Trentham Boat Club Guidance to Blue Green Algae

Background

Members of the club are responsible for their own safety at all times. It is the duty of the club to ensure that risk of reaction to coming into contact with Blue Green Algae(cyanobacteria) is minimised in accordance with the risk assessment.

The Environment Agency publish advice notes on the risks and precautions to be taken in the event of Blue Green Algae levels Algal blooms: advice for the public and landowners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) presenting a hazard to water users.

Blue Green Algae occurs naturally in inland waters, and Human health risk from exposure to Blue-Green algae toxins can arise through direct contact with exposed parts of the body (especially sensitive areas such as ears, eyes, mouth and throat), swallowing or inhaling water containing the algae. Different groups of water users are at different levels of risk, depending on the amount of time they are likely to spend in/ close to the affected water.

The basic principle applied is that if those responsible for the management of club:

i. Take the steps necessary to help users avoid the worst areas of contamination; and
ii. Fully explain to users the possible risks and the personal safety precautions that should be taken;
iii. then those who choose to go onto the water will have voluntarily accepted such risks as there may be.

1. Users, other than juniors, are responsible for their own safety and the safety of other water users at all times. The club undertakes to provide all the relevant information for the user to decide whether they wish to go onto the water on any particular day.
2. New members will be made aware of the possible risk of reaction to the Blue Green Algae and instructed on how the club will work with the user to minimise risk, including a copy of this note.
3. At the start of each club event the users should make themselves aware of any out of bounds areas (i.e areas with visible bloom of algae) and ensure that they are avoided. If the safety officer, coach or other club official requests that the user moves from an area this shall be done without delay.
4. Members going onto the water outside of scheduled times do so at their own risk and should ensure that they are familiar with this note and assess the risk for themselves. This includes the identification of out of bounds areas.
5. Ensure that broken skin is protected from possible contact by providing cover such as bandage or plaster.
6. In the event that your skin does come into contact with the Algae then wash with clean water as soon as practical.

Juniors

By 'children' we mean those who would be regarded in law as too young to make a valid judgement about whether to accept the risk of injury by participating in a hazardous activity.

Water sports have an element of risk. All water sports are properly managed and most risks associated with it are self-evident, this is not the case with potential dangers arising from water pollution or Blue Green algae growth.

An instructor or coach in charge of a group of juniors must provide the standard of care as outlined in British Rowing guidance.

Instructors must therefore try and judge what a parent (having the same information on algae problems that the instructor has) would do when deciding whether to allow their child to use the water for rowing. This should take into account the prevailing conditions and the ability of the child.

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE RISK STATEMENT

Participants are advised that blue-green algae is present in the waters used by Trentham Boat Club. On occasions, growth of the blue-green algae becomes excessive and can cause blooms and scum. Bloom and scum-forming algae are capable of producing toxins which can be harmful to people and fatal to animals. We wish to advise you of the following:

1 Every person or parents of children wishing to use the potentially affected water is required to sign this Risk Statement after reading this guidance.

2 Keep away from large blooms of algae that will appear visible on the lake.

3 Minimal time should be spent in shallow water launching and recovering equipment. Launching/recovery should be in areas away from thick aggregations of algae or scum. If it looks difficult to row, rowing should be avoided.

4 If you are unsure if it is safe to go out, consult a captain or the safety officer before going out.

5 After coming ashore participants should wash their hands and avoid bringing scum and algae into the changing rooms. All clothing should be washed and thoroughly dried on returning home. Do not store wet or damp clothes if contaminated with algae scum.

6 During periods of algae blooms, boats and equipment must be rinsed off on the slipway.

7 If a hose is being used, you must have a member of the crew on the public pathway advising them of the trip hazard.

8 Avoid fooling in or near the water.

9 In the event that a participant capsizes in the water, they shall make every effort to minimise the time in contact with the Algae. Participants should use the shower facilities to reduce the risk of skin irritation. A record of the incident will be kept in accordance with the requirements of the governing body, British Rowing.

This Risk Statement is to be signed by or on behalf of those intending to go in or near the water at Trentham Boat Club.

CONSENT

I confirm that I have read and fully understood the guidance and other information provided by the club on blue-green algae and accept responsibility for exposing myself to such risks whilst taking part in activities in and around the water. I will comply at all times with the instructions of the club and its officers. I accept responsibility for any injury, damage or loss caused by my own negligence.

Name	**Signature**	**Date**