

Wansbeck Paddle Sports Club: Risk Assessment

Activity / Venue: Canoeing/ Kayaking on Sheltered water environments eg River Wansbeck, Ashington

Completed by: Chris Scott **Date of Assessment:** 1/9/2021 **Checked By:** Gary Cadman **Date:** 26/08/2024

Activity	Hazards	Possible outcomes/ injuries	Who Affected?	What controls	Further Controls / comments
Kayak/canoe Trailer (loading and transit)	Poor manual handling, Boats falling from trailer, trailer malfunctioning or unexpected disconnection from vehicle in transit.	Various injuries from poor manual handling, accident/injuries resulting from boats or trailer. Road Traffic accident due to incorrectly secured trailer or load.	All , General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor supervision and control. • Participants trained in effective manual handling techniques and communication in relation to lifting, moving and loading boats and moving the trailer. • Participants trained on how to secure boats to the trailer. • Instructor/driver to always check boats are secured effectively before driving. • Instructor/driver to always check that trailer is secured to vehicle effectively. • Trailer not to be overloaded (and guidelines on maximum weight limit and compatibility with vehicle flowed). • Driver to have appropriate driving license for towing a trailer. • Periodic checks of trailer during transit and stop and adjust if necessary. 	The Club are responsible for maintenance of the trailer and ensuring that it is roadworthy.
Paddling	Incorrect paddling technique	Strain & muscle/joint Injury.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm up completed prior to strenuous paddling or heavy lifting. • Correctly sized & fitted boats to be used. • Back and foot rests to be fitted and secure effectively. • All participants are coached on safe/effective paddling techniques e.g. active posture, paddlers box, etc. to help avoid injury. 	All participants are shown correct paddling techniques e.g. posture/paddlers box etc. to avoid injury.

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Paddling	Rescuing capsized boats.	Strain Injury during rescue, injury to capsized paddlers, rest of group during drifting during rescue.	Instructors, participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaches who perform the rescues use the correct techniques (as recommended by British Canoeing) to avoid injury. Participants briefed and coached on what to do in the event of a capsize. Coaches to use other people to help if needed. Boats to be fitted with operational air bags. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	Coach to consider PoMU (Position of Most Usefulness) in order to maintain a line of sight with whole group while dealing with a capsize and direct group accordingly.
Paddling	Shallows	Cutting feet, slips and trips, sprained ankles & wrists, shoulder/head/neck injury from capsize.	Instructors, Participants,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid shallow sections of the river where possible and instructor to direct group away from shallows accordingly. Avoid playing 'wet games', with high likelihood of capsizing in shallow water. Warn participants. Participants and instructors to wear appropriate footwear. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	
Paddling	Paddles	Impact injuries, e.g. cuts and bumps to face and head.	Participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants and instructors to wear helmets when kayaking. Choose games/activities to match the ability and maturity of the group. Participants made aware that controlling their paddles during games is important to avoid hitting others. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	
Paddling	Water quality	Leptospirosis, etc. and general sickness.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid areas where there is a known problem. If there is a question about the water quality, avoid all planned immersion activities. Participants made aware, told to wash hands before eating and after getting off the water. Participants also advised to cover any open cuts. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	Monitor. Contact Environment Agency if problem occurs.

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Paddling	Fishermen	Entanglement & cuts	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors constantly check river banks for fishermen and lines and direct participants accordingly. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	Participants made aware of keeping a suitable distance from fishermen.
Paddling	Other water users	Strains & Sprains. Crush injuries.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors constantly check for other water users and direct participants accordingly. If paddling in a harbour, it may be necessary to contact the harbour master prior to the session to check on traffic and gain information about busy times, areas to avoid, etc. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	Participants are made aware of other water users and the 'river right' position rule.
Paddling	Water/flow (increased hazard if the sheltered area is in high water/spate conditions)	Drowning, loss of group control.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check weather forecast and water conditions prior to session. Avoid if water levels aren't suitable for the group and level of qualification of the instructor/coach. Mandatory use of buoyancy aids. Buoyancy aids to be well fitted and checked by the instructor/coach before getting on the water. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	Instructor to carry rescue equipment.
Paddling	Trees/strainers (often an increased hazard if the sheltered area is in high water/spate conditions)	Pinning, entanglement resulting in drowning.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above. Avoid. Warn participants and instruct them on what to do and what not to do if they get close to a tree. Check weather forecast and water conditions prior to session and avoid an area if water levels aren't suitable for the group and the instructor/coach in relation to the remits of their BC qualification. Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	Instructor to carry rescue equipment. Group to be advised on rescue priority and involvement.
Paddling	Weirs	Drowning	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above. Avoid. Instructors will guide/direct participants away from the weirs during session and set boundaries if needed. 	Participants are made aware of the dangers of the weir. Instructor to carry rescue equipment.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warn participants and instruct them on what to do and what not to do if they get close to a weir (if appropriate). Qualified instructor/coach supervision & control. 	
Padding	Weather (strong winds, cold & temperatures, etc. Increased hazard in winter.)	Drifting and split-up group, Capsizes, loss of group control (especially in canoes) Hypothermia through exposure/immersion, sun burn.	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified instructor supervision & control. Weather forecast to be obtained prior to session. Session to be adapted/ postponed/cancelled if conditions are not appropriate. Participants and instructors to wear & carry appropriate clothing and equipment for conditions. Instructor to carry full leadership equipment including group shelter. Adequate & appropriate food to be eaten prior to the session and carried. Water/drink (hot &/or cold) to be carried. Participants to be encouraged to eat regularly and keep energy levels up. Participants encouraged to drink regularly and keep hydration levels up. Instructors & participants to wear sun protection. Planned carefully around hours of light available for session. 	Instructor to carry safety equipment (group shelter, spare clothes, food etc)
Warm up	Dog foul	Bacterial illness, Blinding.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor choses an area of grass with no dog foul or remove the dog foul 	Make participants aware of dog foul.
Warm up	Muddy/slippy or uneven terrain	Slips, trips, Twists and sprains	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor choses an area of ground that is most suitable and appropriate. Adapt warm-up to a more static activity if the ground isn't appropriate for running around. Instructors and participants to wear appropriate footwear. Instructor/coach supervision & control. 	

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Paddle sport sessions Risk Assessment:

Sessions must be run by a British Canoeing (BC) qualified and updated Coach award holder or above. It is possible for this session to be run by a BC paddle sport instructor under the qualification of a higher level coach. If the paddle sport instructor isn't in direct supervision by a BC Coach or leader, then they must have been signed off as technically competent by the Coaching Officer and are in effect working under their qualification.

The coach / Leader running the session must hold a current first aid certificate, have a minimum of FSRT and should be 'up to date' in terms of BC revalidation.

The recommended ratio for this session is 1:8. This can be increased if a 'competent second' is present, e.g. someone who is at a competent level to assist in rescues etc or if the ability of the group is at a good level for this type of water. The decision on the competency level of the second & of the group will rest with the Coaching Officer and will ideally be backed up by awards such as: BC Canoe / Kayak award holder, FSRT or White Water Safety Training etc. With a competent second, the group size could be 1:12. If the group size is larger than 12, then a second qualified coach is required.

Names & positions of those carrying out this risk assessment: Chris Scott (Club Chair)	Signatures and date: Chris Scott 1/9/2021	Date that this risk assessment was last reviewed and updated: 26/08/2024 Date for next review: 26/08/2025
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