



Safe Rowing Note

Subject	Bridges and Weir: Turning and Navigation		
Note number	8	Version	1
Date	30 September 2024		
<p>Hazard Context</p> <p>There are three bridges on the river where piers and columns reach into the water:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welsh Bridge 2. English Bridge 3. Railway Bridge <p>Turning near these bridges presents hazards, which can be avoided if following the safety rules set out below.</p> <p>Passing underneath these bridges must be done with care and attention, following the safety rules set out below. This is particularly important when the river levels are higher (yellow zone) and the stream is faster.</p> <p>In addition, there is a Weir downstream of the Railway Bridge.</p>			



Welsh Bridge – Safe Turning

Hazard Context

The stream through Welsh Bridge presents hazards when turning a boat near the bridge.

There is a risk of being swept onto the bridge by the stream from an upstream direction.

The stream is fast and swirly under the bridge

The stream can be fast and swirly immediately downstream of the bridge,

All these conditions make it difficult to control a rowing boat if in the red 'no-turning' zone.

Safety Rules

When near Welsh Bridge **only ever turn when downstream from the bridge**, in the **green zone** as shown in Figure 1 below.

Never turn a boat around in the red 'no turning zone' area upstream of the bridge,

Do not turn a boat around in the red 'no turning zone' area immediately downstream of the bridge.

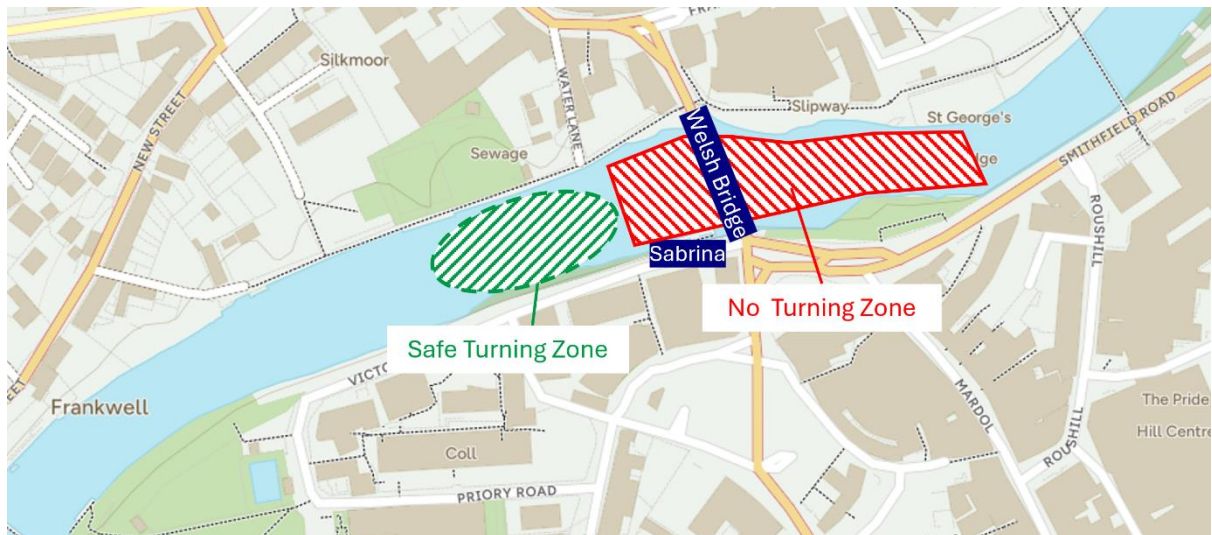


Figure 1 *Welsh Bridge Safe Turning Zone*



Welsh Bridge – Safe Navigation

Hazard Context

The stream Navigating through Welsh Bridge is challenging:

- Branches and other debris in the water often gather on the upstream edge of the bridge piers and obstruct passage through the arches.
- The stream is fast under the bridge and can be swirly up and downstream of the bridge.

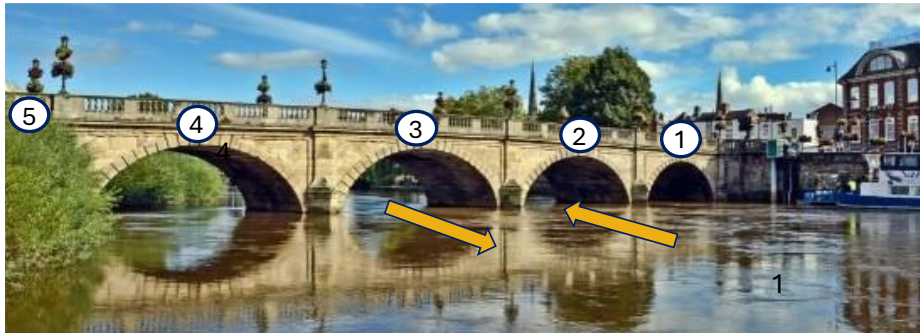


Figure 2 *Welsh Bridge Viewed Looking Upstream*

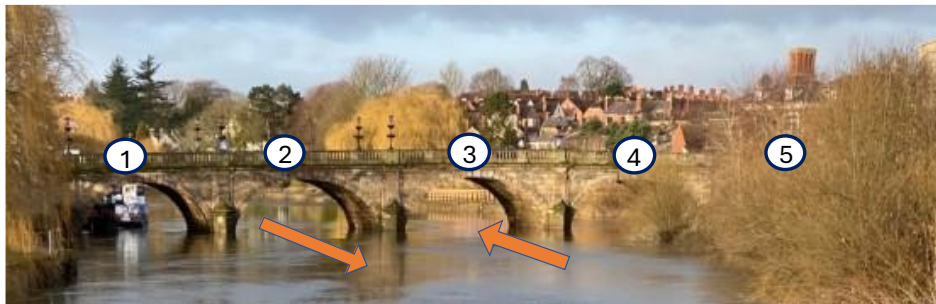


Figure 3 *Welsh Bridge Viewed Looking Downstream*

Safety Rules

Welsh Bridge has 5 arches, numbered 1-5 from the town centre Quarry side.

