **IN THE EVENT OF A CAPSIZE**

Stay calm and breathe deeply.

Float to save alive, tilt head back ears in water for 5 seconds, allow breathing, heart rate to slow down.

The hull of the boat should be used as a buoyancy aid to assist in getting back to dry land. Stay with the boat it can be used as a life raft.

If you are unable to get back into the boat you should remain with the boat and keep hold of it. Try and get your torso out of the water (lie over the hull.) The Boat will aid in keeping you afloat and makes it easier for rescuers/other crews see you. **ONLY LET GO AND LEAVE THE BOAT IF STAYING IT WITH IT PUTS YOU IN MORE DANGER.**

Be patient and attract attention immediately. If possible, kick your legs to move the boat towards the bank.

Do not try to swim the last few yards without the boat. Wait until you can stand up safely before letting go of the boat.

Leaving the boat and swimming to the bank should be a last resort.

Being able to swim in a warm swimming bath is completely different to swimming in a cold river. Your body loses heat up to 30 times quicker in cold water than air, up to twice this amount if swimming. No matter how good a swimmer you are, unexpected immersion in cold water can lead to shock, and heat loss from immersion can quickly cause hypothermia.

On return to the boathouse, all wet crew members should have a warm shower as soon as possible to help increase their body temperature. Once in dry clothes, warm the room to about 25C (77F.) Give the casualty warm not hot drinks, high energy food like chocolate. Keep monitoring them level of breathing and responsiveness.

A towel and a dry change of clothing should always be brought in case of an occasional capsizing. Always use the shower facilities after capsizing and if significantly wet.

The Club will keep dry clothing available to emergency use. It is in a marked box in the tool cupboard in the gym.

## **MOVING AND STORING EQUIPMENT**

### **BOAT BAYS**

Keep the aisles clear. Unused riggers should be stored on the racks the back of the boathouse. Trestles should be stored against the end walls by the bay doors.

When lifting boats on/off racks make sure that there are enough people to move the boat safely. One person should take charge to give instructions

Take care-moving in/out of the boat bays. Protruding riggers can be dangerous.

Unless the boathouse is being occupied whilst you are on the river, before going afloat put all equipment away. Then close and lock all the doors.

## **LANDING STAGES AND FRONT OF BUILDING**

Do not block the access to either of the landing stages. Avoid leaving oars or sculls lying outside the sculling boat bay door.

Do not block the front of the boathouse with boats on trestles; leave plenty of room for other crews to gain access to the bays.

Ensure all boats are secure at all times; particular care is required in windy weather.

Do not leave any equipment in front of the boat house in a manner that would place a trip risk to the public. (There is a public right of way for pedestrians past the boathouse)

## **WEIGHTS AND TRAINING ROOM**

The weights and training room is a potentially dangerous area and great care should be taken when using the facilities provided.

Do not lift weights until you have been instructed in the safe and correct technique for weight lifting.

Loose weights must be cleared away tidily after use.

Do not use free weights unaccompanied. Use spotters.

Warm up for at least 15 minutes before lifting weights. Never lift weights cold. Remember to take care of your back. Do not lift heavy weights whilst injured. If injured seek medical advice.

A responsible adult must accompany any junior members in the weights and training room.

## **RUNNING**

Runners should put their names and time out and expected return time on the club Safety Notice board. This will hopefully ensure that you do not get locked out of the building. You should of course remove your name upon return.

The club recommends that you do not run outside on your own.

## **EQUIPMENT SAFETY**

Coxes must wear a life jacket at all times whilst on the water. Coxes in front loaders must only use manual inflating life jackets.

Coxes who are required to carry weight in races should ensure that the weight is not attached to them.

We have a modern high quality fleet of boats which are kept in good working order. It is important that regular checks are made on the equipment you are using.

Do not use any equipment without the permission of the Club Captain or a designated coach.

Do not use boats which have crossed tape to indicate they are waiting repair.

All boats should be washed and cleaned before going back on the rack. This is often the best time to find out if the boat has suffered any damage during the outing. The only exception to this is if the air temperature is freezing or below. This is to avoid us creating an icy surface in front of the boathouse.

Boathouse Keys are only distributed to members who have demonstrated a safe level of boat handling and navigation

### **DAMAGED or DEFECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

If any equipment is damaged or found to be defective, record any damage on the clubs' online damage form <http://lancasterrowing.co.uk/boat-damage-form/> **and** inform the coach or Club Captain by recording on the damage notice board.

If there is no one available, mark the boat with **crossed** tape.

If the boat has been damaged through impact or collision, this must be reported on the British Rowing website.

