

BCCC Mytchett Site Risk Assessment (Updated 3rd September 2009)

The following is a generic risk assessment for club activities run around the Mytchett site and on the Basingstoke Canal. This covers the majority of club-organised activities run at the site. It covers risks to both canoeists and other canal users and is specific to the site as well as the boathouse.

'Canoeists' is used in the assessment to describe all those participating in recreational or competitive paddlesport. Some variances are used to cover risks associated with specific activities or disciplines (such as marathon or canoe polo) run around the centre. Generic risk sections are also used to assess additional risks associated with particular activities.

Individual sections are also used to assess and record variances to the BCU 'norm' such as members who are not BCU coaches supervising activities or juniors paddling alone - **controls** representing current practice are **included** in each case.

Some general risks associated with canoeing are covered by the club's policies on child protection and safety.

This risk assessment drives the club's general actions and attitude to safety at the site and it should be used as a starting point for anyone running an activity from the site. Individual activities should also be dynamically assessed by the coach or event organiser in charge of each activity.

The Basingstoke Canal is probably as safe a venue for canoeing as it is possible to have. It is generally well sheltered, and (although deep enough to drown) it is also generally shallow enough for conscious, unencumbered paddlers to walk out. In a risk assessment for most other waters it would be necessary to include a section about the risks posed by strong water flows over weirs and sluices. On the Basingstoke Canal however there are seldom any such flows strong enough to pose a threat to canoeists.

Paul Jeffs
BCU L3 Coach (Inland Kayak)

Revisions:

Date	Details
25 Jul 05	Original release
7 Sep 05	Swing bridge risks extended.
15 Sep 05	Generic weather risks, introduction and weed as hazard.
16 Sep 05	Controls ratified and extra section on Weil's from committee meeting.
3 Sep 09	Document reformatted and updated. New risks and controls added with proposals/contributions from Alan Ebbage, James Freemantle, Lee Matthews, Brian Gandy, Liz Murnaghan and Harvey Wade in August 09. Items include sewerage spill; bank side coaching on cycle, site traffic; boat-store safety, new BCU terminology/awards/levels and other minor updates. Amends forming this version are marked in red.

IMPORTANT

This is a controlled document. If you do make changes please change the name (date), signature, and record any changes you make.

BCU Generic and Site / Activity Risk Assessment

Record of Risk Assessment	Club/Centre: Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club.
Activity: Generic Club Activities at site	Site: Mytchett Boathouse, Canal Centre area and Basingstoke Canal
Date of Assessment: 1 September 2009	Assessment Review Date: September 2010
Assessment Undertaken By: Paul Jeffs	Signed By... Paul G. Jeffs

Hazard	Water Level Variance	Who Might be Harmed	Probability L/M/H	Severity L/M/H	How is the Risk Controlled Generally	Action By Whom	Special Circumstances Control variance	Outcome Probability Severity
Obstructions & trip hazards, collisions with canoeing equipment on land	none	Other canal & area users; towpath users (tripping, aggression, injury, falling into canal)	L	M	Canoeists encouraged to control kit, put kit away, not obstruct paths & towpaths	Coaching team & activity organisers		L
Seal launch damage	low water has higher impact	Canal bank – other canal users by unstable banks - canoeists in shallow water	M	L	Canoeists to restrict launching to deep areas edged by wood	Coaching team & activity organisers		L
Boats or paddles falling from storage racks in boathouse/storage.	none	Canoeists, helpers, visitors to boathouse	L	M	Sensible boat placement, boathouse restricted to children only when with adults, good handling practice; regularly review boat layout. Permanent elastic ties installed to prevent boats falling from racking.	Coaching team & activity organisers; boat store manager	Most likely to impact children	L
General boat handling risks	none	Canoeists, helpers, visitors to boathouse	L	M	'Best practice' lifting and handling - encourage carrying by two people and 'part lift' techniques	Coaching team & activity organisers		L
Generic drowning hazards.	none (note majority is shallow).	Canoeists.	L	H	All canoeists required to wear buoyancy aids. Club buoyancy aids provided.	Coaching team & activity organisers.	Exception is adult marathon paddlers but they are encouraged to wear buoyancy aids during individual training. Junior marathon paddlers may be exempted from wearing buoyancy aids at the discretion of the coach in charge of an activity.	L

