

Generic Risk Assessment for Liverpool Canoe Club

Please adapt as required for your own Risk Assessments



Liverpool Canoe Club Date of Risk Assessment: 1/1/26		Name of Risk Assessor: Keith Steer LCC Safety Officer: Kevin Corcoran		Review Date: Reviewed annually and as required by the club safety officer. (eg following any reported Incidents)	
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
Drowning	Paddlers Other	Wearing of buoyancy aid Instruction on capsize procedures Relevant supervision for novices Advised to keep away from the riverbank	Buoyancy aids are checked annually Induction sessions for beginners and new members Supervisors to ensure the buoyancy aid is correctly fitted Regular checks on equipment during the season	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Hypothermia	Paddlers	Advised on the correct clothing to wear Adjustment to clothing as required	Continuous dynamic risk assessment	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Slips, Trips and Falls	Paddlers, Parents, Coaches and Others	Regular maintenance of landing stages, banks, steps and storage and compound floors	Appropriate cleaning/maintenance equipment available	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session

Sprains, Strains and soft tissue injuries	Paddlers, Parents Coaches and Others	Trained to lift correctly Ask for help Encouraged to paddle correctly	Ongoing training and regular checks of procedures Appropriate checks on storage facilities	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Pollution and water quality	Paddlers	Advised to bathe soon after immersion Made aware of flotsam	Risks are higher in spate conditions Avoid intentional capsizes in poor conditions (eg near moored boats in Coburg Dock Water Quality is monitored by the Canal and Rivers Trust	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Other water users	Paddlers and other users	Paddlers are instructed to be aware of other water users and how to take appropriate/avoiding action	Informed as to possible other water users and location. Canal and Rivers Trust (Harbour Master) circulates water users' notices regularly, and these are circulated around the club, including leaders.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Weirs and man-made features	Paddlers Coaches	Helmets to be worn when paddling in associated rough water	Appropriate skill and awareness training	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Over hanging tree or strainers	Paddlers Coaches	Paddlers advised to negotiate around trees, both overhanging and floating Advised as to correct action in event of entanglement Appropriate tree management on site	Regular checks as part of on-site maintenance Appropriate training for off-site visits	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session

Injury from traffic	Coaches, leaders, participants and the public	<p>Low Volume of traffic The compound area has no public access</p> <p>Danger from moving traffic when unloading boats at venues</p>	<p>Limited number of vehicles Speed limits in operation</p> <p>Common sense when loading and unloading vehicles in parking spots and on roadsides.</p>	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Injury from manual handling	Coaches, leaders and participants	There is minimal heavy lifting as club boats are stored on racking near the water's edge or poolside.	Advice, training and help are given to club members on how to lift and move boats and equipment. Two people to each boat.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Property and Facilities	Coaches, leaders and participants	Club boats, compound, pool storage and pontoon(s) are checked at each session and faults/work required are reported to the Compound and Equipment Coordinator using the email on Key Members & Responsibilities - Liverpool Canoe Club	Annually maintained (Last Saturday of April) and ongoing as necessary.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Wildlife (nesting birds, seals, swans)	Coaches, leaders and participants	Aggressive encounters, capsizes	Standoff, avoid nesting sites/seal haul-outs; seasonal awareness; brief group on behaviour.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Cliff/rockfall/coastal erosion	Coaches, leaders and participants	Trauma	Standoff distances; avoid undercut cliffs in swell/heavy rain; landing zones pre-identified.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session

Paddling at night	All Paddlers	<p>At night, any navigation rules regarding location MUST always be followed.</p> <p>In conditions where there is an increase in risk, a more stable boat can be selected to minimise the risk of capsize.</p>	<p>Navigation lights are essential if there are other boats (powered or unpowered) on the water. All-round White Light - Must be displayed from sunset to sunrise and during reduced visibility (e.g., fog, dusk) and provides 360° visibility, ensuring other vessels can see you from any direction.</p> <p>Paddling is strongly advised to take place in groups.</p>	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Weather and environmental conditions (See below for specific conditions)	Coaches, leaders and participants	Weather forecasts are always obtained, plans are adapted, and participants are advised.	Cancellation or adapted plan (Dynamic Risk Assessment during all activities). Participants to have suitable experience and clothing,	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Cold water ($\leq 15^{\circ}\text{C}$), immersion, cold shock	Coaches, leaders and participants	Inhalation/aspiration, swim failure, cardiac stress, hypothermia	Eliminate: Avoid coldest periods / shorten immersion risk activities. Engineering: Choose sheltered venues; bank safety. Admin: Go/No-Go rules using water + air temp; buddy checks; progressive exposure; carry hot drinks, shelter bags. PPE: Suitable wetsuit/drysuit, thermal layers, hats/gloves, spare kit.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Wind (\geq Force 4), gusts, crosswinds	Coaches, leaders and participants	Capsize, loss of control, blown off-course, separation	Venue choice with lee; upwind-first routing; group spacing; towing kits; comms plan; avoid offshore winds; choose stable craft; reduce sail area (SOTs/boards); cancel if whitecapping beyond group capability.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session

Waves/swell/ standing waves (surf, tide races, WW)	Coaches, leaders and participants	Capsize, impact, entrapment	Match conditions to skill; spotters/bank safety; selective features; helmet use; short swims plan; throwlines; clear signals; progressive feature choice; retreat options.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Flow/level changes (rain, dam release, spate)	Coaches, leaders and participants	Strainers, entrapment, and powerful hydraulics	Check gauges/releases; local intel; avoid high hazard features; bank-based scouting; eddy-hop; pin/rescue kit with trained leaders; strict group order; abort thresholds predefined.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Tidal streams & range	Coaches, leaders and participants	Overfalls, standing waves, and missed tide gates	Tidal planning (Nautical Publication/Admiralty Tide Tables), slack windows, neaps preference, avoid overfalls; bail-out landing options; VHF/PLB on coastal; group kept tight through gates.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Lightning	Coaches, leaders and participants	Fatal electrocution	30–30 rule; leave water, avoid high points/isolated trees/metal; wait 30 min after last thunder; reschedule.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Visibility (fog, dusk, heavy rain, snow)	Coaches, leaders and participants	Disorientation, collision, separation	Daylight windows; route close to shore; lights/reflectives; hi-vis; buddy system; track/waypoints; cancel if <200 m vis unless fully mitigated.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session

Extreme heat / high UV	Coaches, leaders and participants	Heat illness, sunburn, dehydration	Early/late sessions; shade on shore; electrolyte plan; SPF 30+; long sleeves; rest cycles; heat acclimation guidance.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Air temperature (wind chill)	Coaches, leaders and participants	Hypothermia	Wind chill in plan; layers + spare kit; shorten exposure; on-water rewarm plan; shelters/bothy bags.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session
Flooding / debris / poor water quality	Coaches, leaders and participants	Impact, entanglement, illness	Inspect river for debris; avoid after sewage spills/CSOs; check EA/SEPA/NRW advisories; avoid head-first swims; washdown protocols.	Session leader and group leaders (as identified on the club calendar)	Before and during the session