Never remove a part from another boat to repair your boat. This causes more problems long-term than it solves short-term. This also applies to any private boat stored or used at the club.

It is the responsibility of owners to maintain and insure their private boats.

## **MOTOR LAUNCHES**

Launch drivers must be members of the club and have successfully completed a RYA Level 2 Powerboat Handling Course (or equivalent). A list of qualified drivers is kept on the club Safety Notice board.

Launch drivers must:

- ensure before leaving the boathouse that they have enough fuel for that session
- wear and attach a kill-cord to the start switch
- report immediately all mechanical failures, defects with the use, storage, and handling of the launch to the Club Captain or Maintenance Officer
- maintain competency through practising boat handling and rescue techniques on a regular basis
- carry a competent person as “crew” for every outing.

All launch occupants must wear a life jacket.

Every launch is equipped with emergency equipment including:

- Anchor
- Throw line
- Thermal blanket
- Bailing device
- Paddle

All launches must undergo and pass an annual inspection for water-worthiness and engine performance. Without this certificate the launch can not go on the water.

After being launched, motor boats should be moored at the downstream end of the landing stage to save space for the crews/scullers at the other stages and should leave from and return to this stage.

## **SUPPORT LAUNCHES.**

Coaches running a session must exercise their judgment to allow boats on the water depending on the weather and river conditions and in the light of the available adult support.

The minimum standard for a junior session is:

- There must be at least 2 adults supervising.
- All supervising adults must be members of LJOGL/LSRA.
- At least 1 launch must be available if any juniors are on the water. The coaching team must exercise their judgement whether more support is needed based the number and proficiency of rowers wishing to go on the water.
- Launches must have a driver and a crew member in case of having to go to the rescue of a boat.
- The “buddy” system must be used and enforced.

## **FUEL STORAGE and REFUELLING**

Partially full launch tanks and petrol canisters are required to be stored in the yellow flame proof cabinet when not in use. After use, launch drivers must ensure that the lid/air inlet on the fuel tank or canister is kept closed when not in use to prevent petrol vapour escaping. Even if the tank or canister is empty, ensure the lid/air inlet is kept closed as petrol vapour can still seep out. Petrol vapour is highly flammable.

The use of naked flames or equipment that would give rise to a spark is not permitted within the vicinity of the petrol store. Sources of ignition are not permitted to be brought into the boathouse.

**Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the Club site.**

All refuelling activities must take place in the open air, away from the building and any sources of ignition. The use of a mobile phone whilst refuelling is not permitted.

Before refuelling, the launch tank must be taken outside away from the building and surface water drains and a funnel or nozzle inserted into the tank, to prevent petrol from being spilled. Fuel spills must be cleaned up immediately.

In the event that refuelling has to take place indoors on the ground floor (for example due to poor weather) the doors to the boathouse must be open to allow for air circulation and a drip tray must be used and every effort taken to minimise spillage. Care must be taken to ensure fuel does not enter into the surface water drains directly outside the boat house or into the river.

## **TRAILER DRIVING**

Any member towing a trailer or carrying a boat on a vehicle must refer to the clubs' Trailer Guide and diagrams showing the recommended arrangement for loading, including the allowable load projection.

Have a method to check the nose weight of the trailer.

Information regarding tyre pressure and unladen trailer weight

Ensure that information regarding the Maximum Allowed Mass (MAM) is fixed to the trailer.

Trailer has adequate projection markers and lights

Ensure that sufficient ties, (in good condition) are available.

Ensure that, if towing or using vehicles overseas, any local rules are adhered to (lights, spares, yellow vests, fire extinguishers, triangle, overhang, etc.)

Ensure that a copy of the trailer insurance (and any club vehicle) insurance is displayed in the club/boathouse and towing vehicle.

Provide copy of towing vehicle insurance to accompany the trailer on a journey.

When reversing or manoeuvring in car parks, regatta sites or other confined spaces there must be a banksman/observer on foot outside the towing vehicle and in sight and hearing of the driver.



Before using the trailer, the driver(s) will:

Check the tyres (including spare), lights, projection markers and the security of the load, jockey wheel and brakes before each trip.

Ensure that the vehicle used for towing is appropriate for the length, load and type of trailer

Trailer carries a spare wheel and suitable tools and jack for changing a wheel.

Always carry a passenger to help with navigation, manoeuvring, and any emergency, which may arise

Be aware of the dangers of high winds and icy road conditions and consult the weather forecast before setting off.

Take breaks during journeys of longer than 2 hrs duration or have a buddy driver to share driving on long journeys.

