



# The York Rotary Dragon Boat Challenge



Organised by York Rotary – Registered Charity No. 1025046  
For more information visit - [www.yorkrotary.co.uk](http://www.yorkrotary.co.uk)



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## Team Information 13th July 2025 Event

Need help with organising your team's Sponsorship/Fundraising? Click [here](#)

### Contents / quick links

Click the Section Link, or just scroll though

#### Before the event:

1. [Selecting Team Name / charity](#) ; [Setting up sponsorship](#) ; [Captains' Briefing](#)

#### On The Day:

4. [Event Location](#) Maps and site plan

5. [Car Parking](#) Large vehicles ; Car permits; restrictions

6. [Registration](#) Signing in after you arrive

7. [Your Team Base](#) Dimensions ; Rules ; Barbeques ; Security ; Rubbish ; Dogs and Cycles

8. [How the Day Runs](#) Race format

12. [Crew Declaration](#) All crew members must sign the declaration/waiver

13. [Notifying Medical Restrictions](#) Registering any crew member disabilities

15. [Health & safety](#) Clothing ; Buoyancy aids ; safety briefings

19. [Cups and Trophies / Best Dressed Team](#) Trophies ; award presentations

21. [Team Flags](#) (on the boats) DIY instructions

22. [Race Commentary](#) Sending team info to Elly; Race Cards ; Our Sponsors ; Data Protection

[View / Print this Team Information section as a pdf](#)

The purpose of this information is to provide details of the event and the facilities that will be available, so that you, the competitors, will be able to get the best out of the event and have an exciting and thoroughly enjoyable day. If you have any queries, please ask your Rotarian Team Contact who is there to help in the period up to the day itself. On the day, there will be Rotarian Stewards to assist.

#### A. BEFORE THE EVENT

##### 1. Choose a Team Name and select your nominated Charity

All teams should finalise and notify us their **Team Name** before setting up their sponsorship/fundraising efforts; and wherever possible finalise early their selection of their **Nominated Charity** that will receive 2/3 of all the sponsorship money their team raises.

## 2 Team's Sponsorship

Team members are reminded that all teams **are expected to raise not less than £2000 (excluding Gift Aid) in sponsorship as a condition of taking part**. In fact, many teams raise in excess of £2000, so we hope that will be every team's aspiration. **2/3 will go to the team's own nominated charity** and the remaining one third will be shared between our Rotary nominated charity for 2025, **Citizens Advice York**, and our own **York Rotary Charity Fund**, supporting local charities throughout the year. Further information about Citizens Advice York and York Rotary's Charity Fund is available [here](#)

All sponsorship fundraising is to be carried out on-line, using our **enthuse** platform. They also take care of Gift Aid processing and payment.

We do not issue Sponsorship Forms.

**Teams are required to set up their own Team Page**  
(\*\* when you have a confirmed place in the event \*\*)

All sponsorship, for your team and for all crew members, should be channelled through your Team Page on our **enthuse** online platform\*.

Full instructions on setting up your page (which will be linked automatically to the Dragon Boat Challenge) can be found here...



Setting up your Sponsorship Pages

\* One exception: single donations to teams of £500 or more - such as corporate sponsorship or matched funding - should be sent to us by bank transfer, so we can avoid heavy platform processing fees; contact our treasurer for more information [dbtreasurer@yorkrotary.co.uk](mailto:dbtreasurer@yorkrotary.co.uk)

Participants are encouraged to seek sponsorship for their Team early, rather than leave it to the last moment.

A **publicity poster** can be downloaded here ( [word](#) or [pdf](#) ) There is space on the poster to add your contact details and your **enthuse** Team Page web url.  
PLEASE CIRCULATE THESE WIDELY

Team Captains will be asked to confirm the value of their team's sponsorship during registration.

Based on the sponsorship monies received by us via **enthuse** by 1st September, there will be a prize of £100 donated to the nominated charity of the team raising the most sponsorship.

## 3 Captains' Briefing

A briefing meeting for Team Captains will be held at the Novotel York on **Tuesday May 13th 2025** (from 6.30pm for one hour). **It is a condition of taking part that ALL team captains attend this briefing**. If it is impossible for the captain to attend, they may send a deputy who is responsible for relaying all information back to the captain. A second person from your organisation is also welcome to attend.

NB A team's failure to send a representative to the Captains' Briefing will render that team liable to disqualification from the event and to the forfeiture of their entry fee.

