Dart Totnes Winter Head

Water Safety Plan

Reviewed January 2025

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1. Introduction to Safety Document

1.1 This document sets out the special safety procedures and arrangements to be put in place for the annual Dart Totnes Autumn Head.

1.2 The event is run under the guidelines set out by British Rowing, presented in the RowSafe documentation which may be viewed on the BR website: http://www.britishrowing.org/taking-part/staying-safe/rowsafe

1.3 This document is additional to, and should be read in conjunction with, the Water Safety Plan for Dart Totnes ARC which accompanies this document or may be accessed here: https://darttotnes.co.uk/resources-and-documents/

2. Race Course & Event Description

2.1 The Dart Totnes Autumn Head is a processional format event rowed in 2 or 3 divisions, according to tide and conditions. The event is competed in fine type rowing craft.

2.2 The River Dart is a tidal river, with moored navigation buoys and some fixed post navigation/ hazard markers.

2.3 Each division is raced upriver from a start towards the lower end of Fleet Mill reach and finishes at the turning bay in Totnes. Competitors are marshalled in the area down river of the start prior to the start of each division.

2.4 A map of the course is presented as **Appendix A**.

3. Safety, Start & Marshalling Craft

3.1 Rescue and marshalling craft will be stationed as follows (Table 1) and as shown on the course map presented in **Appendix A.**

	Location	Comments
Safety Boat 1	"Red post"	Warn of red post hazard
Safety Boat 2	"Home reach"	Patrolling
Safety Boat 3	"Ranges"	Patrolling
Marshall Boat	Marshalling area	Marshalling at start

Table 1 Stations of safety boats and other craft

3.2 Rescue craft will be suitably crewed (minimum of two appropriately qualified or experienced adults, one of whom to have first aid training).

3.3 All rescue craft will be of a suitable type and size and will be equipped with at least the items indicated in **Appendix D.**

4. First Aid & Refuge

4.1 Rescue boats will be stationed as noted in 3.1 above.

4.2 Any casualties will be returned to the Longmarsh slipway.

4.3 First aid will be provided by an approved supplier from a first aid unit stationed in the car park at the DTARC club house.

5. Safety Co-ordination & Communications

5.1 The safety team will be coordinated from **Control** at the Dart Totnes ARC club house.

5.2 Communications will be made by the means indicated in the table below:

Who	*How to contact*
Race CONTROL	VHF, Direct, Visual.
Safety Boats	VHF, Visual, Direct
First Aid Team	Direct
Umpires	VHF, Visual, Direct
Marshalls	VHF,
Competitors	Direct, Visual
Emergency services	999

Table 2 Communication channels

Means of communication used in the above matrix are further described in Table 3:

Direct	Direct verbal communication, alert, megaphone, PA, etc.
VHF	Licensed VHF radio transceiver.
Visual	Visual signal, waving etc.
999	Landline/ mobile.

Table 3 Communication abbreviations

6. Boat & Clothing Checks

6.1 All competing rowing craft must be safety checked before going onto the water. This is the responsibility of the competing clubs.

6.2 For this purpose, a boat and competitor safety check list is presented in **Appendix D** and will be communicated to competing clubs in advance of the race days.

6.3 Representatives from the host club, DTARC, may also perform spot checks to cover the elements outlined within BR Rowsafe.

6.4 Boats otherwise failing any inspection will not be allowed to row in the Race. The Club's Representatives will be in contact with the Event Safety Adviser, whose decision will be final. These inspections do not reduce the responsibility of competing Clubs to ensure their boats and equipment are adequate to withstand the conditions of the day.

6.5 All competitors must be wearing suitable clothing for the conditions on the day of the race. Competitors should carry sufficient additional layers to keep warm and dry whilst waiting at the start.

7. Incident Procedures for Rescue Team

7.1 Safety team members will exercise their own judgements in handling minor incidents.

7.2 **Control** is to be kept informed of minor incidents and other notable occurrences.