Ensure an effective communication system is set up with the club for the journey.  
(Do not use mobile phone whilst in control of the vehicle)

### **CLOTHING**

Always bring plenty of kit, even if you are only planning for one outing. There are lots of ways to get wet in our sport; rain, capsize, damage to equipment, lifting the boat after washing, even sweat or perspiration.

Wear multiple layers of light close fitting clothing that will not get caught on equipment and will help to trap a layer of air/water, thus reducing heat loss. A layer of breathable but waterproof fabric will be much more efficient at trapping a layer of air/water. 50% of heat loss is from the head. A hat or a waterproof hood stowed in a garment collar, which can be quickly pulled out with one hand, would be of benefit.

A towel and a dry change of clothing should always be brought in case of wet weather, splashing and an occasional capsize. Always use the shower facilities after capsizing and if significantly wet.

Make sure you have secure zip pockets for any valuables you may be carrying. You are advised not to take mobile phones or other electronic equipment in a boat. Items get lost or wet in the water very quickly.

In the summer, consider wearing sunglasses, a cap and sunscreen to protect from the sun/glare off the water. Especially in hot weather, keep hydrated throughout the training session on or off the water.

## **HEALTH & HYGIENE**

To prevent disease always wash hands before eating and drinking. Do not splash river water onto your face or body to cool down. Never drink water from the river. Cover cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings.

Do not row in bare feet to avoid leaving or picking up any foot-borne infections.

Keep oar handles clean and wash down after use when contaminated with blood.

Always wash your hands after rowing, particularly before eating and drinking.

Cuts and scratches should be cleaned thoroughly upon returning to the boathouse and a clean dressing applied.

A "First Aid" kit is kept in the clubroom, to the right of the sink [cupboard door marked "First Aid"] should it be required. All incidents requiring first aid must be reported on the BR website system.

If you feel ill during or after training inform a First Aider, Coach or Club Captain. Seek medical assistance.

To prevent disease always wash hands before eating and drinking. Do not splash river water onto your face or body to cool down. Never drink water from the river. Cover cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings.

Keep oar handles clean and wash down after use when contaminated with blood.

## **COVID-19**

During the currency of the Covid-19 pandemic, do not come to the club if you display any signs of illness.

When entering the club, use the front door, where sanitising fluid, gloves and face masks are available.

Maintain a single directional system down the stairs into the boat storage area and leave the boathouse by the boathouse doors. Maintain social distancing. Coxes should wear visors (supplied). Sanitise blades after use.

## **FIRST AID**

First aid equipment can be found in the clubroom/kitchen area, cupboard to the left of the cooker marked up with Greencross first aid box. There are also two small hard cases which can be taken out in the launch

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

Avoid alcohol and caffeine the night before training. Those under the influence of alcohol or drugs are not permitted to boat.

In both the winter and summer months it is important to keep hydrated. It is advisable to take a drink of some kind on the water with you in hot weather.

Avoid sharing water bottles. This is the fastest way to spread germs throughout the crew. Keep your water bottle clean.

It is important that the body is fed as soon as possible after exercise. You should make sure that you have food with you to eat as soon as possible after each outing or training session.

In using the kitchen, ensure it is left in a clean state. All cups, plates and cutlery must be washed and put away after use.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

It is strongly recommended that members familiarise themselves with the location of fire extinguishers, and escape routes. Keep fire escape routes clear at all times.

If you discover a fire:

- First raise alarm by warning any others in the building.
- From outside the building dial 999 to call the fire brigade.
- Only tackle the fire with one of the fire extinguishers if you can do so without personal risk.
- Leave the building by the nearest emergency exit.

The methods of leaving our building in the event of a fire are.

### **Upstairs**

1. The main emergency exit from the Changing Rooms, Toilets, Gymnasium and Meeting room is by crash-bar door in the Meeting room. The glass door on the inside should be left wide open when there are people in the building. The crash door has 2 locks which both have to be turned twice anti-clockwise to open.
2. **If there is no risk from downstairs**, down the stairs to the boat house.

### **Boat Bays**

1. Boat Bay doors.
- Do not go back into the building until the fire services have given the all clear.
  - The assembly point is at **the gateway to the club premises**.



## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1: Safety Noticeboard Poster with advice to rowers in certain weather conditions (December 2022)**

**Appendix 2: Circulation Pattern River Lune Pictures**

**Appendix 3: Navigational Rules River Lune**

**Appendix 4: Which arches to be used Up/Down stream**

**Appendix 5: Float to Live**

## **Appendix 1 - Weather and River Conditions**

All members should be aware of the way in which conditions on the river can change and the risks to safety of adverse conditions at any time of year. They must take account of local weather forecasts and tide tables. Beware of deteriorating weather and river; conditions can change within the time of a typical outing.

