

CUSTOMS OF CITY BARGE

[To be read in conjunction with the Constitution of City Barge]

General

1. “The art of rowing” and “watermanship” are the Club’s goals.
2. Members should be willing to contribute to the Club's success, reputation and smooth running.
3. Members must treat all property owned or used by the Club with care.
4. The time-keeping convention is that if someone does not telephone or turn up within 15 minutes the appointment is void and the rest of the crew may carry on.
5. Whereas, the aims behind the club’s founding comprise all kinds of hand-powered boating, serious racing has not been the norm. However it is recognized that competition between crews or against the clock can raise the awareness of good technique and may improve the standard of rowing.
6. City Barge is the only club in the country for Venetian rowing, and this unity is an advantage on every occasion because it means all can be involved, with their boats, provided they have access to trailers. Consequently, we all see more of the waterways, at home and abroad, and we have flexibility in making up crews, both standing up and sitting down.

Joining the Club

7. It is the custom to welcome every potential new member to come and try the various kinds of hand-powered boating that we practice at City Barge. Thus each new member can make a realistic decision whether to join. Existing members have the chance to pass on their skills ... and hidden talents may come to light.
8. For a new member more interested in the social and support activities there is the Supporter’s membership.
9. Supporters are encouraged to take part in the activities of the Club, and join in as ‘sitters’, to use the archaic word, and indeed learn to row. It is normal that some Supporters transfer and become Full Members.
10. Bearing in mind that the Boathouse is used by the five college boat clubs of the Consortium, it is worth mentioning that no effort is made to encourage undergraduates to join our club, because it is possible that they should be rowing with their college crews. It is different for post-graduates – few of them time to follow a racing regime.

Saturday Mornings

11. Members usually meet at the Boathouse in Oxford to row on Saturday mornings 9.15am at the Boathouse to row at 9.30. Communication about these outings is by a special E-mail list via the Standing Captain or someone he indicates. To add or change your entry on this list contact him.
12. There are various sandolos available, and a double-sculling gig with slides. There is a boat slip near by.

Cruises and other events

13. A Co-ordinator is appointed by the Committee to 'recce' and organise each event. It is usual for the Co-ordinator(s) to pay the costs of their 'recce'. The Co-ordinator takes responsibility for transport, licences, charts, reservations, and money. Participants communicate direct with the Co-ordinator, who needs all the help possible; to know definitely who is coming, and who is not, for each day; and that no one is going to change his mind at a late hour, or frivolously.
14. The Co-ordinator should organise a briefing at the beginning of each day so that communications between Co-ordinator, transport, captains of boats, crews. and guests are fully understood.
15. The account is kept by the Co-ordinator, the costs are shared between the participants, on the basis of user pays. There should be a small surplus cheque to go to the Treasurer, to keep his account straight forward. Members' attention is drawn to the undesirability of running up food and drinks bills such that other members get an unwelcome surprise.
16. Bearing in mind how long an unreserved lunch can take the best solution is often to bring a picnic. These are most successful if they are packed individually, rather than requiring on-board galley services.
17. The procedure is more specialised for the Voga Longa: there is a deposit to be paid in January for main expenses including boat hire, and certain social event costs.

City Barge – the Image

18. A variety of styles and colours of boats makes for a more interesting look. So, whites, and **roses and crowns** were chosen for our clothes colours and insignia, which, worn with Querini vests, are instantly transformed into a Querini look; worn with Drapers' tabards into a Drapers' look; with Settemari blue into a Settemari look – and so on.
19. The typography of the **logo of Χιτψ Βαργε** was chosen from a Mecanorma display in an artists' materials shop in Swindon – in the days before special True Type fonts were economical. When the same font became available in True Type with the name Pamela we adopted its advantages – it could be set in any context, in any size, and as long as we retain black as the colour, and standard letter spacing, it could be printed on almost any printer. It is true it took some time to avoid the logo coming out via the internet in Greek letters, but now, with .rtf and .pdf files, we have discovered how to keep authors and readers happy.
20. The question of a **club tie** was considered early on but when many members were kindly issued with the startlingly attractive London RC Voga Longa tie, and the ultimately smart Querini tie the need for yet another tie seemed to pass. Neckerchiefs are often worn – which at Henley Regatta are called cravats, and are, within the strictest establishments' Dress Codes equivalent to ties. For the Stewards' Boat Dock one requires a special pass. Also everyone in the boat must have a Stewards' badge of cardboard or metal, and adhere to the Stewards' dress code, and not eat or drink on board, nor show signs of a picnic. The boat should be carefully moored to withstand the umpire's wash, and tidily left to give a good impression.
21. While we could have **extensions to the image** by adding more well-chosen kit, like the flag, we should be careful to ensure that proposed new kit will be a success. This calls for prototyping and testing with the involvement of a well-convened 'taste committee'. The Regalo's look was chosen by an effective, and numerous, taste committee. Likewise the detail of the conversion from red to blue of the Drapers' Barge. So the opinions ought

be sought from more than a handful of discriminating members before investing in new kit. Any significant change, or new standard item, should be subject to scrutiny on a Saturday morning and the idea put to members.

