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Guidance for organising trips

Scope of club responsibilities

For paddling trips run by Addlestone Canoe Club, Addlestone Canoe Club has in place policies and risk assessments that cover the paddling elements of the trip.

For events run by external groups or bodies to which paddlers sign up via Addlestone Canoe Club, Addlestone Canoe Club still has a duty of care to ensure that appropriate communication procedures are in place, and that the paddling sessions are run according to Paddle UK standards.

Addlestone Canoe Club does not organise and is not responsible for the other elements of a trip, including:

- transport – travel to and from the trip location, and during the trip (e.g. to the access and egress points) is the responsibility of the individuals driving, and participants may make private arrangements to share transport;
- young people – when not paddling, under-18s must be supervised by a parent or guardian, or by another adult who takes responsibility *in loco parentis* during the trip by means of private arrangements with the parent or guardian;
- accommodation – accommodation is arranged by the trip participants themselves, either on an individual basis or by collaborating to book group accommodation;
- catering – food and drink is arranged by the trip participants themselves, either on an individual basis or by collaborating to arrange for shared meals;
- other physical activities that members decide to undertake during the trip (e.g. swimming, hiking, climbing, etc).

Paddle types

The paddles organised by Addlestone Canoe Club correspond to one of three types.

- **Formally Coached or Led:** these are paddles that include paddlers who are inexperienced in the craft or classification of water (using the Paddle UK water classification scheme shown below), and therefore require the guidance of a coach or leader. These sessions must be led by Paddle Leaders with appropriate Paddle UK coach or leader qualifications for the environment and craft.
- **Supervised:** these are paddles either in Very Sheltered Water, or with paddlers who are considered by the Club Coaches to be able to paddle a given craft and classification of water with supervision. These sessions must be led by Paddle Leaders who have been approved as part of the Club Approved Paddler (CAP) scheme outlined in the club Paddler and Paddle Leader Competency Levels document.
- **Collaborative:** these are paddles with paddlers who are considered by the Club Coaches to be competent paddlers in a given craft and classification of water. These sessions are not formally led by a Paddle Leader – all the participants are expected to contribute to the safety of the group and follow the appropriate risk assessment



individually and collectively. However, it is advised that one paddler is nominated to be the Paddle Leader, though this paddlers need not be a Paddle UK qualified coach or leader, or a CAP. Note that only adults (people aged 18 or above) are able to participate in Collaborative paddles.

Within a single trip, it is possible that there will be all three types of paddle on a single day or at a single location, with the paddle type determined by the Trip Organiser based on the competency levels of the participants as judged by a Club Coach / Leader.

Trip organisation

Every club trip should be organised by a nominated Trip Organiser.

Before the trip, it is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser to ensure that:

- participants are informed of the dates, location, and scope (e.g. activity or intended water classifications) of the trip, and the requirements for personal kit;
- participants sign up using a form that includes the consent statement below, and that gathers participant medical and emergency contact information to be shared with Paddle Leaders and club Emergency Contacts;
- participants are informed of the communication arrangements for on and off the water; and
- Paddle Leaders have been suitably briefed about the club's or event's Risk Assessments.

For trips where Addlestone Canoe Club is organising the paddles, the trip organiser should also monitor the sign-ups to determine whether there are sufficient coaches / leaders / or CAPs for the trip to run successfully.

During the trip, for trips where Addlestone Canoe Club is organising the paddles, it is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser (drawing on the advice of or delegating to Club Coaches / Leaders if preferred) to ensure that:

- Paddle Leaders carry a club Emergency Procedure card that includes contact details of club Emergency Contacts;
- paddle groups are arranged according to the Paddle Types listed above;
- paddle groups are appropriately sized for the water classification following Paddle UK guidance;
- paddle groups carry suitable emergency equipment for the environment;
- paddle groups have made suitable plans for each paddle, including consideration of the capabilities and expectations of each participant, the environmental conditions, transport methods, and methods for emergency egress; and
- that there is a clear float plan shared with all participants that includes the intended route and time of return for each group.

During the trip, for trips where Addlestone Canoe Club is not organising the paddles, it is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser to ensure that:



- the Event Organisers have access to medical and personal emergency contact information for the paddlers (either directly or via the Trip Organiser or nominated other club member);
- paddle groups are appropriately sized for the water classification following Paddle UK guidance;
- there is suitable emergency equipment for the environment;
- paddle groups have made suitable plans for each paddle, including consideration of the capabilities and expectations of each participant, the environmental conditions, transport methods, and methods for emergency egress; and
- that there is a clear float plan shared with all participants that includes the intended route and time of return for each group.