7.3 Any incident that results in the course being obstructed must be speedily communicated to umpires who may choose to suspend racing until cleared.

7.4 All members of the safety team must be aware of the possibility of a failure in communications and are empowered to act autonomously should the situation dictate. All active team members must remain vigilant at all times.

8. Major Incidents, Adverse Conditions & Cancellation

8.1 Serious incidents involving multiple competitors or where competitors or members of the safety team are judged to be at significant risk of harm will be assessed by the nearest member of the safety team who will determine if external assistance is required.

8.2 Conditions will be assessed at regular intervals by experienced members of the organizing team and the event umpires. In the event of deterioration of conditions during the event, umpires and race control may decide to suspend or cancel racing at any time. In this situation all crews will be directed to return to the slipway and steps.

8.3 Any collapsed competitor to be taken immediately to dry land. Safety team must judge if rowing or transfer to rescue boat is more efficient. Do not attempt resuscitation in racing craft.

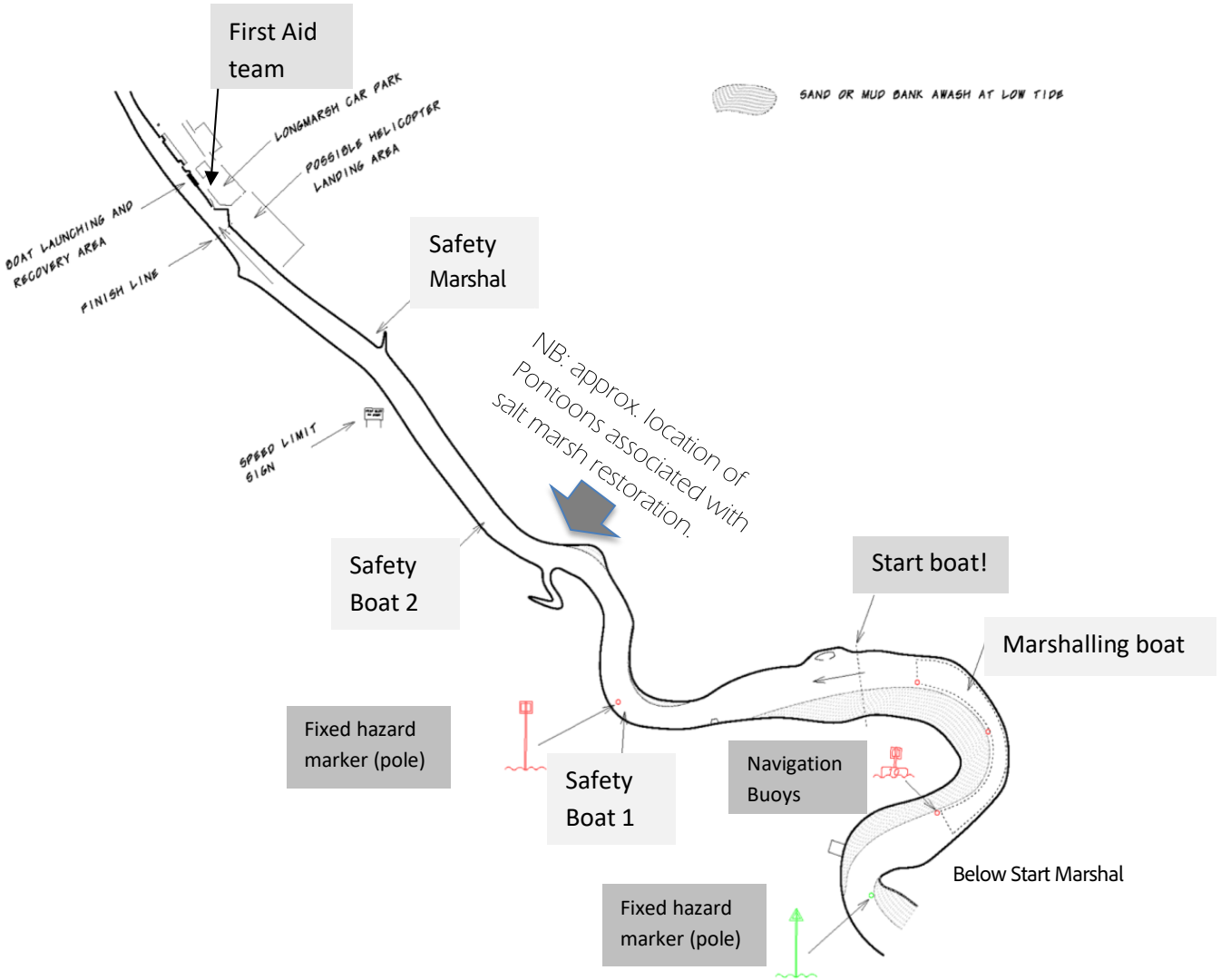
9. Procedures for Dealing with Other River Users

