

Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta Press Release



April 2019

Regatta raft Race/swimming

Grab your spare planks of wood and string and get making - the legendary Kon-Tiki Raft Race is back!

After a gap of some 15 years, the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta will again be staging one of the town's most exciting river challenges.

It will take place on Saturday, August 24, and now is the time to get planning and making your raft.

Although there will be a number of changes on past formats, this year's race is sure to provide a mix of skills and ingenuity to be enjoyed by both participants and spectators alike.

It will also be the chance to paddle in the wake of

one of history's most famous explorers, Thor Heyerdahl, who in 1947 crossed the Pacific Ocean on the balsa wood raft Kon-Tiki.

Almost just as remarkable has been the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta Kon-Tiki Raft Race which over the years has consistently tested the creativity and determination of Dartmouth residents, young and old.

Now, with the kind permission and support from the Dart Harbour and Navigation Authority, the popular race will take place along the South Embankment with rafts being launched at the Higher Ferry Slipway and finishing at the Boat Float.

A raft can be crewed by 2 to 10 people with categories of entry for families and adults. The minimum age for participants will be 8-years old; there is no maximum age limit!

To be in the 'family' category, the crew must have an equal number or more children than adults (noting that for every 3 children, there must be at least one adult). To be in the 'adult' category, the crew must have a greater number of adults than children (adult defined as over 18yrs).

With kind sponsorship from the Higher Ferry and Platform 1 Champagne Bar & Restaurant there will be trophies and awards for fastest crew and best dressed raft and crew in each class.

The 2019 Dartmouth Regatta Kon-Tiki Raft Race will be limited to 15 entries per race.

The entry fee (non refundable) will be based upon the numbers of people on the raft as follows: 2-4 person raft - £10; 5-8 person raft - £20; 9-10 person raft - £30.

The rafts will be launched from the Dartmouth side of the Higher Ferry Slipway and the finish line will be just prior to the Boat Float where a marshall will record the time across the line. The race length is 550m.

Your raft must be longer than it is wide and not be over 10 metres in length. Nor must have any means of propulsion other than paddles, oars or sails. It cannot be based on a previously seaworthy vessel (i.e. a rib, canoe or dingy in disguise). These will be spotted and disqualified on the basis of unsportsmanlike behaviour!

The minimum number of crew members for each raft is 2 and the maximum is 10. Participants and their supporters will have to carry, push or pull the raft from the parking/offload point at Coronation Park and remove the raft from the water at the finish carrying it up the double steps by entrance to the Boat Float or via the Boat Float Slip.

Most importantly, the raft must be made of materials which will not harm the environment or cause danger to other participants noting that the following criteria are mandatory conditions:

- plastics which could disintegrate, particularly polystyrene are prohibited;
- any material used must be thoroughly cleaned to remove any risk of water contamination; and
- care must be taken to ensure that any protrusions from the raft are not likely to cause injury if they strike other rafts or participants.

Coronation Park will be available for mustering the rafts from 10am and rafts will be invited to launch in batches from 11.45am. All rafts will be inspected prior to launch and any which do not comply with the above conditions will be disqualified and will not be permitted to enter the river.

The Raft Race organisers reserve the right to cancel the event should it consider there are serious concerns to the life of the participants and safety crew.

All information on how to enter will be announced on the Regatta facebook page on Easter Sunday.

Fun in the water continues with another Regatta favourite - the ever popular swimming gala at the town's outdoor heated pool. There will be races and relay races for all ages and if taking part isn't for you, a full programme will entertain spectators who are able to sit and picnic on the grass by the side of the pool.

Last year, entries were late coming forward for this event so please get your names in early to make this family favourite a special event.

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For more information regarding the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta contact Lisa Chandler on 07701048363 or lisachandler999@sky.com