To maintain normal navigation rules, keep to the coxes right or rowers' starboard side, using the arches indicated by arrows in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Boats going **upstream** should use arch **number 2**.

Boats coming **downstream** should use arch **number 3**.

Boats coming downstream, may use arch number 2 when this is safe and clear from other boats, or arch number 4, then at once move back onto their correct station as soon as they have cleared the bridge.

Do not use the outer arch 5 (silted up) or arch 1 (blocked by boats moored at Sabrina quay).

All boats must ensure that the arch is clear before going through it.

Ensure that boats are lined up before going through the arches – there is limited clearance for fours and eights, particularly with high water.

Be aware that branches and other debris can gather on the upstream edge of the bridge piers and obstruct passage through the arches.

Boats travelling upstream must give way to any boat coming downstream.



English Bridge - Safe Turning

Hazard Context

When turning upstream of English Bridge, crews must be aware that while turning a boat, the river stream will tend to sweep the boat downstream closer to English Bridge.

This hazard is increased with faster stream conditions associated with higher river levels.

If a boat is swept sideways downstream while turning across the stream, it can be difficult to manoeuvre the boat away from English Bridge. This presents a hazard of collision with the bridge.

Safety Rules

Crews must turn promptly after passing under Greyfriars Bridge while in the green 'safe turning zone', indicated below. This is a safe distance away from (upstream of) English Bridge.

The boat should be turned round so it faces upstream in time to ensure the boat does not drift with the stream into the red 'no turning zone', indicated below.

When the boat faces upstream, it may be necessary to paddle upstream a short distance to avoid drifting with the stream into the red zone.

Only adjust clothing or rigging, drink water, discuss the outing, or listen to instruction from a coach once the boat is **facing upstream** and **in the green zone**. Never do this when facing downstream or if in the red zone.

If other crews need to turn at a similar time:

- crews facing upstream should give way to crews coming downstream; and
- crews facing upstream may need to paddle upstream a short distance to enable the other boat(s) to turn safely in the green zone.

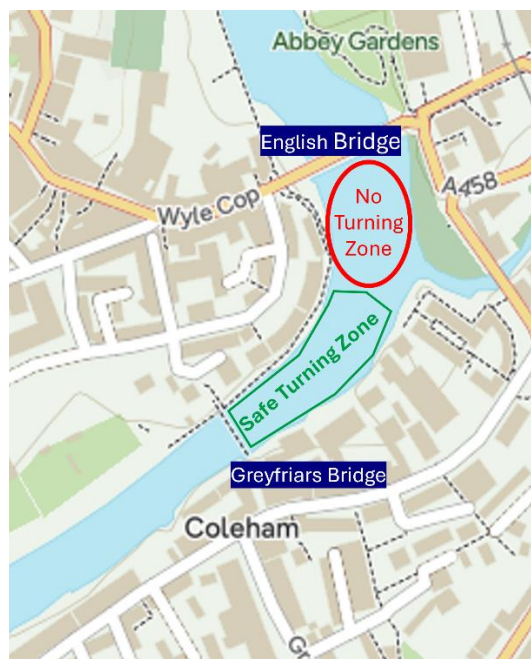


Figure 4 English Bridge Safe Turning Zone



English Bridge - Safe Navigation

Hazard Context

Navigating through English Bridge is challenging:

- Branches and other debris in the water often gather on the upstream edge of the bridge piers and obstruct passage through the arches.
- Silting can occur around the English Bridge, which may impede navigation.
- The small islands immediately downstream of the bridge often change shape and size.



Figure 5 English Bridge Viewed Looking Downstream

Safety Rules

Keep to starboard (right) as best as possible, noting that the outer arches are silted-up.

During times of low water in the summer it may not be possible to go through the English Bridge or you may only be able to use the downstream arch in both directions.

Ensure that boats are properly lined up before going through the arch – there is limited clearance for fours and eights, particularly with high water.

All boats must ensure that the arch is clear before going through it.

Boats travelling upstream must give way to any boat coming downstream.



Railway Bridge - Safe Navigation

Hazard Context

Be aware that there are two rail bridges that have their supports offset, so the navigation line is complex. The current can be very strong at times beneath the bridges.

The two navigable routes under the Railway Bridge are either side of the centre line supports.

Safety Rules

Do not turn when near the Railway Bridge, either when rowing downstream or upstream.

Line up the approach well before going under the bridge, so the boat is on straight clear course.

Use the arch to the right of the centre line in both directions, as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6 Railway Bridge and Navigable Arches

Be aware of the Weir downstream of the Railway Bridge, following safety rules below.



Weir

Hazard Context

Weirs can be very dangerous, once trapped in them it can become impossible to escape and it is likely a boat will be swept down the weir.

There is a weir in the river downstream of the Shrewsbury Railway Bridge and Castle Walk Footbridge, shown below.

Safety Rules

Boats rowing downstream of the Railway Bridge must turn immediately after passing under Castle Walk Footbridge, then proceed upstream.

All rowers must stay away from the weir to keep themselves and others safe, no matter how experienced they are.



Figure 7 Turning Zone Upstream of Weir