



WARGRAVE BOATING CLUB

A GUIDE FOR DUTY MEMBERS

Thank you for volunteering to be a Duty Member. This guide will explain the responsibilities of your role, the resources available to you, and give an overview of what you need to do. It contains:

1. Responsibilities of the Duty Members
2. Opening the Club and duties
3. Closing the Club and after your duty has finished
4. Useful Resources for Duty Members

Please contact a member of the committee if you have any questions, or if you have any suggestions for how this guide can be improved.

WBC Committee, April 2026

1. Responsibilities of the Duty Members

Wargrave Boating Club is active all year round however we are busiest during the summer months, and this is when we run “General Boating” sessions during which Club members can take out boats. During these sessions two members of the Club act as Duty Members, responsible for assisting members who come down to the Club and overseeing the safe use of Club premises and equipment.

Responsibilities of Duty members are:

- **To open the Club for General Boating sessions and make its facilities available to members.** If you are unable to do your duty, it is your responsibility to arrange a swap with another member of the Club to ensure guaranteed cover. Two Duty Members must be present for the Club to be opened. This guide provides details of how the Club should be opened and closed, and what should be made available to members.
- **To maintain a record of who is taking out which boats, where they are going, and when they will return.** You should require members to sign out boats and provide details of how long they expect to be out and their contact details; this is for the safety of members as well as the security of the Club and its equipment. You are also required to record all members’ guests when they come to the Club (for insurance purposes). Members are responsible for ensuring their guests will follow Club rules.
- **To prevent any behaviours which contravene Club rules or are likely to result in injury or damage.** This will generally include providing guidance and clarification to members, requesting appropriate behaviour, and monitoring the general environment in which boating is taking place. In extreme cases Duty Members have the authority to refuse to allow boats to be taken out, to require individuals to leave Club premises, or even to close down the Club for that General Boating session.
- **To escalate as appropriate should there be any problems.** Communication is key to the Duty Member’s role, and can include requesting assistance or clarification from other members, informing committee members of incidents, or calling in emergency services if required.

Duty Members are not required to:

- **Assist or train members in the correct use of equipment.** Members are responsible for their own use of Club equipment, and are required to ensure that they have the appropriate experience and training to use equipment safely. It is of course better to offer assistance and advice if you are comfortable to do so.
- **Risk their own safety.** Under no circumstances must any member risk their own safety or act outside of their comfort zone when using Club equipment, and that includes Duty Members. Ask for support from other members or call for help if you are unsure. You can of course go to the assistance of members if you assess it is safe to do so.

In summary, the Duty Members are responsible for using their own judgment to ensure the safety of the Club and its users, and if uncertain to ask for assistance from those around and escalate as necessary.

2. Opening the Club and Duties

How to prepare the Club for General Boating

Checklist for opening up the Club:

- Check the river conditions.
- Open the gate at the top of the lane.
- Open the main Club door using the Duty Member's keys.
- Open the electric roller doors.
- Prepare the sign-out sheets.
- Prepare the Duty Member's Boat.

Once the General Boating session has started, the Duty Member should keep track of members signing out boats and check them back in using the sign-out sheets, assist where it is helpful to do so, perform maintenance tasks around the Club if time allows, and ensure that all boats are away and the Club locked up at the end of the session. You may bring a pint of milk down for members to use to make hot drinks, but this is not mandatory.

Checking River Conditions

Normal Club opening times are Saturdays (and weekdays during state school holidays) from 2pm until 6pm and Sundays from 10am until 6pm.

The Duty member may suspend or cancel boating dependent on weather or river conditions, though this is usually only the case at the very beginning or end of the boating season. NB, if a thunderstorm is threatened all boating activity should stop.

River conditions (flow) between Shiplake and Marsh locks can be checked using the following link, which is also available on the WBC website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-current-river-conditions>

General Boating (not under section supervision) is NOT allowed when Current conditions between Shiplake and Marsh Locks have a yellow or red stream warning, e.g.:

Sonning Lock to Shiplake Lock	Red Caution strong stream warning
Shiplake Lock to Marsh Lock	Red Caution strong stream warning
Marsh Lock to Hambleden Lock	Red Caution strong stream warning

Duty Member's Boat

The white rowing dinghy on the trailer, with the life ring, is the Duty Member's Boat. This is not a safety boat, but is there to enable those on shore to render assistance to another boater in difficulties ***should they choose to do so and feel confident that they will not be putting themselves or others at risk.***

The Duty Member should ideally put the Duty Member's Boat in the water as soon as possible after the Club opens. If you don't feel confident to put the boat in the water, please ensure it is put near the slip so it could be launched quickly if required. The equipment in the Duty Member's Boat should include a throw rope and oars.

