

## **Paddle Peak**

### **Health and Safety Policy.** Compiled by Pete Montgomery: 11/11/2024

This policy relates to Paddle Sport events and activities which are directly organised, administered, or within the control of Paddle Peak and run by its members as an affiliated club of Paddle UK.

This policy applies to Paddle UK qualified coaches and competent leaders recognised by Paddle Peak whilst participating in these events and activities on behalf of Paddle Peak. The policy does not cover ad-hoc activities organised by groups of members.

Canoeing and Paddle Sport is an assumed risk sport.

- a. All reasonable steps should be taken to reduce that risk.
- b. No one should lose their life or be seriously injured if this could have been avoided through the implementation of simple warnings or safeguards.
- c. Canoeing events and Paddle Sport activities should be made as safe as is reasonably practicable through the application of a working risk assessment.
- d. The level of detail and formalisation of a risk assessment should be proportionate to the level of risk.
- e. Typically a site and major event risk assessments should be formally recorded, whilst ad hoc assessments may be verbally agreed between relevant personnel, who may include coaches and club officials; whereas dynamic risk assessments should be undertaken by one person as situations arise.
- f. Paddle Peak's Risk assessment will consider 'good practice', which is largely defined in British Canoeing guidance, coaching and leadership qualifications. Good practice is not mandatory, but deviations from it will be risk assessed. Routine deviations from British Canoeing guidance, coaching or leadership qualifications should be supported by written risk assessments.
- g. Where appropriate the written risk assessments will also identify the conditions for cancellation of an event or activity when the risks would be considered unacceptable.
- h. The level of risk that children and vulnerable adults may be exposed to should be significantly lower than that of knowledgeable and experienced adults, who would be capable of making their own judgements.
- i. Participants should be aware of the risk nature of canoeing and should also be made aware of the most significant hazards relevant to the location or activity.
- j. Participation in competitive events should be limited to those who declare themselves competent to handle the conditions, taking into account the hazards and safety cover provided.

- k. Where 'open water' is involved the risk assessment should identify the appropriate level of rescue provision (taking into account factors such as distances, types of canoe, kayak or craft, use of buoyancy aids, ability of participants, water temperature, weather conditions and currents).
- l. It is recognised that rescue provision may not always be practicable, especially for tours by groups of paddlers trained and equipped for the venture, or under the leadership of suitably qualified current Paddle UK Coaching Scheme members.
- m. Where 'white water' or the shooting of weirs is involved the wearing of buoyancy aids and crash helmets is mandatory for slalom and wild water racing, and is strongly advised for other events and activities of this type where an obvious risk is present. Suitable safety cover could range from having reliable, competent canoeists strategically placed, to having trained bank-side rescue parties, or even divers on hand. \*Canoeing refers to open canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards and sit on tops, with single or double bladed paddles.

All items enclosed within this document will be reviewed and updated by the club committee at least annually, or as necessary.

**Peter Astles. Chair. 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024.**