Appendix to the Minerva Bath Rowing Club Safety Document - River Hazards

Be aware of the following potential hazards:

Moored boats

There are some moored boats on the river. Keep looking around when sculling and avoid following the bank.

Other River Traffic

The river between Twerton and Saltford weirs is used by many other people, some of who may be very inexperienced. You can expect to meet motor-cruisers, canal-boats, canoes, and other rowing boats. You must abide by normal navigational rules. Power boats should keep to the speed limit, but may not. Hence they can generate quite a lot of wash. Note that some rowing boats (e.g. the University VIIIs) may be going much faster than you think.

You must keep to the correct side of the river and leave a reasonable gap between yourself and any approaching boats.

Forcing other boats to alter course to avoid you is NOT acceptable.

Be careful when stopping and turning so as not to inconvenience other boats.

When rowing alongside another boat (either when coaching or training together), be especially careful, and be ready to drop in astern of one another if boats approach from the opposite direction.

Specific Hazards (number relate to the map below)

Bath (Twerton) Weir [1]

Turn well before the river divides for the lock and weir. Do NOT approach the weir or lock entrance.

The Railway Bridge [2]

This is the second bridge above the club. It has two arches. You must always use the right-hand arch (as viewed by the coxswain). Note that the bridge is quite long. You must not stop under this bridge.

Bath Marina Entrance and Fuel Pontoon [3]

Be aware that boats may emerge from the marina, and that they may not be able to see you until their bows are well out into the river. Also, boats may be mooring up or leaving from the fuel pontoon just upstream of the marina entrance.

Boathouse Pub mooring

Cruisers and pleasure boats may moor-up and depart from the moorings immediately upstream of the Minerva landing stage. They may also turn unexpectedly at this location.

Minerva Bath Boat Club [4]

All boats must leave and return to the landing stage facing upstream (note that the landing stage is on the 'downstream' side of the river). When leaving the stage, you should check that the river is clear and if so, proceed quickly across the river to the far ('upstream') side. When returning to the stage, keep to the far side of the river until you can see that the river and stage are clear. Then cross over and proceed directly to the stage. If you arrive travelling downstream you should continue past the stage, around the bends and half way down the next straight before stopping. Then turn onto the far side of the river and approach as described above.

The Cycle-path Bridge [5]

This is the first bridge below the club. It has two arches. You must always use the right-hand arch (as viewed by the coxswain). You must not stop under this bridge.

Note that some other river users may use what we would consider the WRONG arch. It is especially the case that large narrow boats, cruisers and pleasure boats will use the 'Upstream' arch when they are proceeding downstream.

When travelling upstream keep a good lookout and be prepared to stop.

Avon County & Bristol University Boat Clubs (Saltford) [6]

Be especially aware of other boats manoeuvring at these clubs. Note that at times there may be a large number of juniors on the river, and also beginners in boats attached to the bank with ropes.

