



Boat and Equipment Usage Policy

Ahead of Everything

The content of this document is aimed at helping you ensure safe use of our boats. However:

- You are responsible for your own actions when using a club boat outside of a formally organised and coached BCCC activity.
- You are responsible for ensuring you have the knowledge and skills required to undertake the activity you have planned.
- You are responsible for knowing whether a boat is fit for the purpose you intend to use it for.
- You are responsible for ensuring you have the skills to assess whether the boat you borrow is in good repair.
- You are responsible for having the knowledge and skills necessary to safely and securely transport and store a boat you have borrowed.
- You are responsible for having the organisational and coaching skills necessary to ensure the safety of anybody in your care.

As overarching guidance:

- You **must** have your own 'on-the-water' British Canoeing membership (or equivalent licence and insurance for the particular waterway) before using a club boat (or any boat for that matter) outside of a formally organised and coached BCCC activity.
- You **must** have demonstrated to a BCCC coach the skills and knowledge outlined above, and the BCCC coach must have 'signed you off' in this respect. Note, this 'sign-off' is per boat type, per water type.
- Having the access codes to the boat store does not remove any of the responsibilities on the user outlined above.
- Everyone having use of the boat and equipment borrowed by a member **must** themselves be a member.
- If you are in any doubt, consult a coach or a committee member.

Contents

Ahead of Everything	1
Introduction	2
General Rules and Prerequisites	3
Boat and Kit Care	3
Minimum paddling skills standards	4
Barn Code	5
Damage Policy	6
Limitations on use of Club Boats	6
Using Specialist Boats	6
Extended loan of Club Boats	7
Use by Affiliated Groups	7



Boat and Equipment Usage Policy

Introduction

Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club (BCCC) has an extensive range of boats for its members to use and enjoy. The fleet has been amassed over a number of years and all our members have contributed to it, through subscriptions, attending courses or other fundraising. A key benefit of BCCC membership is that members are able to use the fleet on their own, outside of club sessions, provided they meet some prerequisites. Very few clubs offer this as fleets can become damaged and dangerous without proper management. To allow BCCC to continue to offer this, the Club has a boat usage policy (this document) which members must follow when using Club boats. It is important we all follow these rules as, without them, the Club could not continue to offer this privilege.



Boat and Equipment Usage Policy

General Rules and Prerequisites

Prerequisites

- You must have obtained the BCCC minimum standard in the boat you wish to borrow and have been signed off by a club coach. This is **boat specific**, therefore being proficient in a Kayak does not entitle you to take out a Canoe. For Racing boats, you must be signed off by a racing coach.
- If you are using boats outside of regular club sessions **you must have "On the Water" membership of British Canoeing** (or equivalent licence and insurance for the particular waterway). You are only covered by the Club's 3rd party insurance, during scheduled club sessions.

Rules

- Boats must be checked out using the club diary, found just inside the door in the barn. You should record the boat number (found on the club boat sticker) and your full name on the correct page in the diary for each day you are borrowing the boat. E.g. Sign out on Saturday if that is when you are taking the boat away even if you only want to paddle it on Sunday.
- Check over your boat before taking it out. Make sure there is a bung (where appropriate), buoyancy, all associated nuts and bolts and that the seat and other contact points are secure.
- Members are encouraged to take photos of any damage found on the boat before they use it. If possible, the damage should be checked with a coach ahead of use to check the boat is safe. Members may also choose to take photos when they return the boats.
- If you damage a boat, you must report it to the Committee immediately, especially if the damage renders the boat unsafe.
- Boats must not be dragged along the ground – they should be carried.
- Racing boats should not be sat in on land. There is a ruler hung up on the door to check leg length.
- Children may borrow boats, however they must be supervised by an adult.
- Only one boat can be booked out per member at any one time. You may not borrow boats to run taster sessions for friends. If you have friends who wish to try kayaking, they should join one of the club's taster sessions.
- Please return boats to the barn clean. There are sponges and buckets in the clubhouse to help with this.
- Safety is your responsibility. You are advised to wear a Buoyancy Aid and not to paddle alone.

Boat and Kit Care

- Members are asked to return all equipment to its allotted space. Buoyancy Aids and spraydecks will rot and go mouldy if not hung up to dry.
- All boats must have some form of buoyancy fitted before use. Buoyancy bags where fitted should be inflated to 90% of capacity. (Over inflation causes them to leak or split). Rigid buoyancy must be securely fixed.
- Boats must be returned to the barn in a clean condition, with any water fully bailed out and put back in their space.
- If you wish to use Club equipment away from the canal, check it is clean and dry before taking it off site. Upon your return, all buoyancy aids and spraydecks should be immersed in hot water over 45°C for 15 minutes and dried before returning to the barn. Boats should have the buoyancy bags removed and be rinsed out and dried thoroughly for 24 hours before re-use on the canal. This is to prevent the transmission of non-native invasive species.
- You must check all nuts and fittings are secure before taking the boat out on the water and



Boat and Equipment Usage Policy

return the boat with all of these fittings in place.