Eco Trends

22. Any activity at all increases entropy ... and any such increase is very closely related to having a 'carbon footprint' ... but the activities of our sport of rowing may be seen to have a small carbon footprint. The boats are 'unpowered', and they last – Q.Mary's Shallop lasted 230 years in use, and still lasts in the Maritime Museum. If we look after our boats they can each last another 100 years – comfortably.
23. The exercise is good, and medically low risk ... but it requires transport to reach the rendez-vous. Once there the crews can act communally in any further transport of crews and boats.

The use of the Boathouse

24. Members who own boats may keep them in the Long Bridges Boathouse free of charge provided that (a) the Committee agrees, (b) they make them available for Club use. Boats kept in the barn or other hired storage will be charged rental.
25. The Club has the licence from Hertford College for the use of six boat places as follows:
 - Two on the ground in the Fours Bay – up to 11 m boat lengths
 - Two on the ground in the Pairs Bay – up to 9 m boat lengths
 - Two in the Skiff House – up to 8 m boat lengths
26. The Committee shall, bearing in mind the need to provide variety, as well as for numbers of people, decide at any time which boats (whether belonging to the Club or to members) may be put in these spaces. Members accept that any boats put in these spaces without permission may be removed.
27. Members using spaces for their own boats undertake to licence and insure their boats, keep them in good order, and grant the Club free use of these boats with the proviso that the users must be competent.
28. Members wishing to use another member's boat for private purposes must first ask him/her for permission for each such occasion.
29. After an outing (whether Club or private), if any damage to a member's boat has occurred it must be reported by the member or members responsible (that means the captain of the boat concerned and the person(s) causing the damage) to the owner and to the Club Chairman or the Standing Captain or the Sitting Captain (as the case may be). Those responsible for the damage will be liable to the owner for the cost of reinstatement, or, if the repair is covered by insurance, for the increase in premium attributable to the claim for a period of up to five years.
30. On the water saving life and safety must be the top priorities. All members should make themselves aware of the necessary precautions to be taken in any given location or conditions.
31. It is forbidden for members to use the Club, its assets, insignia and intellectual property, for personal financial gain without the express permission of the Committee".

The Ageement with the Drapers' Company

32. The Club is obliged to make the Drapers' Barge available for the Drapers to use on two occasions per year. In consideration City Barge is the sole operator of the Barge, keeps the Barge maintained, insured, and properly stored. This means that the Club may use the Barge for its own purposes. In practice the legal captain of the Barge at any time must be either the Bargemaster of the Drapers', his Deputy, or a Coxswain approved by the Bargemaster, or a coxswain-under-instruction (in which case under the supervision of one of the above). As a rule of thumb crew members should fit in at least one skills-training outing before each higher-profile occasion.
33. When the Barge is in use by the Drapers she generally flies the Drapers' House Flag at the stern and the City of London flag at the jack. When in use by City Barge she generally flies the City Barge flag at the stern. Members should be aware of the flags and on any occasion be careful to respect the 'ownership' of the outing:- Drapers' Company, or City Barge.
34. There are also occasions when the Barge is 'acting a role', representing another City Company on a lent-hulls basis, taking part in a film, some ceremonial, a re-enactment, or maybe a wedding. On these occasions she will wear the most appropriate flags and colours. Again members should be aware that special conditions apply, and they should respect the situation.
35. Regulations permit the vessel to carry up to 12 sitters, in addition to the crew of 8 – a total of 20 people. This loading applies to taking smaller children out, in which case at least 2 will be teachers or minders, and up to 10 will be children. On these occasions buoyancy aids or life jackets must be put on before boarding.
36. Generally a complement consists of up to 7 sitters and 8 crew, or for shorter distances 9 sitters and 8 crew.
37. The above loadings are stated for example: and the actual maximum loading in any situation will be determined by the Bargemaster or Coxswain-in-charge, as the case may be.
38. Embarking and Disembarking – The rowing crew board first, then the sitters, the Bargemaster/Coxswain, and the Whiffler last. An unusual point in a formal outing is that the Master or 'host' sitter boards first, then one to starboard, and one to port alternately, up to seven or eight.
39. The Whiffler is normally first ashore; then the sitters, and the crew. If there is no Whiffler the No 1 of the oarcrew carries out his duties.
40. If it is planned to go to sea, or abroad, with "The Royal Thamesis" the approval of the Master & Wardens must first be obtained by application to the Clerk.