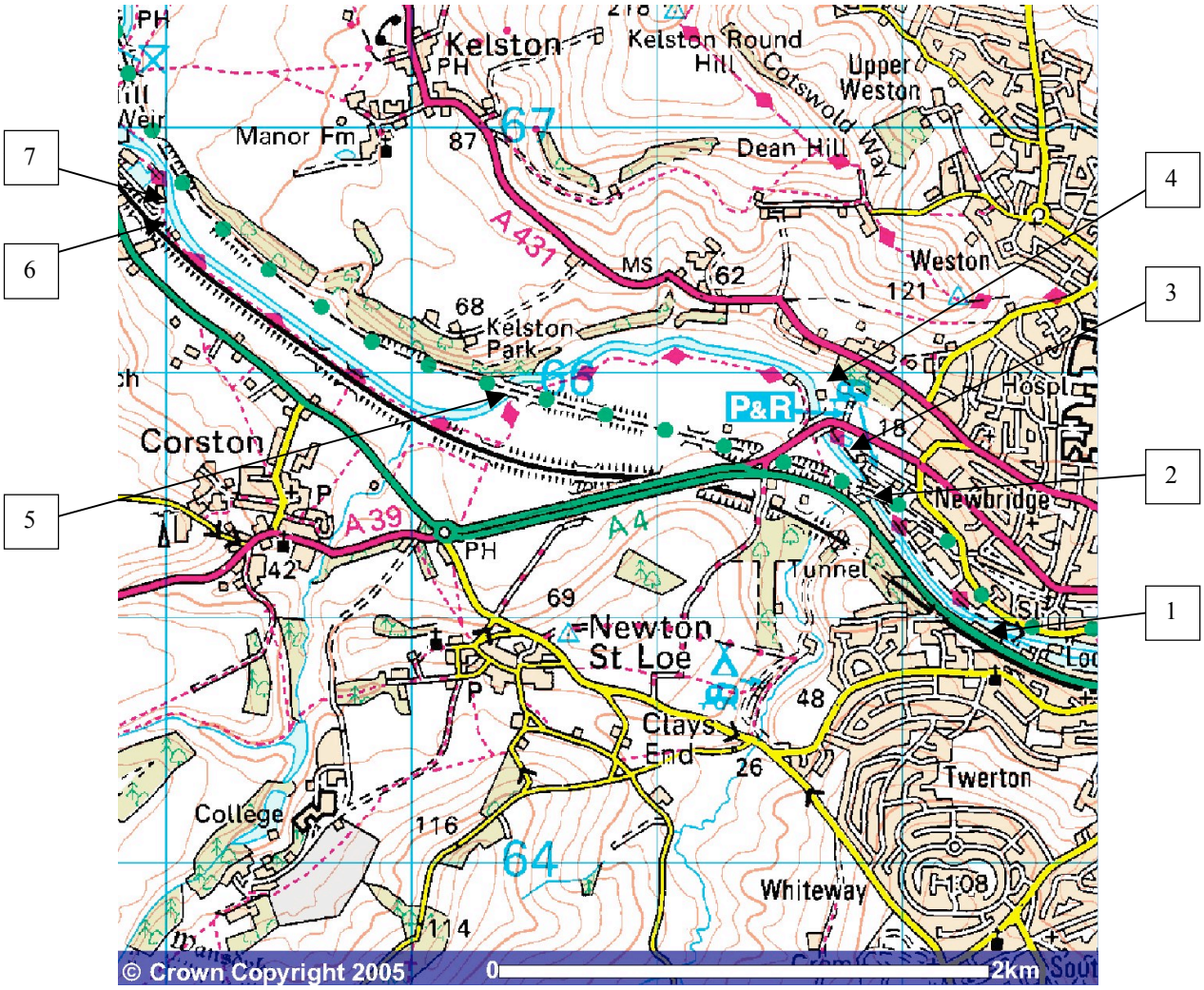
Note that if the river at Avon County is busy it may be appropriate to spin upstream of the busy section if it is safe to do so, rather than rowing though all the other boats and then immediately spinning.

Saltford Marina and Weir [7]

You MUST turn before the entrance to Saltford Marina. Turn at the large warning sign on the right-hand-side of the river facing downstream. At this point you can see in both directions and hence turn safely. Be aware that boats may emerge from the marina, and that they may not be able to see you.

In fast stream conditions spin at Bristol Universality Boat Club

Map of the River Avon between Newbridge and Salford



Rules for leaving the landing stage

- Always boat with the bows facing upstream
- Check that the river is clear in both directions before leaving the stage
- Cross quickly to the far side of the river and proceed upstream through the bridge

Rules for approaching the landing stage

- Approach travelling upstream
- Keep to the far bank until you are almost level with the landing stage
- Check that there are no boats travelling downstream that you may impede when crossing the river
- If the landing stage is clear, cross quickly at approx. 45 degrees and land
- Otherwise continue upstream, spin at the marina, row downstream past the club and half way down the straight (past the white boat), spin again and approach again.
- *Do not cross over too early*

