

Dragon boating was introduced as a community sport to the UK from China. The founder of the Company providing this event, Dragon Boat Events Ltd (DBE), was first to recognise the benefits of the sport to non-athletes. Teams will race replica Chinese war canoes throughout the event over a short course of up to 250 metres, with a grand Final followed by an awards ceremony at the end of an exciting day.

Teams comprise up to 10 to 16 paddlers and one drummer, whilst a qualified and experienced helmsperson from DBE controls and steers the boat from a standing platform aft. Up to 20 people can register for each team, though if a team is too heavy or feels it would be to their advantage to have less people in the boat, dragon boats will go just as well with 12 or even fewer paddlers in it - but there must always be a drummer in the boat to comply with the rules.

1. **Itinerary.** No experience is necessary, and practically anyone can enter. All competitors will be given full safety briefings, and shore-side instruction before going on the water. Then, each team will have at least three dragon boating sessions each to include training, practice and a timed race (with rest periods between sessions). DBE's Event Manager will provide a full running commentary, music and p.a. coverage throughout the day – so the programme will run smoothly with an upbeat, fun and vibrant atmosphere! Finally, trophies and/or medals will be given to the champions and runner-up teams.
2. **Safety ... is paramount.** A full safety briefing will be given by a qualified instructor to each team prior to the start of round one and all team members who intend to compete during the day will need to attend this. At the end of their briefing each competitor will be given a coloured safety band, which indicates to the event staff that the safety briefing has been attended and understood - only people wearing these safety bands will be allowed onto the water, so competitors must not lose or remove their band otherwise they will have to undergo another complete safety briefing before being issued with a new one!
3. **Equipment.** Everybody in a dragon boat will wear one of the EU-approved personal flotation device (buoyancy aid) provided, in case anyone enters the water unintentionally! One or more safety boats such as DBE's ex-Fire Service RHIB or ex-RNLI 'D' class inflatable RIBs will be on standby to rescue anyone in difficulty! Each craft is also capable of rescuing an entire team, e.g. in the unlikely event of a capsize – which thanks to the skill of DBE's helms are quite infrequent (and the teams most vulnerable to capsizing are teams that do not pay attention during their briefing!). For additional safety, key event staff are linked by a shortwave radio network. If the venue is on a canal or in water too shallow for a RHIB/RIB, any rescues may be carried out from the land instead
4. **First Aid.** DBE's instructors are all First Aid trained and qualified. A First Aid pack is available for minor First Aid from the red DBE Event Control marquee which will be clearly visible. A dedicated mobile phone will be kept on standby at Event Control in the case of emergencies, we also have de-fib equipment and trained staff.
5. **Races.** Each race is timed and every team will be given three guaranteed (weather permitting) races during the day. The team's single best time over those three races is then used for qualification into the final round using all the available dragon boats in one final race (or more if the course is narrow). For the day's race program to work smoothly, DBE uses a race-order system to ensure that:
 - No team should race against the same team twice
 - The time interval between races is as even as possible, allowing periods to rest (and to refresh)
 - Each team should race in at least 2 separate lanes and in at least 2 separate boats
6. **Prizes.** Sets of bespoke designed medals will be awarded to the champions, runners-up and third place team, and at least one engraved glass trophy will be awarded (the exact number of awards and categories will be decided upon by the event Provider).
7. **Competitors.** No previous experience of Dragon Boat Racing is necessary to enter the Event, but all able-bodied competitors must be comfortable in deep water and capable in an emergency of swimming 50 metres with the aid of the buoyancy aid provided. A minimum age of 12 years is set for competitors in 'open' events though younger competitors may be accepted in exceptional circumstances on a personal stature and declared ability basis, and in special 'youth' events. Please note that Dragon Boat Events Ltd holds a current AALA/AALS (adventure activities licensing authority/Scheme) license to provide water activities including Dragon Boating for children and young people under the age of 18.
8. **Team Registrations.** All teams will have to complete a Team Information and Waiver Form, to be signed by the Boat Captain, to declare (prior to undertaking the training and race programme) if anyone: (a) suffers from chest pains or shortness of breath; (b) has been told by their Doctor that they have heart trouble; (c) has been told that their blood pressure is too high or too low; (d) has had fainting or dizzy spells; (e) has undergone a recent operation; (f) suffers from bone or joint problems such as arthritis, spinal injury, etc.; (g) for any other reason may not be able to 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 declaration will not disqualify a competitor from entry, as fitness to compete will be assessed by DBE helm (the final authority resting with the Event Manager) and may be subject to following specific advice and/or instructions subsequently given. If a competitor is in any doubt about their fitness to compete, they must ask the Company's representative prior to undertaking the training and race programme. Team Information and Waiver Forms will be available on the day at registration, and beforehand via

the event Promoter. Note that names and contact information required for insurance purposes will not be disclosed to any third parties.