Signing out boats

It is the Duty Member's responsibility to ensure that whenever a WBC boat is taken out and brought back this is recorded in the Sign-out sheets located in this folder. The Duty Member should have this folder on their table while on duty. Members should record the names of individuals using the boat; the specific boat used; time of departure; destination (if outside the General Boating Area); mobile number (if carried); estimated return time; and time of return.

Only certain boat types may be taken out, and some only by members who have had appropriate training. The Duty Member must ensure that only permitted craft are launched, and only by members who have permission to do so. A summary of Boat Types and Rules can be found in the Duty Member's folder, as well as a visual guide on display in the Club.

It is the responsibility of the members taking out boats to take all boats from the boathouse and return them at the end of the session – it is not the Duty Member's role to handle these boats (though it may be helpful to assist occasionally). Each member should ask the Duty Member if they can take out a boat, and if for any reason the Duty Member is not comfortable for them to do so they must respect that decision.

Members launching their own craft do not need to be recorded on the Sign-out sheets (however guests need to still be signed in and out on the Visitors Log).

Members' guests

Adult Members (over 18) may bring up to three guests to the Club (or one family unit) at a time, though this is expected to be no more than a few times per year. Guests will be the responsibility of the adult Member that invited them, and must be accompanied by a Member at all times (including if they take out a boat.) All guests must be signed in and out on the Visitors Log for insurance purposes and follow Club rules.

Children (defined by the Club Constitution as before 18th birthday)

Members who are under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult Member when on Club premises, and will need an adult Member's permission to take a boat out on the water. The responsible adult must accompany them or stay on Club premises while they are out on a boat, dependent on the specific rules related to that type of boat (see the Boat Category Guide.). Children age 16 and 17 who are members may visit the club unaccompanied by an adult, but cannot bring guests.

Time restrictions on boat usage

Duty Members may set reasonable restrictions on which boats may be taken, where they may be taken, and how long for. Reasons for doing so may include concerns about river conditions, member safety or fair usage on a busy day to allow everyone a chance to go out, e.g. it would be reasonable to restrict the length of sessions to as little as a half hour at times when the Club is very busy. On busy days priority should be given to members of the Club over guests of members.

Safe handling of boats

All Club members should be aware of how to handle boats safely, however may require guidance from the Duty Member from time to time:

- Boats should be carried, not dragged, to prevent damage to hulls.
- All boats **must** be secured bow and stern so that they do not swing out into the river.
- Life jackets and/or buoyancy aids may be required for some boats; the rules are clearly defined for each boat category and must be strictly observed.
- If any of the boats contain water, please try to dry them out. When emptying, please take care not to damage the rowlocks.
- After use, all Club craft and equipment must be left in a clean and tidy condition and replaced in the allocated position inside the boathouse.

Launching own craft

Members may launch their own non-motorised craft from the Club. These must be carried to and from Station Road and cannot be stored at the Club. The Club's rules, including the wearing of buoyancy aids, still apply. Please note that your own craft are not covered by WBC licences and insurance.

Refreshments

Tea, coffee, hot chocolate and squash are available for free for members to make their own drinks. Members should do their own washing up and take their recycling and rubbish home with them as we do not have a rubbish collection from the club.

If supplies are running low, please notify one of the General Committee members.

We no longer operate a snack cupboard, though members are welcome to use the refrigerators to store their own snacks while using the Club.

Club maintenance tasks

While you are on duty please make the most of any quieter moments to sweep any dirt from the landing areas (or use the pressure washer), and to keep the clubhouse clean and tidy (cleaning materials can be found in the cupboards in the Clubroom). Please water the hanging baskets, containers and other flowers/ plants. Please restock toilet paper and hand soap, the supplies are in the cupboards in the Clubroom. Please inform a member of the Committee if there are any maintenance issues.

Use of gas BBQ and Clubroom

Adult Members can use the Club gas BBQ and Clubroom facilities. It is the Member's responsibility to ensure everything is left clean and tidy afterwards, and to take their rubbish and recycling home with them. Facilities must be shared if more than one member wants to use them at a time.

The gas bottles are kept in the yellow cage behind the club. The key to it is in the key box in the Clubroom.

Medical incidents

The First Aid box is located in the Clubroom. All incidents should be recorded in the Incident Log Book inside the box.

The defibrillator is located on the front wall of the Club, with the number to open the defibrillator door on the wall inside the boathouse immediately behind the defibrillator. Instructions for its use are clearly displayed.