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Generic environment risks - hypothermia, sunburn, hyperthermia.	None.	Canoeists.	M	M	All canoeists encouraged to wear appropriate clothing and footwear & use of sunscreen etc. by training. Guidance in Paddlepower enrolment forms, website etc.	Coaching team & activity organisers.		L
Oncoming craft.	None.	Canoeists – collision & capsize; cuts, bruising; hypothermia.	L	H	Activity leaders and canoeists encouraged to be aware of other canal users and 'rule of road' – keep right & avoid sudden manoeuvres, be aware of line of sight restrictions/placement.	Coaching team & activity organisers.	Marathon paddlers also encouraged to wear lights during night time winter training sessions.	L
Fallen trees & floating debris; trees & bank-side plants, waterweed.	Submerged debris at lower water levels.	Canoeists – collision & capsize; entrapment & drowning cuts, bruising; hypothermia.	L	H	Canal housekeeping. Report large obstructions to the Canal Authority.	Canal rangers, canoeists, other volunteers. Coaching team & activity organisers	Higher risk during crowded marathons- speed and numbers. Special effort to clear course for these events. Advise paddlers to avoid weeded areas.	L
Locks – slippery and/or damaged banks, water flows, other boats.	None.	Canoeists – falling in, capsize, crushing.	L	M	Canoeists encouraged to portage safely. Canal bank damage, e.g. rotten wooden banks/locks to be reported to Canal Authority.	Coaching team & activity organisers.	Generally applies to marathon paddlers that reach locks at Ash and Frimley!	L
Swing bridge (low).	High water may increase impact.	Canoeists -(head injury.). People on bridge whilst opening and closing resulting in entrapment of limbs .	L	L	Bridge is very visible even in dark. Activity leaders make canoeists aware. Bridge is clearly marked with warnings to keep off whilst bridge is in motion. Bridge is also locked by BWB padlock.	Activity leaders.	Bridge may also be locked. Note – normally left open for remote bank access on club evenings.	L
Anglers lines.	None.	Canoeists - capsize; entrapment & drowning cuts, bruising; hypothermia.	H	M	Canoeists encouraged to look out for fishermen, communicate appropriately and minimise disturbance; avoiding lines. This does control this in practice.	Canoeists, coaching team & activity organisers.	Event organisers should co-ordinate with BCA/fishermen to ensure fishing match dates are avoided for events.	L

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Slalom poles.	None.	Canoeists, other canal & path users – bruising.	L	L	Slalom poles located opposite side to towpath in low foot-traffic area; wires/ ropes well above boat+ person height, lightweight poles, stowed after use away from path; slalom coaches allow boat passage!	Slalom coaches, coaching team & activity organisers.	Formal slalom events may require co-ordination with BCA to restrict canal traffic.	L
Canal polo generic hazards (additional).	None.	Canoeists by Paddle contacts (bruising, cuts).	H	L	Canal polo to be played as 'paddle-free' or with helmets and faceguards if available.	Activity leader.	Decision at discretion of activity leader or coach – may depend on numbers.	L

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Group supervision – generic hazards (additional).	None.	Canoeists – Potential extra risks of drowning or other injury from inexperienced group leadership.	L	M	Control: Up to 6 young paddlers on regular club evenings may be led by experienced adult paddlers within the following guidelines: - leaders must be (old or new) 2* standard minimum - must be an active paddler (minimum 1 year) - encouraged to have CST or Foundation Safety & Rescue - must have completed a self-declaration - must be briefed for the activity by a BCU level 2 or UKCC level 2 or above coach - taster & beginner sessions are Restricted to the area from the southern end of Potter's island approx 200m of the centre to the slalom poles 100m N of the centre; for groups without spraydecks - for Paddlepower Discover and above groups to be Restricted to south of Kings Head bridge (approx 1km north) and north of Mytchett Lake (approx. 800m south of centre).	Youth officer, committee, coaching team.	There is no Restriction as such on adults or on junior paddlers under close supervision by their own parents, - this is not regarded as a club activity. It is club policy to use appropriate BCU coaches within their remits. This proposal takes account of leader experience, paddler experience, open areas, typical vicinity of paddlers/coaches/help & distance from base. <i>(This original group supervision control mirrors existing practice and was accepted by the club committee on 16 September 2005.)</i> <i>Minor updates made 1 Sep 2009 to reflect latest Paddlepower terminology and BCU awards/levels.</i>	L