9.1 It is anticipated that commercial and pleasure traffic will be using the river during the event. Commercial operators will be consulted prior to the event and the timing of arrivals and departures of ferries from Steamer Quay will be accommodated within the race program.

9.2 Yachts and motor boats approaching the course from up river or down river will be approached by the nearest rescue boat or marshal and advised that a rowing event is in progress. Cooperation will be sought from the masters of pleasure boats intending to pass through the course area.

9.3 In the event of pleasure craft refusing to cooperate with the requests of marshals, rescue boat crews or umpires, all are to be advised of the situation such that crews on course can be warned. Start or mid-course umpires may decide to halt a race in progress if they perceive significant risk to competitors or the public exists.

1. Appendix A: Course Map



2. Appendix B: Autumn Head supplemental risk assessment

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	LIKELY OUTCOME	WHO IS AT RISK	LIKLEHOOD	SEVERITY	RISK	CONTROLS	RESPONSE
Pre start	Crews proceeding to start	Collision, capsize	Competitors	Possible	Moderate	Significant	Established circulation pattern and warm up area.	Brief competitors.
	Wait at start in cold conditions	Hypothermia	Competitors	Possible	Moderate	Significant	Appropriate kit.	Brief competitors, check kit as part of safety checks.
During racing	Race exertion	Exhaustion,dehydration, asthma, collapse	Competitors	Possible	Moderate	Significant	Adequate preparation of competitors and carriage of water and asthma puffers in boats.	Ensure adequate rescue and first aid provision.
	Overtaking crews	Collision, capsize	Competitors	Possible	Moderate	Significant	Adherence to BR guidelines for head racing. Crews are reminded to read guidelines .	Brief competitors.
	Other river users on course	Confusion, damage, disappointment	Other river users	Unlikely	Minor	Moderate	Pro-active engagement and cooperation.	Brief marshalls, contact other river user groups
		Collision, capsize, swamping.	Competitors	Unlikely	Moderate	Moderate	Sensible conduct of competitors.	Brief competitors.
Post finish	Crews in finish area.	Collision, capsize	Competitors	Possible	Moderate	Significant	Adequate briefing and marshalling at finish. Enforce circulation.	Brief competitors, ensure sufficient marshals are in place.
General on water	Deterioration of conditions	Swamping, sinking, capsize, exhaustion	Competitors	Possible	Moderate	Significant	Procedures for cancellation of event and provision of refuge points.	Ensure safety team are suitably experienced and appropriately briefed.

