

Northern Rowing Council

Online meeting of Executive - 25 May 2020

Responses from clubs on Covid-19 and return to rowing

Gateshead CRC.

We had a break in last week the boat engine, life jackets etc taken. Damage to our safety boat. No plans to return to rowing for a while especially has a lot of our members have underlying conditions and need extra assistance.

Ebchester BC

We have as of today decided to allow max 3 on the water. We initially allowed 4 in singles, or doubles in family units but I think 3 will be easier to manage with the extra time and effort it takes to keep the social distance, extra cleaning, and in general keeping an eye on the rowers. We are lucky though in that 50% of our members are family units so this has made things a bit easier. Our clubhouse is very small so extra care is taken to social distance, with a one in one out system.

We are a bit worried about finances this year with increased insurance costs and very little reserves so I've been speaking with our AAP about funding support. I wonder if Covid-19 has affected other clubs financially too?

Chester-le-Street ARC

We have been able to support training sessions via the internet during the closure and so far things have gone as well as they could have.

Our position on re-opening is that we have had a team consisting of the safety officer, club captain and head coach pulling together a Covid-19 Risk Assessment this week and it is ready for approval by the club officials.

As yet the club has not re-opened but I'd expect it to at some stage this week (Adults only at the moment).

City of Sunderland RC

Through the 'hard' lockdown we were able to distribute the club ergs and bikes so as many members as possible had access to equipment. We've provided weekly training plans including erg and non-erg sessions for people who wanted to partake. We took part in the Tees lockdown regatta, have issued various stretching and core guides on social media and we ran an Easter competition for the different sections of the club.

We're back and running on a limited basis for seniors now. We hope to be getting some of the older more experienced juniors out next week, though we're still finalising how to do this whilst meeting social distancing, no one-to-one contact between juniors and coaches and ensuring the sessions are safe without a launch. We're pretty sure we've got a method that should work though, albeit the parents may have to graft a bit!

Logistics wise we're doing pretty much the same as everyone else managing to get out. Singles going out in pairs on a timetabled basis to comply with social distancing, boat house access minimised, hygiene rules to ensure everybody disinfects hands before using equipment and then disinfects and cleans the equipment used afterwards etc.

Durham ARC

DARC re-opened on a partial basis on Thursday, 21st for singles. This followed a rigorous risk assessment, the production of guidelines and a timetable for members. There will be a restriction of six members rowing in any time slot. Access to the Club is through the boathouse only and provision has been made for distancing and hygiene in accordance with government guidelines. We shall be monitoring this and will review in response to members' feedback.

Lakeland RC

We are closely following BR guidelines and are in the process of finalising our safety protocols for private boats to be able to launch from our beach.

This will be followed by a phased opening of the club compound for the use of club singles, or doubles for family groups.

Hexham RC

Currently in line with British Rowing guidance and the government guidelines we're allowing private singles stored at the club to be used alongside club singles and doubles (when both rowers live together). The only people allowed out are those capable of rowing without supervision and in addition to this we've put new health and safety policy in place around cleaning and use of the boats, only one member down at once etc. Hope this helps!

It would be interesting to know how other clubs are looking at reopening.

Tynemouth RC

In terms of what we are doing - thats a straight forward one - nothing!! Our club is officially closed for rowing, training and any social activities. The committee decided that our club couldn't guarantee social distancing for any of those activities. Even our singles can't be launched by 1 person on their own.

The 1 thing I will say though is that the use of Whats App has been brilliant. Before Covid kicked off, a lot of the regulars were on a Whats App group. The use of this has been maintained during this time, more for social purposes/banter than rowing, but I think it is a good outlet and a good way of maintaining momentum in the club which has really picked up in the last year or so. I have also contacted people who had expressed an interest in a learn to row course this year explaining the position and to hopefully maintain their interest.

Talkin Tarn ARC

In terms of Covid-19, the Committee made the decision to shut the Club (including all access to the shed and club activities) on Tuesday 17th March and we have remained closed since. A virtual committee meeting was held on 7th April, when the Committee

agreed to a lockdown strategy which would continue to engage members through the lockdown. This has consisted of a weekly Club update sharing good news stories, photos, pics from the past, workout inspiration etc.. We have also been running an internal Virtual League with 20 members participating from home on their machines each week in line with the cancelled season (e.g. last week we all had to submit an 850m 'Tees' time and next week we're submitting a 700m 'Hexham' time).

In light of the recent British Rowing guidance, the Committee again discussed the situation and agreed that the Club should remain closed until further notice. This has been backed up by the Council who have requested that no boats go on the water at all. Whilst the Tarn car park was reopened recently (having been shut at the main road for weeks), all facilities e.g. toilets and showers upon which the Club usually rely, also remain closed which makes risk assessments interesting and takes the decision almost out of our hands. The Club has been open a couple of times recently by personal appointment through the Captain to allow members with private equipment to remove it from the shed and take it away, however these members have been told that any rowing shall not be carried out with Club endorsement, on the Tarn or in Club colours and that those individuals must carry out their own risk assessment and apply for their own launching licenses etc.

Our Committee has another virtual meeting scheduled for Tuesday 2nd June, with the main agenda item of discussing how we may re-open as and when the time comes. In preparation for this meeting, Committee members have been asked to submit any workable ideas/proposals to me by next weekend so that they can be circulated prior to the meeting and discussed during the meeting. It is hoped that the outcome of this meeting will be some form of proposal for re-opening as and when the time comes.

Queen Elizabeth High School BC

QEHS has not as yet resumed any activity on the water. I have not had any communication from school but we feel that under current guidance we cannot take responsibility for juniors and could only put them out one at a time which is against our normal protocol anyway, not to mention that we have over 100 members! Geoff is waiting for the BR guidance expected today before finalising our Risk Assessment.