

Blakeney Sailing Club

Organised Sailing – including races, open meetings and Social Sailing

Risk assessment for BSC on water activities, which usually take place in Blakeney Harbour and its approaches from seaward.

It is approximately 3 miles/5km from the Carnser dinghy park in Blakeney village to the open sea at Blakeney Point at the Western end of the harbour.

The Harbour has shallows, is exposed on the North Norfolk coast to variable winds in strength, direction and reliability, the sandbanks and channels can be subject to unpredictable movement by strong winds and high tides.

During periods of spring tides launching and returning to the dinghy park at Blakeney Carnser is only usually possible one and a half hours either side of High water.

There is usually only a short stand after the flood tide at high water before the ebb sets in, this needs to be considered by sailors, rowers and race officers during periods of light or unreliable winds to allow both sufficient time and depth of water to ensure a return to the dinghy park on that tide.

BSC usually provides a patrol boat[s] during organised events, which are manned by volunteer amateur crews who are not necessarily trained in first aid or rescue procedures.

Blakeney Harbour is 'free' and available for use by anyone at any time, consequently there may be inexperienced adults and children on the water, there are also commercial ferries operating out of Blakeney cut and Morston creek.

There are many moorings off the entrance to Morston creek in the area known as 'the Pit' as well as other moored boats in the harbour.

All members should note that BSC is a Community Amateur Sports Club that is run by members for the benefit of members. We all have a responsibility for our own health and safety and the safety of others. It is the member's responsibility to please follow the advice and guidance laid down in this risk assessment and not to engage in any activity that puts you or others at risk of injury.

Before making the decision to go afloat members and guests taking part in BSC events need to be aware of all the risks involved. They need to have acquainted themselves with an up to date weather forecast, have assessed the capabilities of their crew and the condition and suitability of their boat and its equipment. It is advised that sailing in the presence of the club patrol boat reduces risks. Risks can also be reduced by sailing with a minimum of two boats in a buddy system and being prepared to offer assistance to each other if necessary.

The following are risks we have identified:

Hazard -1	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
<p>Less skilled or less experienced sailor helming</p> <p>The less skilled helms who through their inexperience do not recognise the dangers.</p>	<p>Danger to themselves and other users on the water</p>	<p>Sailors with inadequate skills to sail at Blakeney</p>	<p>Sailors to have RYA Youth Scheme Level 3 or RYA National Scheme Level 2 or equivalent skill</p> <p>When racing, sailors who have indicated that they are less experienced or if the EO suspects that there is doubt about the sailor's skills in the prevailing circumstances, two Patrol Boats (PB) are recommended to be on the water. One PB to take the Race Officer to Lapwing and one PB to patrol. SEE RACE OFFICER BRIEFING NOTES <i>"It is good practice to use two craft."</i></p>	<p>PBs to be on water and ready to assist as early as possible preferably before sailors set sail. PB to be aware of the less experienced sailors and their sail numbers paying them frequent attention.</p> <p>More members boats carrying VHF radios to assist Event Organiser (EO) & PB helm.</p> <p>The EO can assign an experienced sailor with VHF radio to shadow the less experienced member to the race start line at Lapwing or throughout a flotilla event. The experienced sailor can assess whether that sailor has the ability to sail safely in the prevailing conditions summoning help if required.</p> <p>If necessary the EO will request the PB or an experienced sailor to accompany the inexperienced a place of safety e.g. Lapwing or back to launch slipway at Dinghy Park. RO to consider setting a course where the less experienced can be seen from the committee boat. The EO to consider arranging shadowing as above if there is any doubt about skill level in more challenging wind/tides.</p>	<p>Low</p>

Hazard -1 a	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Youth Members until skill levels established deemed satisfactory at Blakeney but especially in challenging tides and/or winds	Danger to themselves and other users on the water	Sailors under 18years with inadequate skills to sail at Blakeney	As for less skilled or less experienced members listed in Hazard - 1	<p>The EO to arrange shadowing as above of a Youth Member for two/three events unless a high degree of skill/experience is obvious</p> <p>The EO to arrange shadowing of a Youth Member in more challenging winds/tides unless high skill/experience is obvious.</p>	Low

Hazard -2	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Medical emergency such as a heart attack / stroke or similar life threatening event.	<p>Death / permanent disability</p> <p>Low</p>	Sailors and duty team / Patrol Boat crew.	PB & EO to be in radio contact using BSC VHF radios and know how to contact emergency services if required using their mobile phone (see note 1)	First aid / CPR to be administered as necessary.	Low

Hazard -3	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Drowning from capsized or falling overboard	Death / brain damage Low.	Sailors	Personal buoyancy is to be worn at all times when on the water, specifically this includes helms and crews in dinghies, EOs and assistants on Lapwing and PB helm and crews. EO to ensure adequate PB cover. PB & EO to be in radio contact. EO to know how to contact emergency services if required.	Sailors to ensure that their personal buoyancy is fit for purpose Crew of PB not to enter water thereby creating risk. First aid / CPR to be administered as necessary	Low

Hazard -4	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Capsized resulting in crew trapped under boat	Death / brain damage Low	Sailors	PB to carry rescue knife. Adequate crew on PB but not increase risk by entering water unnecessarily.	Sailors to carry personal rescue knives and ensure proper clothing worn and boat equipment and fittings do not present a hazard.	Low

