

## **LOCH AWE SAFETY CODE OF PRACTICE**

*This voluntary Code of Practice has been developed to promote the safety of locals and visitors who use the loch and its shores for boating; fishing and general enjoyment. This loch is one of the largest and coldest in Scotland and has claimed a number of lives over the years. It is fed by melt water in the winter and spring, and all boat users should seriously consider wearing survival suits for their own comfort and safety. Even on the hottest days the loch is very cold. If you end up in the water you will initially suffer from shock followed by the rapid onset of hypothermia; your survival time in cold water is very limited. You have a personal responsibility to look after your own safety and the safety of others with whom you may be sharing your boat. Adopting these simple guidelines may help to save your own life and the life of others. Please consider them carefully as rescue in remote locations may be fraught with difficulty in the timescale needed to preserve life.*

1. Anyone venturing out on the water must always wear a correctly functioning and fitted personal flotation device. Anyone fishing from the shore should consider wearing a personal flotation device.
2. Boats within 100 metres of the shore should exercise caution when underway.
3. Water and alcohol just do not mix! Even one alcohol drink can impair judgement making most water activities unsafe.
4. Any boat used on the loch should be `sea-worthy` and fit for purpose, any outboard fitted should be in good working order and oars or paddles should be carried. Means of summoning assistance in event of an emergency should be carried – whistle; mobile phone; torch.
5. No boat should be overloaded such as to impair its stability and should not carry more than its intended number of passengers. All on board must wear correctly functioning and fitted lifejackets.
6. Avoid standing up in your boat as this is a common cause of instability problems.
7. The person in charge of the boat should take due account of the prevailing weather conditions and should not embark if the weather conditions or forecast dictate otherwise.
8. Taking the boat out in the dark requires extra precautions – lighting; ability to navigate using a compass; telling someone where you are going and when you will be back.
9. All boat users should be considerate of all others using the loch including shore anglers and take care not to disturb the local area.
10. Think Safety and act safely – you only have one life!

**Stay safe - before heading out on the water get trained, check weather forecast, wear a lifejacket, avoid alcohol and keep in touch**