Full details of this meeting will be sent to team contacts two weeks in advance.

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## B. AT THE EVENT

### 4 Location

All of the team activities associated with the Dragon Boat Racing will be centred on the Railway Station (south) side of the river, between Scarborough Bridge and Lendal Bridge. Access to the site and the layout are shown on the Location Map available [here](#) and the detailed Site Plan available [here](#)

The only vehicular access for teams will be via the Esplanade Car Park. (entrance shown as "A" on the map/plans)

All of the other activities associated with the Gala Day will be on the Minster (north) side of the same stretch of river.

## 5 Car Parking

Each team will be allocated **either one or two free parking spaces (depending on availability)** in the Esplanade Car Park, Leeman Road, for **cars or small vans not exceeding 4.5m in length – no trailers**. This will take up the whole of the car park, so no additional spaces can be made available.

**Larger vehicle?** If you wish to bring a team vehicle longer than 4.5m (but **not more than 7.0m**), it will be necessary to **pre-book one of the few spaces** which will accommodate such vehicles. Notices will be sent to teams several weeks ahead of the event to allow these "larger" spaces to be booked. Vehicles longer than 4.5m, which have not been pre-booked, are likely to be turned away on the day.

The entrance to the Car Park, marked 'A' on the [Location Plan](#) and the [Site Plan](#), is between Westgate Apartments and the War Memorial Gardens, where a Rotarian Steward will be on duty. The Car Park will otherwise be closed for the day. Each team will be sent (electronically) one, or two, individualised Parking Permits (or one large vehicle permit if booked) for the Esplanade Car Park shortly before the event, which should be printed out and displayed on the vehicles' dashboards. If you need to leave and return to the Esplanade Car Park during the day, retain your Permit on the dashboard to allow re-entry.

Other parking is available in public car parks further along Leeman Road, off Tanner Row and in Nunnery Lane, or on the opposite side of the river in Marygate Car Park – see Location Plan. There are also Park & Ride services on the approach roads into the City. Team Members arriving on cycles may park them at their own risk by the portable toilets, at the Lendal Bridge end of the Esplanade Car Park to avoid congestion and hazards elsewhere. Please ensure that they are securely locked.

## 6 Team Registration

In order to stagger the arrival of teams, each team will receive their registration time **approximately two weeks** before the event. It is vitally important that the whole team arrives at that time, so that the Team Captain can register them all at the Registration Desk in the York City Rowing Club's (YCRC) Clubhouse, located between the eastern end of the Esplanade Car Park and Lendal Bridge.

When registering, the Team Captain, who is required to be aged 21 or over, will need to produce the Crew Declaration (see Section 12 - [Declaration below](#)) **completed and signed by every member of the team**, up to a maximum of 20, from which the Team Captain will be able to select the crew of 16 paddlers and a drummer for each race. Registering more than 17 will enable teams to change members of the crew between heats. Teams will have 30 minutes, or in some cases more, to change ready for their Safety Briefing, after their registration time. Teams which are late for their Briefing risk losing their place in the heat. The minimum age for participants is 16.

Each Team will be required to appointment one of its paddlers as the Boat Captain to be the principal contact with DBEL's Helmsman

## 7 Team Base

Each team will be allocated an area of the riverside path approx 4.3m long by 2.5m front to back, for their use as a **'team base'**. These areas generally (bases 3 to 36) back onto the Esplanade Car Park and a private car park. The area in front - beyond the white line - overlooking the river, **MUST** be kept clear, as it is a public right of way and to allow **access for emergency vehicles**. The team bases will be numbered from 1 – 36 (from the Lendal Bridge end).

**Gazebos** - teams may erect small gazebos etc on their team bases, but the areas have a tarmac surface which mustn't be damaged in any way, for instance by pegs etc. Gazebos may need to be weighted down if the day is windy (bags of compost do that job admirably!). **Gazebos MUST be of a size that will fit within the team base area (approx 4.3 x 2.5m) so they do not encroach on adjacent teams' spaces and they MUST NOT encroach onto the riverside footpath. A 4m x 3m Gazebo will usually fit in the space, if the rear of the gazebo can be positioned with the legs just beyond the rear of the base area (jutting into the shrubbery behind!)**

**Note: Teams bringing excessively large gazebos will not be allowed to erect them but may use their team base area as an open space. Gazebos must not obstruct the emergency egress spaces that are set up between team bases and the car park.**

**No encroachment onto towpath** - For the avoidance of doubt, **NO** chairs, pop-up banners, tables or similar equipment can be placed in the area between the white line (the front of the team base) and the top of the sloping bank down to the lower tow path. This is to help alleviate towpath congestion and allow access for emergency vehicles.

