

COVID 19 AND COMBWICH BOAT CLUB

Dear Members,

We should be becoming active now, in spring. We should be using our boats, training in the gigs, socialising and working on our boats and club facilities. Sadly our boating and lives are being changed drastically by recent events.

My thoughts and sympathies are with you all as we go through this pandemic that is affecting every one of us. As a nation and as part of humanity we are faced with an invisible, unpredictable and frightening disease that could kill any of us and our family members.

Every one of us have had unprecedented restrictions placed on us that severely limit our lives, work and the economy that we depend on and are part of. These restrictions are intended to slow the rate of infection down by reducing the chance of the Covid 19 virus passing from person to person. There is no cure or vaccine as yet that will help people that are infected recover, the immune system of our bodies is all that we have at the moment. Sadly some people are made very ill and despite the best efforts of intensive care medics many are dying. As you will have heard through the media the restrictions are in force to prevent the NHS from being swamped by sheer numbers of patients.

We are all at increasing risk and while we might survive infection some of those that we infect might not. I think there is scope for some activity but nobody could realistically describe what we might do as essential. The more we mingle the more our chances of infection and further transmission. Anything that we do to flatten the curve of infection is likely to bring about an earlier release from the drastic and onerous restrictions that have been imposed on us.

There are a few things that have occurred to me regarding safe practice at the club that might reduce the risks for all.

Things we touch.

The Gate Lock, everyone that passes through the gate has to handle this twice per visit. It is possibly the most risky thing we touch at the club. If someone that that is infected has sneezed or coughed on their hand and then uses the lock then the virus could transfer to others passing through the gate. Gloves, sanitiser, bleach solution, strong alcohol (above 60% by volume. (Whisky or vodka at 40% is not strong enough, save it to drink, we are going to need it!) I am using methylated spirit, (don't drink that, it doesn't taste good and it is poisonous!)

Keys, toilet flushes, door handles tools, ropes, ANY THING ELSE THAT SOMEONE MIGHT HAVE TOUCHED. These are all possible sources of the virus. Again, gloves sanitisers etc.

Gloves, if a glove has touched anything that has virus on it then touching the glove could be a danger. Use vinyl or rubber gloves and disinfect them with bleach or alcohol BEFORE putting them in your pocket.

Other People

We are so used to being near other people; I miss friends, colleagues and family members that do not live with me. We all do. Sadly everyone else is a potential risk. When we work on boats and boatyard work we need to keep our distance. A minimum of 2 metres (A bit more than 6 feet) is the nearest we should allow ourselves to be to a friend or fellow worker. There is apparently some evidence that droplet spray from a sneeze or cough can carry much further. Stay upwind from people you pass!

We need to be aware of where other people are and not go near and be alert to how near others are approaching. No matter how much you like them! Don't crowd other people. It may feel rude to ask someone to keep their distance, it could prevent infection. I have noticed that strangers often say "Stay safe" with a smile to remind themselves and you.

A pair of gloves or a facemask may look strange or seem over the top and make people grin at you but potentially could save your life and the lives of your friends and family.

There is a lot of information available on various media. The NHS site is a good starting point.

I really hope that restrictions will soon be lifted. If you decide to go to the club please make sure that you have thought about your safety and that of those around you. Nobody is saying you must not go to the club but do make an informed decision about how safe and essential it is.

I look forward to seeing you all in happier times when we can enjoy the water again.

Stay safe and enjoy this lovely weather.

Dave Allibone

Commodore

Combwich Boat Club 7th April 2020