If you are worried, or something goes wrong

Communication is key. If you have any concerns ask other members at the Club to help, or call a member of the General Committee (see the Contact Details sheet in this Folder and on the Club noticeboard). You are not expected to know all the answers, or to pretend to.

3. Closing the Club and after your duty has finished

- All equipment (including parasols) must be put away.
- Please wash, dry and put away all crockery and cutlery and leave the Clubroom clean and tidy.
- Lost Property should be placed in the box marked Lost Property.
- All electrics (other than fridge freezer) must be turned off.
- Switch off all the lights.
- Members should be encouraged to take their own rubbish and recycling away with them. Please empty the bins and take any remaining rubbish and recycling home with you to dispose of as we don't have a rubbish collection from the club.
- Please ensure the electronic goose scarers are in place to deter geese from roosting on the Club lawn.
- Please check all doors are locked before leaving (including the patio door, main boat roller door and the fine boat doors). The gate at the end of the track should be closed.
- Please pass the Duty Member's keys to the next person on duty as soon as possible.
- If you have any difficulties, or discover damage to property, equipment or fittings, please contact a member of the Committee as soon as possible. The telephone numbers of the Committee are listed on the General Notice Board and in the front of this folder.

Keys

At the end of the session, the duty keys must be passed onto the next Duty Member (indicated on the rota online).

All other keys are kept in the keybox in the Clubroom.

4. Useful Resources for Duty Members

The following list includes the information available to Duty Members and where it can be found:

Summary of Boat types and their rules. Can be found in this Duty Folder and on display in the Club.

This quick guide gives a visual guide to the types of boat in the Club, and a summary of the rules relating to each.

Boating Area Maps. Can be found in this Duty Folder and on display in the Club.

These maps provide information about local waterways and routes that may be taken with the Duty Member's permission.

FAQs. Can be found in this Duty Folder.

An easy access summary of frequently asked questions; please notify a member of the Committee if you have other questions that should be added.

The Duty Register. Located online, details provided by email to all members.

Duty Members will have signed up for their duty on this sheet. It contains details of which members are on duty for the previous and next sessions and their contact details to assist in collecting/ passing on Club keys etc.

Sign-out sheets. Available in this folder (the Duty Folder).

These sheets are the forms used to sign out boats during the General Boating sessions. Members are required to fill these in when taking boats out, including expected return time and contact details.

Visitors Log. Available in this folder (the Duty Folder).

All guests visiting the Club must be logged against the Adult member who is supervising them.

Incident Log Book. Kept on shelf above the duty desk.

If any injuries occur or Club equipment is damaged or in need of repair this should be recorded in the Incident Log Book.

Membership List – Adults. Snapshot can be found in the Duty Folder.

It may be useful to refer to the list of adult members when signing out boats. The most comprehensive and current list is stored in a membership database that is not publicly available, however a recent snapshot of adult members is held in the Duty Register. Further details can be requested from the Membership Secretary if required.

Membership List – Fine Boats. Snapshot can be found in the Duty Folder.

Some members who have had relevant training and paid an additional subscription charge are entitled to use Fine Boats (Rowing, Skiffing and Punting).

Membership List – SUP approved. Snapshot can be found in this Duty Folder.

A Club-specific induction is required for members wanting to use Stand-Up Paddleboards (SUPs) before they may take them out. SUPs can be taken out as part of General Boating, and Duty Members should ask members to confirm they are qualified to do so.

Membership List – Kayak Approved Paddlers. Snapshot can be found in this Duty Folder. Some members who have had relevant training are entitled to use Closed Cockpit Kayaks (as distinct from Sit-On Kayaks; see the section on Boat Types and their rules for more details.) Closed Cockpit Kayaks may not be taken out as part of General Boating as specialist supervision is required on the water.

Swim Test List. Can be found in this Duty Folder.

Children (defined as anyone under 18) are required to wear life jackets at all times when on Club premises or using Club equipment unless they have passed the Swim Test. The list of all children who have passed the test may help when advising parents of the appropriate equipment that must be worn.

Important Contacts List. Details can be found in this Duty Folder and on Club noticeboard.

Please reach out to Committee members with questions and to escalate issues as required.

River Conditions Status. Live details at this link, which can be found on the WBC website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-current-river-conditions>

It is the Duty Member's responsibility to ensure that river conditions are safe before the Club is opened. This may include verifying that there are no stream warnings active for the stretch of water where the Club is located (between Marsh Lock and Shiplake Lock).