- Straps which are tightened using a mechanical ratchet are not to be used on any Club boat (because of the risk of damage caused by overtightening).
- If you are the only person on site, or the last to leave, you must make sure that all facilities are securely locked and the lights are off when you leave.

Minimum paddling skills standards

To borrow club boats, you must be assessed by a club coach to have met the standards below.

Part A Personal Paddling Skills

A.1 Lifting, carrying and launching

- The paddler must demonstrate safe lifting and carrying principles, avoiding twisting when lifting. Paddlers should work towards the 'spine in line' ethos and keep the load close to the body (assistance is recommended). The boat should be floating unless bank conditions prevent this.
- The paddler should demonstrate the use of simple draws, rudders and short power strokes to manoeuvre away from the bank.

A.2 Forward paddling over a distance of 100m

- Paddlers must show that they can control their boat in a straight line over a distance of at least 100m. Some directional instability is likely to occur but without complete loss of forward movement.
- Canoeists may switch sides to generate initial momentum.
- Paddlers should:
 1. Demonstrate an appropriate paddle grip and stroke length.
 2. Show an active posture, using the larger muscles of the body and showing some rotation of the body.
 3. Place the paddle in the water with an extended front arm, depending on the style of boat.
 4. Show evidence of foot/knee pressure and connectivity.

A.3 Steering and controlling

Paddlers should demonstrate:

- Stopping both forwards and backwards. Stopping within 4 strokes.
- Rotating 180 degrees in both directions. Turning the boat using forward and reverse sweeps; body rotation needs to be evident.
- Reverse paddling over a distance of approximately 15m, to a fixed point. Paddlers need not make contact with the point but should be within half a metre of it. Rotating at the waist and looking over the shoulder(s) must be in evidence.
- Turns to both the left and right, with the boat tracking a course and maintaining forward movement. Paddlers should use a combination of sweeping and forward strokes, or use a rudder to negotiate through a controlled turn.

A.4 Return to the bank and get out

- Paddlers should make a controlled and appropriate approach to the bank or shore, demonstrating an understanding of the use of draws, rudders and short power strokes.
- Once at the shore, paddlers must show a controlled and safe method of getting out of the boat and taking it out of the water.

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Boat and Equipment Usage Policy

Part B Rescue Skills

B.1 Capsize the craft and be rescued or swim to the shore (whichever is most appropriate to the craft and conditions)

- Paddlers should capsize away from the bank and either be rescued or swim to shore towing all their equipment.
- Paddlers must demonstrate a calm and relaxed exit from the boat, with a clear attempt to retain contact with the boat and paddle in evidence.
- Paddlers do not need to be able to demonstrate a rescue of another paddler. They need to demonstrate that they can be a proactive part of being rescued.

B.2 Emptying boats

- Paddlers should be aware of and demonstrate the principles of safe lifting when emptying boats at the water's edge. The amount of water would be small i.e. a slight amount after a paddling session. Paddlers should not be emptying excessive amounts of water, though knowledge of how to safely empty a swamped boat at the shore should be understood. Care and concern for the boat should also be shown, particularly when a light racing boat is used.

Part C Safety, Leadership & Group

C.1 Personal risk management

Evaluated via theory questions e.g. equipment.

C.2 Awareness of others

Evaluated via theory questions e.g. equipment.

C.3 Provide evidence of one journey of about 1 hour (3 km) duration

- All the above are covered via theory and a logbook or by questioning paddlers about a basic 3km journey they have undertaken. Providers should ensure that paddlers understand the basic communication signals, the importance of looking out for each other's safety and well-being, as well as what to do in the event of a capsize.

Part D Theory

D.1 Equipment

D.2 Safety

D.3 Wellbeing, health and first aid

D.4 Access

D.5 Environment

D.6 General

Evaluated via theory questions. Paddlers should only be asked questions that reflect the boat and equipment that is being worn or used, for example: 'Why and when should you wear a buoyancy aid?' 'What are toggles for?' A detailed knowledge is not required at this level.



Boat and Equipment Usage Policy

Barn Code

When you meet the prerequisites, you will be able to have the Barn Code. The code is changed each quarter and you will be notified by email when this is the case. You may not tell other members the code.