3. Appendix C: Rescue Craft Minimum Equipment list

For the rescue boat:-

a. Bagged throw line
b. Bailer
c. Appropriate PFD for each crew member
d. Safety knife with rope cutter
e. Foil blankets/bivvy bags x9 for an 8 plus cox
f. Foil blankets for safety crew
g. Length of spare rope
h. Spare kill cord
i. Fog horn/claxon
j. 2 paddles
k. Boat hook
l. Adequate fuel
m. Duct tape/electrical tape
n. Radio/mobile phone
o. High vis jackets
p. Provisions for the rescue boat crew e.g. clothing, drinks etc
q. **First Aid Box:-**
    i. Guidance leaflet
    ii. 2 small dressings
    iii. 2 medium dressings
    iv. 2 large dressings
    v. 2 non-stick dressings
    vi. 2 eye pads
    vii. Scissors
    viii. 10 saline wipes
    ix. 4 non-sterile gloves
    x. Cold pack
    xi. Burn gel
    xii. Plasters
    xiii. Resuscitation mask

4. Appendix D: Boat & Competitor Safety Check List *(to be communicated to competitor clubs)*

A. **Buoyancy**

check that the following are secure and watertight:

- buoyancy compartments,
- seals,
- hatch covers,
- boat hull and
- ventilation bungs

B. **Bow balls**

check that:

- all racing boats have a bow ball securely fixed over the bow
- bow ball fixing screws do not represent a further hazard.

C. **Fittings**

check that the following are secure and operating freely:

- outriggers,
- swivels,
- gates,
- seats
- stretchers

D. **Heel restraints**

check that heel restraints:

- are adequate and secure
- do not allow the heels to rise higher than 7cm (ROWSAFE).

E. **Steering equipment**

check the following are secure and working:

- rudder lines,
- steering mechanisms,
- rudder and
- fin

F. **Oars & sculls:**

check:

- not damaged
- 'buttons' are secure

G. **Boat suitability**

check:

- suitable design for the situation: e.g. crew weight

H. **Rowing competitors**

check that rowers:

- are suitably dressed for rowing or coxing carrying suitable extra clothing in the boat
- appear to be fit for the event and that have attended the race briefing

- have sufficient drinking water in the boat
- have informed their crew, attending club member or coach, or race official if they have any medical condition that might exceptionally require treatment.
- carry appropriate emergency medication for any such medical condition in their boat; e.g. asthma inhalers, epi-pens, diabetic medicines etc.
- have ensured that specific details of any such medical conditions are held for them by their crew, attending club member or coach and are available if they might require medical treatment.

I. **Coxes**

ensure that coxes

- carry a course map (head races only)
- wear buoyancy aids or lifejackets with crotch-straps fitted as appropriate.
- are suitably dressed for the conditions
- carry sufficient drinking water

J. **Precaution for Rough Conditions**

ensure that:

- competitors carry bailers
- splash boards are fitted to craft, where normally appropriate. NB If the *exceptional* fitting of splash boards is considered necessary then abandonment of the race should be given strong consideration.

5. Appendix E: Time Plan for 2024 event

TIME	CREWS	**ORGANISATION**	TIDE
07:45		**Safety teams briefing**	
08:00	**Competitors briefing**		
08:15		Safety boats on water	
08:30			
08:45	Div1: Boating begins	Safety boats depart to stations	LW 08:40
09:00			
09:15			
09:30			
09:45		Starters Ready	
10:00	Div 1: START	Finishers Ready	
10:15			
10:30			
10:45	Div 1: Crews Off Water		
11:00			
11:15	Div 2: Boating begins	Safety Boats depart to Stations	
11:30			
11:45			
12:00			
12:15		Starters Ready	
12:30	Div 2: START	Finishers Ready	
12:45			
13:00			
13:15	Div 2: Crews Off Water	Safety Teams Break	
13:30	Div 3: Boating begins	Safety Boats depart to Stations	
13:45			
14:00			
14:15			
14:30		Starters Ready	
14:45	Div 3: START	Finishers ready	HW 14:58
15:00			
15:15			
15:30	Div 3: Crews Off Water	Safety Teams Stand Down	

No ferries or paddle steamer running

Refer:

https://www.dartmouthrailriver.co.uk/tours/dartmouth-totnes-river-cruise

https://www.paddlesteamerkc.co.uk/

https://www.tide-forecast.com/locations/Totnes/tides/latest