9. **Don't be late!** Please note that all team members are required to be on site on time for Registration, immediately following which are the safety briefings. [If anyone is either late or not on site when their team is called up to be briefed, their team may either have to race without them or risk missing that race altogether.]
10. **Special Needs.** Provision is made for competitors who register as having special needs, who will have to sign (or have signed on their behalf by an appropriate person) a Disabled Waiver Form. All special-needs competitors must be able to sit unaided in a dragon boat, be capable of obeying instructions given by DBE's helmsperson both on and off the water, and be comfortable in deep water whilst wearing the personal flotation device provided. They will not be required to be able to swim 50 metres, but must be escorted by an able-bodied "buddy" who they are capable of communicating with and who will be briefed as to their duties. If required, an additional charge may be levied for the supply of a trained member of the event team to act as a personal buddy. Disabled Waiver Forms will be available on the day at registration, and beforehand via the event Promoter.
11. **At Risk Competitors.** For health and safety reasons due to youth, non-swimmer, medical grounds or their declaration of special needs, any competitor requested to do so by DBE's representative or helmsperson must wear a high-viz tabbard which will be provided. These competitors will be prioritised in the event of a rescue or other emergency.
12. **Insurance.** The Company complies with all industry standards and is fully covered for insurance purposes whilst staging its events and activities – Public Liability to £5 million, and Employers Liability to £10 million.
13. **Clothing and personal requirements.** It is recommended that competitors bring with them a change of clothes, and a number of lightweight layers suitable for hot, cold, dry or wet weather both on and off the water. Whilst on the water, competitors should wear clothing suitable for the prevailing conditions: such as wet water shoes or old trainers, tracksuit top and bottoms or shorts and t-shirts / polo shirts / rugby shirts, lightweight sweaters, lightweight cagoule that is both waterproof and also windproof. It is not advisable to bring valuables, especially onto the water (including phones and car-key fobs) – as anyone does so entirely at their own risk!
14. **Drinking Water.** Please note that you will need plenty of drinking water throughout the day!
15. **Alcohol.** Whilst the Company doesn't want to prevent anyone from enjoying themselves, alcohol and water don't mix (please keep drinking in moderation if you will be going onto the water). In the interests of safety, please note that if any competitor (or team) is deemed to be over the safe alcohol limit, in the opinion of a staff member from Dragon Boat Events Ltd, then that team member (or team) will not be permitted, without refund, to participate any further in the event (the decision of the Event Manager will be final).
16. **Information Release.** Teams will have the option at Registration to fill in a form to give the PA commentator background information on the team and competitors (to broadcast when racing and throughout the day, or to release to the Media).
17. **Shelters and other Extras.** If there is no natural shelter available on site, teams may benefit from shelter in the event of poor (or very sunny) weather. For details of how to book this, or if a team would like to brand a boat or paddles with their team logo, or use their own flag, please contact the Promoter.
18. **And Finally** Teams should listen to their helms, who are all experienced in the ways of dragon boating and are there to help (there is no guarantee that teams will always have the same helm)! The secret to dragon boating is teamwork, rhythm and timing. If everyone works in sync together, then fast times can be achieved. However, it only takes one or two people in the boat to get out of time and stop paddling for the boat to start slowing down. Taking part in the UK's fastest growing water sport will guarantee a great day out. Most people competing will be complete novices and will not have done this before. The atmosphere, fun, excitement and energy of a dragon boat festival is a unique experience. Everyone should also finish the day justifiably proud of themselves and of the money they have helped raise for charity in this event.

I am certain that you will enjoy a memorable day!

Roger Irwin,
Managing Director of Dragon Boat Events Ltd