Damage Policy

Any damage must be reported to a member of the Committee at the earliest opportunity (b3cmembership@hotmail.co.uk). You are responsible for any damage that may occur to a Club boat whilst in your care. You are expected to have repairs done to a professional standard or replace the boat as necessary. Members are encouraged to take photos of boats before and after they have used them, to provide evidence of existing damage.

Limitations on use of Club Boats

Club boats are to introduce beginners to the sport and enable you to try out different aspects of the sport before you decide to purchase your own boat. As such there are some limitations on what you can do with Club boats.

- White water type boats are not designed for use on water above Grade 3.
- Racing boats are not for use on any Descent type races
- The Flat-Water Racing Group (FWRG) must approve all use of racing boats in events where there is a high risk of damage (e.g. DW, Watersides, Thamesides etc). In deciding whether to approve the use of a club boat for DW, Watersides etc, the FWRG will take into account the experience and ability of the paddler(s) and how long they have been a club member and actively raced for the club. For those crews without prior race experience please allow two years of regular racing and training to gain the necessary depth of skills and experience to allow you to borrow a club boat for the DW.
- Where there is a high demand for boats (e.g. Paddlepower, Hasler Races) the Committee reserves the right to allocate them as they see fit.

Using Specialist Boats

The club's competition boats are typically lighter weight and of a composite (fibre reinforced resin) construction. Thus, they are more fragile and more expensive than the plastic general purpose or whitewater style boats. These boats require more care in their use and handling if they are to remain in good repair and available to all. You will need to become aware of such considerations and how to look after these boats. Consequently, the following additional rules apply to these club boats.

Flatwater Racing Kayaks

- You are not allowed to borrow flatwater racing K1s and K2s for *unsupervised use* until you have either attended an 'introduction to racing course' or have demonstrated your experience in such boats to one of the club's racing coaches. Flatwater racing K1s and K2s includes any flatwater racing or touring boat fitted with a rudder.
- V-bars must be used when transporting the club's flatwater racing boats (kayak or canoes) on vehicles.
- If you borrow a Club boat to enter a competition then you must race under the Club name unless permission to do otherwise has been granted in writing by the Committee.
- If you change the seat(s) of a flatwater racing boat you must return the original seat after use.
- The flatwater racing boats are in high-demand and are frequently used for training. They



Boat and Equipment Usage Policy

should be returned on the same day of use unless agreed otherwise by the FWRG. For races on Sunday they should not be removed from the boat store until midday Saturday and they must be returned to the boat store immediately after each event.

Flat water racing kayaks ice policy

- For Hare and Hounds and race events, it is the decision of the organiser if the event goes ahead.
- For all other daytime sessions, the coach in charge of each group is responsible for safety and will decide if the session continues.
- During night time sessions, if paddlers encounter ice they should immediately return to the club.
- Buoyancy aids must be worn by junior race paddlers in higher divisions in adverse weather and are strongly recommended for all paddlers.
- Club competition boats and paddles are not to be used through ice.

Sea Kayaks

- V-bars or other cradles that are purpose designed for sea- kayaks must be used when transporting the club's sea kayaks on vehicles. Using just a pair of roof bars is not sufficient.
- To prevent the wire being damaged, the skegs on the sea kayaks must be retracted at all times unless the boat is in deep water.

Extended loan of club boats

Occasionally members may require access to a club boat for extended periods (for example preparing for the DW). Medium terms loans of club equipment must be arranged in advance with the FWRG and booked out using the loan book as usual. Additionally borrowers must be prepared to make available (possibly at short notice) such equipment for any prearranged club training session. Any modifications required (e.g. fitting of pumps, tie down points) must be agreed with the FWRG before being undertaken and shall either be left in place or made good prior to return. The club will not pay for any modifications.

Use by Affiliated Groups

- Affiliated groups (e.g. Scouts etc) may only use Club equipment at the venue where it is stored and are not permitted to take it offsite to paddle elsewhere.
- Affiliated members are not allowed to use boats during regular Club training sessions at Mytchett as detailed in Waterfront and elsewhere unless by prior arrangement with the event organizer.
- Affiliated groups must use coaches with British Canoeing recognised coaching qualifications to run their sessions. The minimum requirement is a UKCC Level 1 qualified coach with site-specific training (Site specific training to be provided by a BCCC representative nominated by the committee)
- All affiliated groups must operate coach:student ratios within their coaching remit as detailed in the British Canoeing Deployment Guidelines for Coaches and Leaders <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/British-Canoeing-Environmental-Definitions-Deployment-Guidance-for-Instructors-Coaches-Leaders-Apr18-v1-1.pdf>