Boat Captain's Duties

41. Other boats have captains too, the coxswain in skiff or gig, the puntsman in a punt, the stern-man in a canoe, the popier in a Venetian boat. Also a coach may take the role. The role of captain can be transferred by agreement via word of mouth announcement to the crew and sitters, and acceptance by the new captain.
42. For clarity, captains announce their role to the crew and sitters at the outset, or at the beginning of their stint.
43. Captains must make themselves aware of the rules, customs, and navigational information (charts, tide tables, and sailing instructions) applicable to the waterway on

which they go. They must be aware of the safety regulations applicable to their craft, as well as the applicable risk assessments, and child protection regulations.

The Annual Programme

44. The City Barge accounting year ends on 30th November.
45. The Drapers' annual cycle is marked by the Election in July. Thus the Programme for the Shallop's next rowing season is agreed with the Drapers by the end of September, and becomes a firm commitment. This leaves October and November for drafting City Barge's part of the new Programme. It is publicised and discussed at the AGM and Co-ordinators are appointed to take charge of upcoming events.

Communications

46. The Membership List is maintained by the Membership Secretary. It is available for use by members, but only for the Club's purposes. Some members prefer that their contact details are not shown – which is respected.
47. E-mails, landlines, mobiles, and the post are used as needed, in the priority order shown.
48. Good communications make for happy crews, because they can practice at the cutting edge of the rowing art.

Normal Duties of the Club Officers

49. Any of these duties can be delegated but remain the overall responsibility of the officer
- 50.

a/ Chairman

Chair all committee meetings and the AGM
Attend to the administrative running of the club
Act as spokesperson on official occasions
Coordinate the production of the annual club programme in January
Ensure that one person takes responsibility for each club event and broadcast the name
Issue, with the secretary and the membership secretary, the invitations to the AGM

b/ Treasurer

Collect, record and bank all club monies
Pay on behalf of the club all centrally paid invoices
Keep insurance premiums paid up to date
Prepare accounts for the year ending on 30 November annually
Advise and recommend on fiscal practices to the committee

c/ Secretary

Take minutes at each AGM and committee meeting and circulate them
Write on behalf of the club to various contacts on request
Keep up to date copies of the constitution and the customs
Maintain the club records

d/ Standing Rowing Captain

Be the contact point for Venetian rowing practice within the club
Arrange for someone to be present to open the boathouse for Saturday outings
Be the coordinator for the pool of Venetian rowers attending the Vogalonga
Encourage and arrange training for all Venetian rowers but especially new ones
Supervise the maintenance of the club's Venetian boats
Check annually that club members Venetian boats are insured, inc. for 3rd party risks

e/ Sitting Rowing Captain

Be the contact point for conventional rowing practice within the club

Be the coordinator for the pool of conventional rowers attending the Vogalonga
Supervise the maintenance of the club's conventional rowing boats. (none so far)

f/ Membership Secretary

Request subs. of members with the annual circulation of the AGM invitations

Receive and record membership subs. in January chasing for outstanding ones thereafter

Maintain the list of members with contact details and payment status

Supply a copy of the membership list to any paid up member on request

Maintain an emailing list and email all the club members on request

g/ Social Secretary

Plan the social part of the club AGM

Plan the social part of the City Barge Voga Longa trip

Encourage other social events, with/without rowing events, during the year

Watermanship

A good waterman is a step ahead of every situation, is checking everything that matters, and has ready the answer to every question:- "What is to be done if ...?", and "Where to go if ...?". He knows the weather forecast. He does not use his oar as a boathook. He uses the right knots, the right ones for the rope in hand. He does not tie up when descending in a lock. He notices when an "Alze remi" is due. He makes everything look easy and neat, and his competence calms all concerned in every situation.

46. As they row their mistakes dissolve in the water, as they put in the next stroke with all the skill they can manage. They row 5 good strokes, then 10, and by-and-by 100. They learn to pick up their technique where they left off last time. When they can keep their form, they can improve their technique, and by-and-by they have become artists. Now, after 15 years of practice, is the time to find the right musical accompaniment, and to link the music to the visual images.

RLB 10MAR2008 paragraph numbering incorrect after 22