

Risk Assessment Shropshire Paddlesport



Date:	18.05.2026
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Assessor's Name:	Peter Dickinson	Review Date:	18.05.2027
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Description of Assessment:	Generic risk assessment for sea kayaking sheltered to low moderate water.
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Location Details:	Coastal waters close to land
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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	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?	Done
Injury or drowning while paddling on the sea	Participants and Volunteers Participants - Drowning, Secondary drowning, Hypothermia, Entrapment Sharps injuries	Buoyancy aids (BA)/Personal Flotation Device (PFD) appropriately sized and fitted. All Leaders/Coaches have been deployed by the club including first aid and safeguarding checks. Appropriate First Aid kits available and are to be taken out on trips. All trip members briefed as required. Ensuring that all participants are competent for the trip.	Ensure paddlers paddle in groups, no lone paddling permitted. Buddy system to be used in more exposed areas.	Trip Leader and all coaches / leaders present on trip	On location safety brief	

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A participant becoming incapacitated	Participant can no longer continue due to medical situation or injury.	Notify coastguard of the trip prior to departure and on safe return. Carry phone with numbers in and marine radio.	Use buddy system and everyone to check on each other for any signs of difficulty. In the event of a serious situation call the coastguard.	Trip leader	On location safety brief	
Participants becoming tired.	Participants.	Ensure all participants have enough food and drink and don't have injuries or illness that would cause them a problem. All to wear adequate clothing so as not to become wet or cold.	Leader carries tow line to provide towing assistance.	Trip leaders and any coaches/leaders present	On location safety brief	
Paddler becoming separated from the group	Participants	All paddlers briefed to be aware of what is happening in the group. Buddy system in use. It is recommended that all paddlers carry a whistle. carry a whistle.	Leader to do regular head count on the water and bring the group together.	All participants	On location safety brief	
Worsening weather conditions and sea state	Participants.	Tide and weather forecasts to be monitored prior to depart and during the trip. Leader to assess using the Beaufort scale. Be prepared to return if the option is available. Keep to the shore in the event of a worsening sea state. Carry Radio and mobile phone with Coastguard numbers programmed in.	Plan escape routes in the event of cutting the trip short. Plan bolt holes wherever possible.	Trip leader	On location safety brief	
Equipment failure	Paddles break or boat starts to leak.	Participants encouraged to carry splits and leader to carry temporary repair equipment.	All equipment to be checked prior to starting the trip.	Trip Leader and all coaches / leaders present on trip	On location safety brief	
Head injury when paddling around rocks	Impact while swimming, impact while falling in, accidental impact from own/others paddles.	Helmets to be worn when paddling near rocks. Helmets to be modern style in usable condition.	Ensure helmets worn properly.	All	On location safety brief	
Other sea users	Participants Contact injuries, injury from fishing equipment,	Avoid other paddlers on the sea.	Members briefed at start of trip to be aware	Trip Leader and all coaches / leaders present on trip	On location safety brief	

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Slip, Trips and Falls	Participants and General Public: Head contact Strains, Sprains and Breaks	All members to be briefed at the beginning of activity. Care to be taken at launching/egress points to reduce the possibility of slips/trips while entering/exiting boats.	Members briefed at start of trip to be aware	Trip Leader and all coaches / leaders present on trip	On location safety brief	
Manual Handling	Participants and Volunteers Musculoskeletal harms	Members briefed on good manual handling techniques for boats/kit. Tying boats onto cars is left to the discretion of individual car owners. Members to be advised to share carrying boats/kit where possible.	Members briefed at start of trip to be aware	Trip Leader and all coaches / leaders present on trip	On location safety brief	
Hypothermia	Participants and Volunteers getting cold due too much time spent in the water.	Members briefed at start of trip; participants advised via booking form on kit requirements. Leader carries 1 st aid and emergency shelter.	Dynamic assessment on the day, appropriate action may be required	Trip Leader	Prior day and on day	
Hyperthermia	Participants and Volunteers Heatstroke Sunburn	Members briefed at induction; participants advised via booking form of kit requirements. Leader carries 1 st aid which includes sun cream and emergency shelter.	Dynamic assessment on the day, appropriate action may be required	Trip Leader	Prior day and on day	
Change in Weather Conditions	All Participants	Members suitably equipped for prevailing conditions and groups carrying sufficient supplies to cope.	24 hrs before trip, assessment to be made if the trip needs to be cancelled / postponed. Further dynamic assessment prior to start and during trip.	Trip Leader	On day	

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Lightning strike	All Participants	If thunder and lightning are audible/visible, there is a risk of a lightning strike. The safest option is to check in advance and not to get on the water if thunder and lightning are forecast. If in doubt get off the water.	Dynamic assessment ongoing during trip, safe exits identified	Trip Leader	On day	
Pre-existing medical conditions	All Participants	Understanding who is on the trip and their needs.	Emergency contact details collected on the day of the trip. Participants requested to disclose any medical conditions in confidence to the Trip Leader(s)	Trip Leader	On day	
Safeguarding Failure	All Participants	Compliance with British Canoeing Safeguarding policies and procedures	Action to be taken by coaches and leaders if required	All coaches / leaders	On day	
Illness & fatigue	All Participants	Paddlers to inform leader	Correct supervision and group control by leader. Dynamic risk assessment. First aid kit, food and water, evacuation procedures and assistance identified.	Trip Leader	On day	
Equipment: unserviceable	Paddlers on trip	Leader to check at start of trip. Paddler cannot paddle without serviceable equipment	Basic repair kit and split paddles to be carried by Leader	Trip Leader	On Day	
Throwline / Tow lines / Fishing line etc entanglements	Drowning	All river leaders & competent paddlers to carry a suitable knife.		All coaches / leaders	On day	
Ratio's	1 to 6 on moving water Youth trips	1 to 6 on moving water, consideration given for reduction depending on skill and age. Competent seconds to be included with in the 1 to 6 ratio.				

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<p>Water Quality & Environmental Hazards</p>	<p>All Participants</p> <p>Contact with blue green algae, Pollution, Sewage outflows</p>	<p>Avoid locations with known water quality risks</p>	<p>On the day carry out visual check of location.</p>	<p>Trip Leader and all coaches / leaders present on trip</p>		
<p>Water features</p> <p>Rocks</p> <p>Waves and holding wave patterns</p> <p>Gullies</p>	<p>All paddlers.</p> <p>Uncontrolled interaction resulting in swims, collisions, injuries resulting from this.</p>	<p>Training in capsize drill.</p> <p>Training in safe navigation and progression through rock garden features.</p> <p>Defensive and offensive swimming training.</p> <p>Rescue brief,</p> <p>Rescue training.</p>	<p>Rescue kit</p> <p>Leader proficient in rescues in challenging situations</p> <p>Group aware of actions on incident.</p>	<p>Trip leader</p>		

Office use only (to be completed by a risk assessment checker if selected for sampling)

Checked by:		Position:		Date:	
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