

## **Ethel Trust**

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**

#### **Background**

The need for carrying out an emergency evacuation of Ethel will be an extremely rare occurrence, however the Skipper and crew should be clear about their roles and responsibilities in the unlikely event of an evacuation needing to take place.

#### **Reasons for an emergency evacuation**

The following are examples (though not an exhaustive list) of reasons for an emergency evacuation:

- Fire on board
- When moored, fire on a nearby boat
- When moored, fire in a nearby building
- Gas/chemical leak or fumes on board or nearby
- Following a damaging collision with another boat or fixed object
- Striking an underwater object causing damage to the hull resulting in the taking on of water

#### **Key responsibilities of the Skipper**

- **Ensuring the alarm is raised is the responsibility of the Skipper**
- **The responsibility for dealing with the incident will rest with the Skipper until the emergency services arrive**

#### **Procedures for Skippers and Crew**

- The method of raising the alarm is for the Skipper or crew to telephone 999 and to give the emergency services the following details: name of boat; location (including post code from on board handbook, if possible); number of personnel on the boat; nature of the incident and assistance required. If there is no mobile network available, then efforts should be made to locate a nearby land line telephone (following evacuation) or use bystanders on the towpath to assist if possible in raising the alarm. An alternative is to call for assistance on the VHF Marine radio.
- The arrangements for informing the passengers/carers etc. of the need to evacuate will depend on the age/disability/type of group on board. For example, if the group is learning disabled, then communication and action will be through the carers. If the group is, for example, a Rotary Club then the Skipper will

address them directly and explain the action to be taken. The evacuation routes from Ethel are up the stairs at the either end of the main cabin.

- The Skipper will ensure the list of passengers (the Manifest Sheet) is safely taken off the boat. A roll call will later be taken at the assembly point as soon as possible after everyone has vacated the boat.
- The crew will move the passengers away from the immediate danger (at the opposite end of the boat to the danger) which will usually also involve moving them onto the deck. If appropriate, and having been trained, the crew will mitigate the impact of the incident. For example, in the case of a fire, utilise the firefighting equipment as long as this does not place the crew in more danger
- The Skipper will steer the boat to the nearest safe evacuation point which will generally be the tow path, river bank or moorings (the assembly point). If the emergency has resulted in engine failure, then the boat should be poled to the bank or a rope thrown to a bystander. In moving water with engine failure, the boat should be maneuvered to the bank in a similar way and the anchor maybe deployed. River evacuation may be difficult with currents, uneven banks, overhanging trees and difficulties in using the ramps.
- When the boat is secured to the bank all able bodied passengers will disembark in an orderly fashion. It may be necessary to use the wheelchair ramps to bridge the gap between the boat and the towpath, particularly if the water is shallow. Where children or young people are involved it is crucial that there is adult supervision on the tow path assembly point
- If the wheelchair lifts are still working safely, then they should be used to assist with the evacuation of disabled or elderly/ infirm passengers
- If the wheelchair lifts are not working, then disabled/elderly/infirm passengers should be assisted or if necessary carried off the boat. Further assistance should be sought from any suitable adults who may be available, either passengers or members of the public. Manual over-ride of the lifts is possible, but slow, an alternative (as a final resort) is to use one of the ramps to slide passenger onto the decks
- It may be necessary to carry out First Aid on any injured persons at the assembly point and the First Aid box should be taken off the boat
- Ensure that property and belongings are protected
- If possible, a responsible person should be sent to meet and direct the Emergency Services to the boat and assembly point. The Skipper should brief the Emergency Services and where the incident is serious, hand over the responsibility for the incident/emergency

## **Aftermath**

- The Skipper will ensure that following any incident or accident that Ethel is secured and/or recovered safely in readiness, for example, a survey by our Insurance assessors.
- At the first practical opportunity, the Skipper is to make a note of the incident by completing the Accident Book and Ethel Incident Form
- Statements/details will only be given to the relevant authorities. Skippers will not speak to the Press.
- Contact a Trustee as soon as practically possible
- Organise a debrief for all concerned and include the passenger Group Leader
- Undertake a lessons learnt session at the Operations Group

John Batley/Billy Carruthers

1<sup>st</sup> September 2019