**Barbecues** - teams may use barbecue cooking equipment, providing they are gas - not solid fuel - are suitable for use in the confined space available, located at the back of the Team's Base - used with care - and attended at all times. **Any team bringing a barbecue will need to satisfy the Stewards that they have with them on their team base, a 1kg (min) powder fire extinguisher from the time that the barbecue arrives on site**, kept readily accessible.

In addition, any barbecue brought to the event must be fitted with a **Flame Failure device** and have date-compliant hoses and regulator. In addition, there are **further safety requirements** for LPG cylinder use which you can read and download [here](#)

Please ensure that barbecuing does not cause annoyance to those on adjacent bases.

**Security** - as these areas are all accessible to the public, please arrange for any personal belongings to be looked after. To reduce the security risks, **it is important that teams monitor their Team Base regularly** during the day and that they report any suspicious bags or packages immediately to a Steward.

**\*\* To ensure our event is run in a safe manner, and to improve security and threat awareness, we now employ additional professional stewards, in addition to our own Rotary stewards. Please note, all instructions to your team from event stewards MUST be complied with especially with regard to Team Bases and your management of these.\*\***

**Rubbish** - No rubbish wheelie bins will be provided, **We ask that teams please take ALL their rubbish away with them when they leave at the end of the day.** We will provide some black bags for this purpose, but advise teams to bring their own black bags as well. When you depart, Teams are expected to leave their team base areas completely clear and clean!

**Cycles and Dogs** - you are welcome to come to the event by bike, but please note we do NOT allow cycles on the riverside bank nor in the Team Base area. Cycles need to be left (locked) in the area adjacent to the portable toilets. Also, **dogs are not allowed** in the Team Base areas; it is not fair to the animals to have them in such a confined environment, and they can create additional congestion on the riverbank area. If your team, or visitors, bring a dog into the Team Base area, stewards will ask you remove it from the area immediately. **Failure to do so may result in immediate disqualification of your team from the event.**

## 8 The Challenge - how the day runs

Racing is scheduled to commence at 10am and continue throughout the day to finish around 4pm. There will be up to 36 teams participating, with three boats racing at a time. Three complete sets of heats are scheduled and each time a team races, it will be in a different boat and against different opponents. All race times will be recorded and each team's fastest single time will be used to rank teams. Racing will conclude with the Grand Final for at least the four (and hopefully six) fastest teams from the heats, with the fastest in the Grand Final winning the Challenge Trophy.

Approximate start times for each of the races will be set out on the Race Card given to teams in advance of the day, but depending on conditions etc these times may vary. **It is important that Teams are all assembled at the boat loading steps in time for each of their heats. Teams will therefore need to listen to announcements. Current race information is also available and updated throughout the day on our twitter feed on #YORKDRAGONBOAT.**

Six boats will be in use throughout the day, so whilst three boats are racing, the other three boats will be loading and preparing for the next race.

## 9 The Course

The 250 metre course starts just downstream of Scarborough Bridge and finishes close to the YCRC Clubhouse, just upstream of Lendal Bridge. Crews will board their boats from the steps in front of the Clubhouse. They will then paddle upstream to the start, keeping to the Minster (north) side of the river. Following their race, crews will disembark at the same Clubhouse steps.

There will be other traffic on the river, so care will need to be taken to ensure that racing takes place safely and without inconvenience to other river users.

## 10 Control of Racing

A professional company, [Dragon Boat Events Ltd](#) (Dragon Boat Events) - a division of The Organisation Group Ltd - will conduct the racing in accordance with the rules of the International Dragon Boat Federation. Dragon Boat Events' Event Director will be in overall control of the racing, and his directions relayed over the public address system and via radio to DBEL staff, are to be observed by crews on the river. His decision on all aspects of racing is final. Dragon Boat Events will provide a qualified helmsman for each boat. Their duties are to navigate and to oversee the safety of the crew, and their directions to their crew are to be observed. If in the opinion of the helmsman, the weight of the crew, or the conditions on the day, make safe boat handling a problem, the boat's helmsman has the absolute authority to require the crew to reduce the number of paddlers. Dragon Boat Events is licensed under the HSE's Adventure Activities Licensing Scheme to provide dragon boat racing activities to under 18s.