### **1. Wind**

The prevailing winds on our river are from the West which means blowing upstream. This can produce rough water and make small boats – pairs and double sculls and *especially* single sculls – unstable. Steering and turning around is hazardous.

The apparently slight bends on the Lune can produce quite different water conditions between Skelton and Halton. **Usually**, the conditions get worse above the aqueduct.

Winds from the east can blow boats past the landing stages on return.

**Small boats should not go out when winds of more than 12/15 miles per hour and gusting above 20/25 mph are forecasted.**

### **2. River level**

Rain and snow melt in the hills to the north and east will make the river level rise. Launching and - even more! - returning to the stage is more difficult and there is danger of damaging the boats as well as capsizing

**When the level is above the main landing stage, small boats should not go out.**

Sometimes the river level can fall below the landing stage. Capsize risk is great and boats can be damaged by the being trapped under the stage.

**Do not boat if the river is more than 6inches [15cm] below the landing stage.**

Useful website for river level check-for-flooding.services.gov.uk

### **3. River flow**

When the river level rises the flow rate will also increase. This makes stability and navigation more difficult. It also means that the weir will draw more strongly across the river.

**If you can see the river moving past the landing stage, it is too fast to row safely.**

Higher level and faster flow will bring trees and other debris down the river. Collision with these can destabilise small boats and some are big enough to damage boats.

Above the M6 Bridge, where the river is narrower, the river becomes more turbulent and boats are at greater risk.

**Do not go above the M6 bridge in these conditions.**

### **4. Ice**

In very cold weather the river can ice over. This particularly common on the pool in front of the landing stages where the river flow can be negligible. Ice on the water will cause damage to boats.

**Do not boat if there is ice formed on the river.**

### **5. Tides**

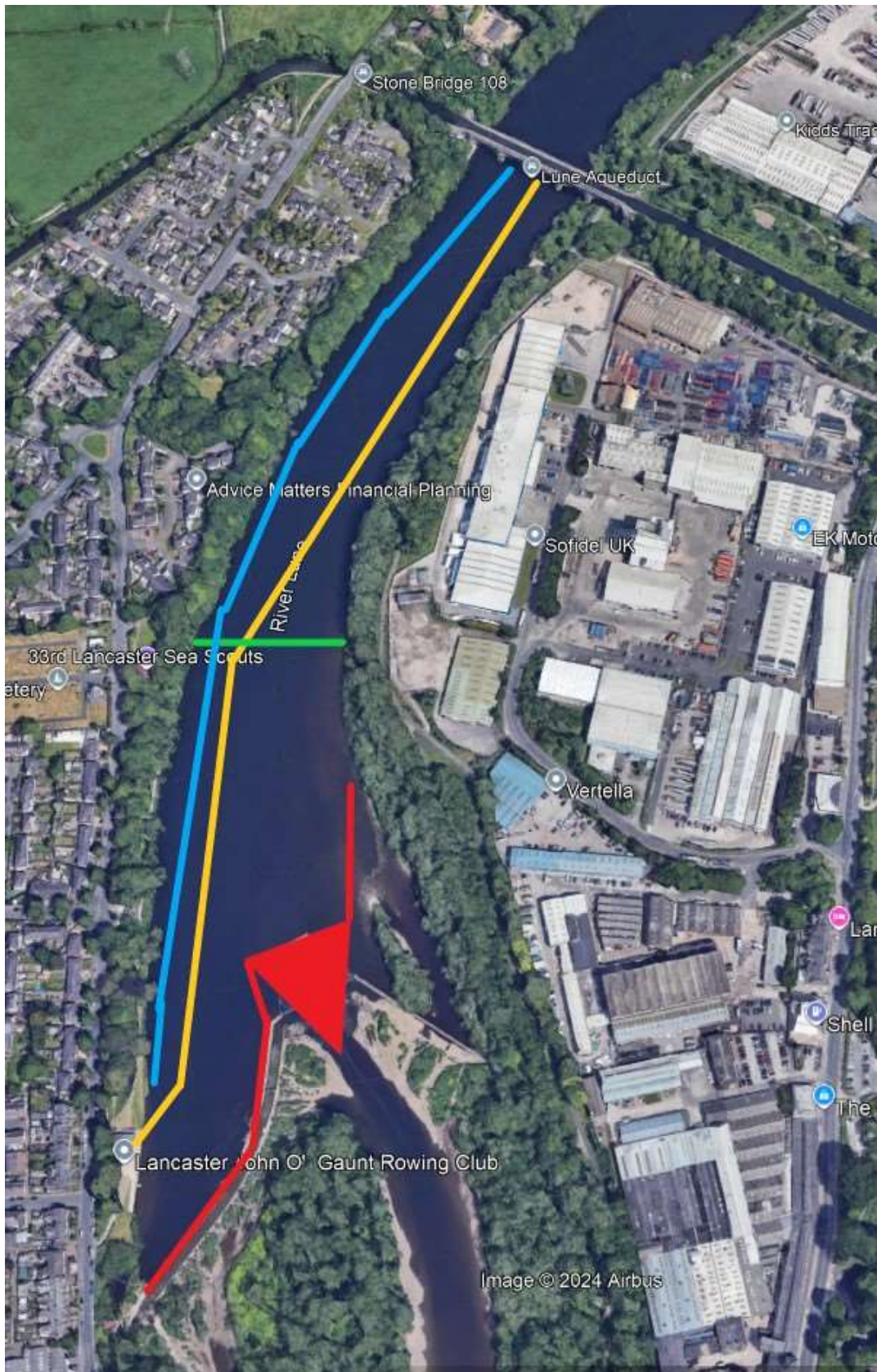
The incoming tide from the open sea can surge over the weir and increases the river level and flow.