Following the trip, it is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser to ensure that:

- any incidents are reported according to the club's Health and Safety Policy;
- any feedback or learning points are reported to the Committee; and
- any temporary communication groups (e.g. WhatsApp groups) are closed down.

Consent statement

Paddling, including kayaking, canoeing, and paddleboarding offers an exciting, engaging, and rewarding experience. Paddling provides opportunities to explore blue spaces, develop new skills, build confidence, and enjoy paddling independently or as part of a team, as suits the individual paddler.

However, paddling is also an adventurous water-based activity that carries inherent risks. Participants should understand that whilst these risks cannot be completely removed, they can be mitigated with consideration of environmental conditions, as well as proper supervision, training, and the use of appropriate safety equipment.

By taking part in paddling activity, participants acknowledge the risks and accept the need for responsible behaviour and actions whilst continuing to embrace the enjoyment and unique benefits that paddling provides.

I understand that outdoor activities include an element of risk and confirm I understand the risks involved and am happy to take part. I give full consent to allow a member of Addlestone Canoe club to issue treatment, medication and first aid in an emergency situation or if an injury, accident or incident occurs whilst taking part in an activity. If I develop flu-like symptoms within two weeks of participating in water based activity I understand that the club recommends visiting a GP and stating I have been in a natural water environment.

I have answered the questions above fully and honestly and know of no medical condition or injury, not stated above / in the JustGo membership system, which may impede me when taking part in a physically and emotionally demanding activity. I the undersigned accept that Addlestone Canoe club will not accept responsibility for any previous condition or injury included or not included on this form and accept that outdoor adventurous activities do involve an element of risk.



Water classifications

These water classifications are based on British Canoeing's environmental definitions and deployment guidance, with additional classification and examples based on rivers and features commonly used by Addlestone Canoe Club.

Description	Definition	Examples regularly used by Addlestone Canoe Club, subject to weather and flow conditions
Bank support	Equipping and fitting paddlers with appropriate equipment.	
Pool sessions	Pool sessions run by Addlestone Canoe Club	
New Haw to Coxes locks	The home stretch of Addlestone Canoe Club, keeping at least 5m from the lock gates and submerged weir into the mill pond at Coxes lock, and not entering the weir stream behind the White Hart.	
Wey Navigation between Walsham Gates and Town Lock (not weirs)	The Wey Navigation, keeping away from weirs.	
Sheltered Water	Ungraded sections of slow moving rivers where the group could paddle upstream against the flow (not involving the shooting of, or playing on, weirs or running rapids). Areas of open water (e.g. lakes and lochs) where the paddlers are no more than 200 metres offshore and the wind strength does not exceed Beaufort force 3, avoiding the group being swept/blown out of the safe working area. Slow moving estuaries (less than 0.5 Knots)	River Thames (away from the moving water of weirs) in normal conditions River Wey river sections in normal conditions Shepperton main weir in summer conditions with little flow
Running Coxes weir	Entering the mill pond at Coxes Lock and shooting the weir.	
Local Weirs (Chertsey, Shepperton, Wey)	Local weirs commonly used by the white water group (see list on right)	River Wey: Hamm Oils, Bulldogs & Town Lock weirs River Thames: Shepperton main weir with up to and including 2 gates open River Thames: Chertsey weir when Environment Agency warnings are not in place



Moderate Water	<p>Inland: Large areas of open water that exceed the sheltered water definition, where the paddlers are no more than 500 metres off shore and in wind strengths that do not exceed Beaufort force 4.</p> <p>White Water: Grade 2(3) white water or equivalent weirs.</p> <p>Surf: Sections of sandy beaches free from significant hazard (e.g. rocks and strong rips) and easy access. Gentle, sloping and spilling waves, preferably peeling. Not pitching or dumping. Wave height should be no more than double overhead when seated in a kayak in the trough of the wave (head high for a stand up surfer).</p>	<p>River Thames (away from the moving water of weirs) with Environment Agency Yellow or Red warnings</p> <p>River Thames: Shepperton weir with more than 2 gates open</p> <p>Thames: Chertsey weir when Environment Agency Yellow or Red warnings are in place</p>
Advanced Water (excluding Sea and Surf)	<p>Inland: Large areas of open water which exceed Moderate Inland Water and/or have winds in excess of Beaufort force 4.</p> <p>White Water: Grade 3(4) white water for canoe. Rivers up to and including grade 4 for kayak.</p>	