## 11 Racing Equipment

All the boats, paddles, buoyancy aids etc will be provided by Dragon Boat Events.

## 12 Crew Members' Declaration

The Dragon Boat Events' **Team Information & Waiver document**, which includes the **Crew Declaration**, can be downloaded [here](#)

To register on the day, each Team Captain will be required to produce a copy of the **Crew Declaration completed and signed by every member of the team**, accepting all the risks involved in participating and that all the members are fit and able to swim wearing a buoyancy aid, as per the medical restrictions below, and will not hold The Organisation, Dragon Boat Events, the Rotary Club of York, Canal and River Trust, York City Rowing Club, or Citizens Advice York liable for any claims arising from any accident resulting in any loss or damage including bodily injury or death and agree to be bound by the Rules.

In particular, the Team Captain should ensure every crew member understands the medical declaration that is included in the **Team Information and Waiver document**:

(f) **DECLARATION OF FITNESS TO COMPETE** – Crew members are required to declare to the Company (prior to the commencement of the event) if they: (a) suffer from chest pains or shortness of breath (b) if they have been told by their Doctor that they have heart trouble (c) they have been told that their blood pressure is too high or too low (d) they have had fainting or dizzy spells (e) they have undergone a recent operation (f) they suffer from bone or joint problems i.e. arthritis, spinal injury etc. (g) any other reason why they should not participate in an exercise programme which in the case of Dragon Boat Racing should not exceed 5 minutes of active aerobic exercise per race. This list is not exhaustive. If you are in any doubt about your fitness to compete, you must ask the Company's representative prior to undertaking the training and race programme.

It is strongly recommended that Team Captains have the Crew Declaration completed by the members of their crew in advance of the day that racing takes place. The Crew Declaration may be spread over several forms providing **each form** is countersigned by the Team Captain.

Anyone considered by Dragon Boat Events' Event Director to be unfit, or unsuitable to participate **for reasons of alcohol or any other reason**, will not be permitted to race and the Event Director's decision in that respect will be final.

## 13 Notification of Medical Restrictions

Members of the team must be reasonably fit, able to swim at least 50metres wearing a buoyancy aid and not vastly overweight in relation to their height. If you are unsure whether you are fit to take part, please seek advice from your doctor. If any member of a team has disabilities, they will need to sign a **Disability Waiver** available [here](#).

**Any and all Disability Waivers for your team must be brought first to the Team Registration, and then the Team Captain and the subject of the Waiver must BOTH take the form to the DBEL event director** (at the DBEL gazebo on the riverbank) **before your team attend the Safety Briefing**. The Event Director will determine the support needed; and reserves the right to refuse any team member from participating in the event, if there are grounds for believing the person is physically or medically unfit to race.

## 14 Insurance

Dragon Boat Events complies with industry standards and has Public Liability insurance of £10 million and Employer's Liability insurance of £10 million. For insurance purposes, **it is essential that every member of the crew completes and signs the Crew Declaration prior to registration**.

## 15 Health and Safety

For reasons of health and safety, each competitor will be required to have available:

- a complete change of clothes,
- a windproof jacket, or similar garment with hood, and
- footwear, such as trainers (but not flip-flops), to wear whilst in a boat to protect their feet from any sharp objects on the river bed, should they capsize.

Crew members are also advised

- to bring a towel and, if the day is sunny, a supply of sunscreen, and
- that open wounds should be covered before going near the water to minimise the risk from Leptospirosis (Weil's disease)

Buoyancy aids, supplied by Dragon Boat Events, must be worn by crew members at all times whilst on the river. A safety boat will be on the water during racing. First Aid facilities will be available.

Each team will receive their Safety Briefing from Dragon Boat Events' personnel immediately before their first race. **It is essential that all the members of the team are there for that Briefing, not just those paddling in the first heat**. They will be tagged with a wrist band as having been briefed, and any team member who misses their team's Safety Briefing, will not be able to take part in their first race and will only be able to take part in their subsequent races if the opportunity for a further briefing session arises – that cannot be guaranteed.

## 16 Shower Facilities

Shower facilities will be available in the YCRC's Clubhouse for members of any team that capsizes, together with limited changing and toilet facilities.

## 17 Toilet Facilities

Toilet accommodation will be provided on the south side of the river in the YCRC's Clubhouse and in the car park area. Toilet accommodation will also be provided on the north side adjacent to Marygate Landing. The nearest public conveniences on the north side of the river are at Bootham Bar.