Hazard -5	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Injury through collision with other watercraft	Concussion, cuts, bruises Medium	Sailors / PB crews	The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (Colregs) will be obeyed by all sailors. These are designed to minimise the risk of collision. First Aid kit available on PB, Lapwing and in club house	Helms and crews to ensure that they are competent to take avoiding action and do not present a hazard to other craft. Third party insurance must be held.	Low

Hazard -6	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Injury through being struck on the head by boom. E.G. from an uncontrolled gybe.	Concussion, cuts, bruises. High for sailors with at risk medical conditions and inexperienced sailors. Low for experienced sailors.	All sailors, those with at risk medical conditions and inexperienced sailors, e.g. those who have yet to learn the potential hazard	First Aid equipment on PB, Lapwing and in club house	Inexperienced sailors or those with at risk medical condition to wear head protection at their discretion	Low

Hazard -7	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Hypothermia from immersion or exposure.	Loss of limbs, death Medium	Sailors	Wear appropriate clothing / hat / gloves etc. During the period 1 st October to 31 st May dry suit or wetsuit must be worn, this includes Patrol Boat helm and crew PB in attendance. 'Space blankets' available on PB, Lapwing and at clubhouse See note 2	Sailors to ensure own welfare and to retire if affected to a degree that would hinder their recovery from capsized etc. EO to be prepared to abandon event and advise return to Club House with PB escort	Low

Hazard -8	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Illness due to water contamination	Loss of limbs, death Low	Sailors and all those in contact with water and surroundings	Sailors to cover cuts with waterproof plasters and seek first aid as required.	Club members to be aware of potential hazard	Low

Hazard -9	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Injuries from equipment on boat or slipping on surfaces.	Concussion, cuts, bruises. Low rising to medium in strong winds	Sailors	EO to decide if conditions are suitable for event First Aid equipment on PB and in club house	Helmets to ensure equipment on boats does not present a hazard and non-slip surfaces fitted where appropriate	Low
Hazard -10	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Injuries from contact with booms, flapping sails or mast whilst boats getting ready to sail	Head, eye or other injuries Medium if windy, low if not	Sailors and public	Sailors and EO maintain look out. Ensure boats are unattended for minimum time unless secured so as not to present a hazard	Assess level of risk for conditions	Low
Hazard -11	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Injuries from slipping / tripping on or falling on the slipway	Head injuries, fractures, bruising, drowning. Drowning low, other medium	People who use the slipway	Sailors and EO to ensure minimum hazards prior to events. First Aid equipment on PB and in club house	Users to remove any unnecessary slipping or tripping hazards. Appropriate footwear to be worn.	Low
Hazard -12	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Capsize resulting in inability to right or stranding of dinghy (e.g. mast stuck in the mud when inverted)	Crew in water for substantial time. See note 2 re: hypothermia High to Low depending on type of dinghy, strength and ability of crew	Sailors	PB on standby to assist crew with recovery. Sailors to ensure sufficient buoyancy carried or built in to ensure dinghy floatation in all reasonable circumstances.	Crews to ensure they are familiar with capsize recovery procedures for the craft sailed. Inexperienced helms to make EO & PB aware of their skill level.	Low

Hazard -13	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Dinghy gear failure resulting in inability to manoeuvre	Capsize, stranding or presenting a hazard to other craft resulting in personal injury. LOW	Sailors	Helm to ensure craft in proper condition to sail. PB in attendance. For members not racing, it is recommended they carry an anchor and paddle.	Helm to check operation of gear before launch	Low

Hazard -14	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
Unsuitable weather conditions including deterioration of weather and lightning strikes	Numbers of dinghies in difficulties with crews unable to self recover Medium to high in severe conditions	Sailors	EO to cancel / abandon or shorten events as dictated by the weather conditions. Abandonment mandatory if risk of lightening	Helms are responsible for ensuring that they, their crew and boat are suited to the conditions at the time and should retire if in doubt	Low

Hazard -14	Potential severity and risk	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Further measures as appropriate	Residual risk
High temperatures and strong sunshine	Heatstroke / sunburn / Eye damage Medium	Sailors / EO / PB crews	High SPF sunscreen / hats / sunglasses with high UV rating to be worn. Exposed skin to be covered and sufficient fluid intake	Individual to assess level of risk for conditions.	Low

Note 1 Race Officer must have a mobile phone in a waterproof bag. He/she should have registered the phone with the 112 emergency services. To learn how to register your mobile phone see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPZv_8dABfU

Note 2 Sailors/ Race Officers / Patrol Boat to be aware of risk.

See <http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/RowSafe/1-8-ColdWaterImmersion&Hypothermia-v1.pdf>

Sudden, unexpected immersion in cold water below 15 C is potentially dangerous. The coastal and inland waters of the UK remain cold all year round and a peak of drowning deaths often occurs in the summer, as the hot weather tempts people into the cold water. The effects of the cold water mean that even healthy individuals, who are good swimmers, can still drown within a short period of time, often only a few feet from the shore. Be aware of one minute – one degree rule. E.G if the water is 10°C you can assume you have 10 minutes to get the individual out of the water

Rough handling of the individual in the rescue is dangerous, handle carefully, lift them out horizontally, wrap in space blankets to prevent further heat loss. Shield individual from cooling effect from wind, e.g returning to shore in speeding rigis.