

Findochty Water Sports Club (FWSC)

Rowing Risk Assessment V4 (June 2025)

The purpose of Findochty Water Sports Club is to promote and advise on sailing, rowing, pleasure boating and water sports in Findochty Harbour. This Risk Assessment covers activities in relation to Coastal Rowing

	Risk or Hazard	Detail	Initial Likelihood	Initial Impact	Mitigation	Responsibility	Residual Likelihood	Residual Impact
1	Risk of drowning	Lifejackets must be worn appropriately, and rowers informed of safe practices whilst in the harbour or at sea OODs are fully aware of and trained in emergency procedures if the risk of drowning increases due to weather and sea conditions	1	4	All rowers - members and visitors, must wear a club or personal lifejacket approved by the OOD. OOD and Cox will check that lifejackets have been fitted appropriately. All rowers are instructed how to use their lifejacket and how to behave in the boat to minimise the risk of falling overboard OODs are trained in VHS radio use OODs are trained in how to manage a boat in challenging conditions OODs have participated in Man Overboard training OODs have participated in Medical Emergency Evacuation training OODs are aware of emergency 'escape routes' OODs have a mobile phone in case a 999 call is required	OOD OOD Group OOD	1	3

2	Launching and Recovery	Skiffs are launched and recovered in Findochty Harbour as per OOD instruction. Launching and recovery outwith Findochty should be detailed in the Event Risk Assessment	1	3	To ensure that rowers and skiffs are unharmed during launching and recovery, rowers will be instructed by the OOD as per agreed procedures. This includes preparing boats for launching and recovery, steering, navigating the slipway safely and positioning on the beach	OOD	1	2
3	Weather and sea conditions	Weather and sea conditions are variable, so must be considered and analysed fully before a row is added to Spond. Conditions should continue to be monitored on the day of the row, prior to launching and whilst at sea	3	4	The OOD will check weather and sea conditions prior to and on the day of the row. A minimum of two weather apps should be used to correlate and assess conditions. Advanced data should not be relied upon in isolation. On exiting Sterlochy Pier, the OOD should stop the boat and assess the current direction of wind and sea conditions. Directional plans should be altered accordingly. All crew members contribute to ongoing assessment of conditions whilst at sea	OOD Crew	2	2
4	Skiff entry and exit into harbour	Exiting and entering harbours is a routine part of any row. OODs and Coxes must be aware of hazards and how to mitigate	2	3	On exiting and entering harbours, OOD / Cox should approach with caution, have clear sight of any hazards in the water including swimmers and paddle sport users and be aware of other vessels. VHF radio checks on channel 16 or 37 should be carried out in the inner harbour before progressing. Once confirmed, the lead OOD should switch to channel 10 and announce the following: ALL VESSELS, FINDOCHTY SKIFFS ARE EXITING FINDOCHTY HARBOUR. The lead OOD should then return to channel 16 or 37. On return to harbour, the lead OOD should switch to channel 10 and announce: ALL VESSELS, FINDOCHTY SKIFFS ARE ENTERING FINDOCHTY HARBOUR. The same process should be repeated for all Moray harbours apart from Buckie. On entering and exiting Buckie harbour, the Harbour Master should be notified in advance.	OOD / Cox	1	2

					The lead OOD should switch to channel 12 and announce as above			
5	Climbing in and out of a skiff	Minor injuries are most likely when rowers are climbing in and out of the boat.	3	3	When climbing in, the boat should be held securely by the crew. The cox should enter first, followed by stroke, 3, 2 and finally bow. The cox should ensure that the bow rower is able to push off and enter the boat safely. When climbing out, the bow rower should climb out first and secure the boat on the beach, allowing the crew to exit one at a time. Only one rower should be standing at any time, carefully walking on floorboards and avoiding side planks. Rowers are encouraged to stay low to minimise trip risk. If a rower has restricted mobility, the cox should consider this before positioning the crew. Extra attention should also be drawn to stabilising the boat and assisting with entry and exit.	Event OOD Group	1	2
6	Collision with obstacles or hazards in the harbour and at sea	The cox should be qualified to ensure that they are aware of all static obstacles and hazards. other vessels at sea	2	4	The OOD is responsible for ensuring coxes are aware. The cox should always be alert to unexpected obstacles and hazards including creels, buoys, Sealife, driftwood, rocks and	OOD	1	2
7	Moving around in the boat at sea	If conditions allow, crew members may move seats at sea	2	3	If the OOD / Cox is confident that conditions are appropriate, crew members can move seats at sea. Rowers should move one at a time, stay low (never standing upright), and ensuring oars and tiller are secure. The crew should ballast the boat during any movement	OOD / Cox	1	2
8	Handling boats and oars	Boats and oars are heavy. Rowers may sustain injuries when they are lifted, moved, launched or recovered.	2	3	The OOD will ensure that crews work together to ensure individual rowers do not sustain injuries. This includes during launching, recovery, entry, exit and at sea. Rowers are instructed by coxes how to row to maximise their rowing experience and minimising risk to them or others	OOD / Cox	1	2

9	Crew member overboard	The St. Ayles Skiff is a very stable boat with capsize or crew member overboard	1	4	OODs ensure that conditions are conducive to rowing. If sea conditions change, OOD should return the boats to shore asap. Rowers are instructed how to activate their lifejacket in the case of capsize or crew overboard. OOD / Cox is aware of emergency procedures including emergency radio / phone use. The club delivers annual Man Overboard training to ensure members know how to recover a person from the water. The Boat Bag contains a warming blanket	OOD / Cox	1	3
10	Medical emergency	A medical emergency may arise naturally or through over exertion or aggravation of an existing condition	1	4	Coxes are aware of relevant medical information of their crews for communication to emergency services if needed. Radios are used for medical emergencies or 999 as required.	Event OOD Group	1	3
11	Clothing and personal resilience	Weather conditions could change resulting in rowers becoming cold, wet, thirsty, hungry , hot, dehydrated etc.	2	3	Before rowing, all crew should be advised on appropriate clothing including gloves and footwear. Rowers are encouraged to bring boat bags containing water, energy food, extra clothing, sun screen, hat etc.	OOD	1	2
12	Towing	The OOD and nominated tower should ensure that the boat is prepared for towing and secured appropriately	1	3	The OOD overseeing the event / journey, should ensure that the boat is secure as per the OOD "Towing Out" instructions. The OOD and the tower should ensure that the trailer is attached securely to the4 towing vehicle. The tower should drive for no more than 10 miles without checking that the boat remains secure	OOD / Tower	1	2

VHF channel 16 (Aberdeen Coastguard or Buckie Lifeboat)
Telephone 999 or 112 (Emergency services requesting Coastguard)
Telephone for Aberdeen Coastguard 01224-592-334