DOVER ROWING CLUB

DISABILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

POLICY

February 2026

Dover Rowing Club Disability & Accessibility Policy

1. Purpose

Dover Rowing Club (DRC) is committed to creating an inclusive environment that respects and supports the diverse needs of our community. We strive to provide equal opportunities for people of all abilities and aim to make our facilities, programs, and events accessible to all members, participants, and visitors, including those with visible, hidden, cognitive, sensory, and emotional disabilities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Dover Rowing Club members, visitors, volunteers, coaches, and participants. It is designed to guide how we accommodate and support individuals with a wide range of disabilities, including but not limited to those with physical, sensory, neurodivergent, and mental health needs, to ensure our programs and facilities are accessible to everyone.

3. Definitions

Disability: Includes physical, sensory, cognitive, neurodivergent, and emotional conditions that may affect participation without reasonable accommodations. This includes hidden disabilities (e.g., ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, mental health conditions), sensory impairments (blindness or partial sight, deafness), and social-emotional or mental health needs.

Accessibility: The extent to which Dover Rowing Club's programs, facilities, and communications are usable by individuals with diverse needs.

4. Policy Statements

4.1 Equal Access

Dover Rowing Club is committed to providing equal access to all club facilities, programs, and activities. No individual will be denied membership, access to facilities, or participation on the basis of disability, whether visible or hidden. All members, including those who are neurodivergent, blind or partially sighted, deaf or hard of hearing, or have other specific needs, will receive appropriate accommodations as needed.

4.2 Accommodations

Dover Rowing Club will make reasonable accommodations to support full participation for individuals with a broad range of needs. Accommodations may include:

- Physical adjustments, such as ramps and accessible pathways.
- Adaptive rowing equipment and other sport-specific adjustments.
- Modifications to training programs, offering a supportive pace and setting for all participants.
- Quiet spaces and designated areas for individuals who may benefit from less sensory stimulation or require a quiet area for self-regulation.
- Support for sensory needs, including flexible use of personal listening devices, visual aids, and large-print materials.
- Alternative communication aids, such as simplified visual instructions, sign language interpretation, or provision of written materials.

4.3 Support for Neurodivergent Members

Dover Rowing Club values the contributions of neurodivergent individuals, including those with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other differences in processing and engagement. We strive to create a supportive environment that allows neurodivergent members to participate fully. This may mean that we have to adapt our practice accordingly and we may have to look at how we develop as an inclusive rowing club in order that we meet the needs of our members. We may need to look at individual need and look into the following possibilities in order to do this :-

- Training coaches and volunteers in neurodiversity awareness and in adapting practices to meet varying needs.
- Allowing flexible participation, including modified session lengths, breaks, and sensory accommodations
- Providing clear, structured communication with visual aids, as needed, to support understanding

4.4 Sensory and Communication Accessibility

To support individuals who are blind, partially sighted, deaf, or hard of hearing, DRC may have to adapt our practice accordingly and we may have to look at how we develop as an inclusive rowing club in order that we meet the needs of our members. We may need to look at individual need and look into the following possibilities in order to do this: -

- Offer assistance for those who may need help navigating facilities.
- Provide clear written communication in accessible formats, such as large print or audio.
- Arrange interpreters, captioning, or other aids upon request for members who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Use clear and supportive visual and auditory signals for instructions.

4.5 Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Support

DRC aims to be sensitive to individuals with social, emotional, and mental health needs, including anxiety, depression, PTSD, or other conditions that affect social interactions and comfort levels. This includes:

- Providing access to private, quiet spaces for members who may benefit from a low-stimulation environment.
- Ensuring non-judgmental, understanding support from members, coaches, and volunteers.
- Allowing flexible participation options and promoting an understanding, respectful environment.

4.6 Adaptive Rowing Programs

Dover Rowing Club is dedicated to promoting adaptive rowing programs that meet a variety of physical, cognitive, and sensory needs. Adaptive rowing may involve the use of modified equipment, customised coaching techniques, and individualised training plans.

4.7 Training for Staff and Volunteers

In the future and in response to need, DRC may need to develop understanding, and we may need to receive training to understand and effectively support the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. This includes:

- Understanding accessibility standards and sensitivity training regarding hidden and neurodivergent disabilities.
- Learning to communicate respectfully and effectively with individuals with various needs.
- Knowing procedures for supporting sensory, cognitive, and emotional accommodations

4.8 Communication and Information Accessibility.

Dover Rowing Club will strive to make all information, including club policies, schedules, and events, accessible to everyone. This may include providing materials in large print, Braille, or digital formats compatible with screen readers, as well as sensory-friendly and simplified materials as and when requested.

4.9 Facility Accessibility

We are committed to maintaining accessible facilities, and any new or renovated areas will be designed in compliance with accessibility laws and standards. DRC runs out of Dover Sea Sports Center, Esplanade, Dover, Kent, United Kingdom, CT17 9FS. It is run by the Dover Sea Sports Centre Community Interest Company. It is responsible for the building and facilities but does work in partnership with DRC. We shall do our best to ensure that we meet need where it arises. This includes: -

- Accessible entryways and clear routes throughout the facility.
- Adaptations to training areas and boat launching to ensure safety and access for individuals with physical disabilities or sensory needs

4.10 Complaint and Feedback Process

DRC encourages feedback from all members, including those with disabilities, regarding the accessibility of our programs and facilities. Any individual wishing to raise a concern, request further accommodations, or provide feedback may contact the club's Welfare Advisor . All complaints or requests will be addressed promptly, respectfully, and with confidentiality.

5. Responsibilities

DRC Committee : Responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, responding to accessibility concerns, and ensuring compliance with accessibility standards and best practices.

Club Members and Volunteers: Expected to support DRC's inclusivity efforts and respect the diverse needs and accommodations of all individuals.

6. Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Dover Rowing Club Committee to ensure it remains current and effective in promoting accessibility and inclusivity. Changes will be made as necessary to reflect new accessibility standards and best practices.

7. Contact Information

For questions, accommodation requests, or feedback regarding this policy, please contact the Dover Rowing Club Committee at Doverrowingclub@gmail.com

Signed …… Date ……

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