## 18 Food

Arrangements are being made for there to be a stall on the south bank, where food and drink may be purchased.

## 19 Challenge Trophy and Cups

The Challenge Trophy, which is competed for annually, will be presented to the winner of the Grand Final immediately after that race, together with two bottles of 'Bubbly'. £100 will be donated to the Winner's nominated charity and each member will receive a Dragon Boat Winner's Medal.

The remaining teams will qualify for one of the following Cups, each of the three teams receiving £50 for their nominated charity:

- The Ouse Cup for the fastest 'Commercial' Team (i.e. the organisation is not a charity)
- The Charity Cup for the fastest 'Charity' Team; **also**
- Tailenders Trophy for the team with the slowest time

The Challenge Trophy and Cups will be held for one year and competed for again at the following year's York Rotary Dragon Boat Challenge.

**Awards Presentation** All of the trophies and monetary prizes will be "re-presented" to the Team Captains later in the year, together with presentations to our two nominated charities. We will also invite teams to bring a representative from their own chosen charity to this presentation evening. The Presentations normally take place at the Mansion House in York by kind permission of the Lord Mayor of York,

## 20 Best Dressed Team

Teams are encouraged to wear matching team outfits and fancy dress is encouraged - however, in designing outfits, please bear in mind that everyone will have to wear a buoyancy aid whilst on the water. During the day, the Best Dressed Team will be identified and the winning Team announced during the afternoon. They will receive the Ged Bell Trophy and £50 will be donated to their team's nominated charity. The Ged Bell Trophy will be held for one year and competed for again at the following year's York Rotary Dragon Boat Challenge.

## 21 Team Identification - Flags

As each team will race in different boats during the course of the day and because of the short turn-round time in disembarking/boarding boats, it will not be possible to decorate a boat with a team's colours etc. However, so that a team may be identified whilst on the water, teams are asked to provide a distinctive flag **1metre high by 600mm wide** carrying the team's name or logo. The flag needs to have a sleeve along the long side to take a garden cane (25mm diameter), sleeve sewn closed at the top, which can be slipped onto the boat's cane as the team boards its boat. We supply the canes!

Illustration of how the flag looks on the boat...



## 22 Commentary

Elly Fiorentini, one of BBC Radio York's well known presenters will provide a commentary during the event. So that the commentary can be lively and interesting for team supporters and the public, each Team Captain is asked to provide background details of their organisation, their team and the members and characters in their team, humorous or otherwise. Please send the details in advance to Elly at [elly.fiorentini@bbc.co.uk](mailto:elly.fiorentini@bbc.co.uk) using the Team Commentary pro-forma available as word docx file [here](#) or as a pdf [here](#); and send a copy to your Rotarian Team Contact.

## 23 Race Card

A Race Card listing the Teams and their Race Times will be available here three weeks before the event. Team contacts will be informed by email, when it becomes available.

## 24 Corporate Sponsors

We are indebted to our corporate sponsors for their generous financial support – Portakabin, SIMPSON of York, and Reed Boardall. Their support is invaluable for the smooth running of the event and ensures that every penny that the teams raise in sponsorship will go to charity. More information about our Sponsors can be seen [here](#)

## 25 Data Protection

As a Club, we recognise our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations, in respect of the data about individuals that we have been supplied with by Teams, for the purpose of taking part in the annual Dragon Boat Challenges. We have made arrangements to ensure the data is held securely and will only be used for purposes connected directly with them, and other Rotary Club of York activities, and will not be supplied to any third party without the individual's consent. The Crew Declaration referred to in Clause 12 above will seek consent for the Teams' data to be retained and used for that purpose, and for photos taken during the course of the events to be used for publicity purposes associated with the annual Dragon Boat Challenges.

## 26 Flooding

In the unlikely event that the river is in flood, it would be too dangerous to race and the event would have to be cancelled. By monitoring river conditions with the Environment Agency and the Canal and River Trust, every effort would be made to notify cancellation to the Team Contacts by Friday 11th July. In the event of a sudden deterioration of river conditions, however, the organisers reserve the right, on advice from those concerned, to cancel the event at any time.

## Lastly

Bring your family, friends and colleagues to cheer you on and to enjoy the other activities taking place on the riverside.

As we need to prevent overcrowding on the river bank Team Base area on the South Bank, we do request that wherever possible you

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