As a guide, high tide of 10m forecasted at Heysham will create these conditions. This can happen 2 or 3 times each month. High tide at Heysham is about 30 minutes before Skerton.

**Consult the Heysham Tide Tables beforehand for the time of your outing.** <https://www.tidetimes.co.uk/heysham-tide-times>



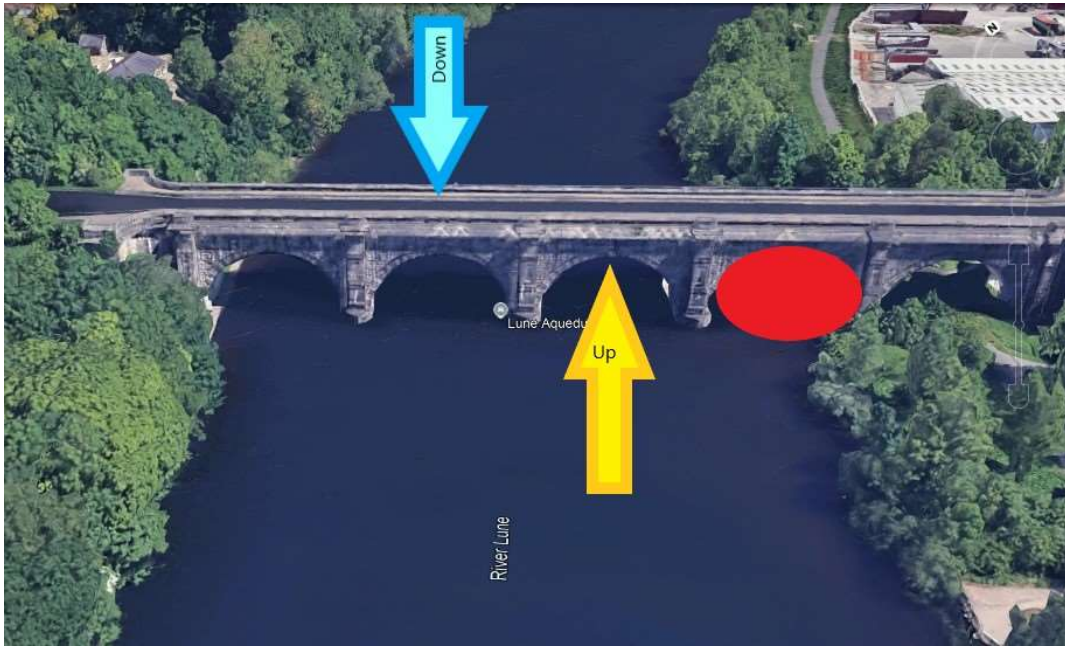
## Appendix 2 – Circulation Pattern River Lune



## **Appendix 3 – Navigational Rules River Lune**



**Appendix 4 – Arches to be Used Lune Aquaduct**



**Appendix 4 – Float to Live**



**Lifeboats**

**If you're struggling in the water ...**

**Tilt your head back with ears submerged**

**Relax and move your hands to help you stay afloat**

**Remember it. Share it.**  
**FLOAT TO LIVE**

#RESPECTTHEWATER

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## Useful Websites

British Rowing Policy and Guidelines: britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance  
<https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/>

British Rowing Row Safe: britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe  
<https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/>

River Levels Flooding: check-for flooding.services.gov.uk  
<https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/>

Metoffice: metoffice.gov.uk  
<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/>