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Inexperienced & junior paddlers on marathon or time-trial events - generic hazards (additional).	None,	Inexperienced & junior marathon/ racing paddlers.	L	M	Control: (Racing canoeists may need to paddle alone as part of an organised event (e.g Hare & Hounds, mini-marathons, marathons)). Organisers must ensure that inexperienced and all junior participants wear buoyancy aids and that their start and finish are monitored. Event organisers should consider staggering start times so that junior or inexperienced paddlers are effectively followed on the water by more experienced paddlers. If this is not possible, event organisers should consider the use of experienced paddlers at turns and as 'sweeper(s)'. Close supervision by parents (for juniors) or by an experienced paddler is essential for all inexperienced paddlers.	Event organiser Youth Officer, Committee; Marathon team.	Note – lower risk of entrapment in racing boats. All paddlers supervising juniors must have completed a self-declaration. <i>(This control mirrors existing practice and was accepted by the club committee on 16 September 2005.)</i>	L

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Group supervision during training sessions – junior marathon paddlers - generic hazards (additional).	None.	Inexperienced & junior marathon/ racing paddlers.	L	L	Marathon training may be supervised at training sessions by experienced marathon paddlers within the following guidelines: - leaders must be 2* PW or new 2* standard minimum (or have 3 years racing experience) - must be active paddlers (minimum 1 year) - encouraged to have CST or Foundation Safety & Rescue - must have completed a self-declaration.	Youth Officer, Committee, Marathon team.	Note – lower risk of entrapment in racing boats. All paddlers supervising juniors must have completed a self-declaration. <i>(This original control mirrors existing practice and was accepted by the club committee on 16 September 2005.)</i> <i>Minor updates made 1 Sep 2009 to reflect latest Paddlepower terminology and BCU awards/levels.</i>	L
Generic weather Hazards – heat/sun rain, lightning, - cold/ice.	None.	All paddlers.	M	L-H	Training and appropriate event organisation (advice to paddlers on clothing etc.).	Canoeists, coaching team & activity organisers.	Particular risk is cold-water shock in winter conditions with lightly clothed (e.g. marathon) paddlers.) Winter marathon paddlers and organisers especially should be advised to wear use appropriate clothing.	L
Weil's disease	None.	All paddlers.	L	H	Training and literature/notices on hygiene and specific risks.	Canoeists, coaching team & activity organisers.	Particular risk under bridges and areas where rats pass.	L
Sewerage leaks: risk of infection	None.	All paddlers.	L	M	Report leak to BCA and Environment Agency Incident Hotline (0800 807 060). Place notices on boathouse and website. Encourage immediate use of showers, particularly after capsize.	Canoeists, coaching team & activity organisers.		L

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Bank side coaching using cycles. Risk of collision with public, damaged bank, falling in.	None.	Coaches, support teams, public.	L	M	Make riders aware of risks. Encourage riders to reconnoitre the tow-path by cycle prior to coaching or supporting for the first time.	Coaching team & support team.		L
Vehicle traffic on site (e.g during car boot sales or other events.)	None	All paddlers.	L	M	Ensure boundaries for groups are set and warm ups take place in a safe area.	Canoeists, coaching team & activity organisers.	Particular concern at weekends.	L

Reference: Generic and Site / Activity Risk Assessment (page 9, diagram 4 of BCU draft document) ref D:\Coaching Documents\SMC\Hazard template HPP.doc