

Adventure Dolphin/ Pangbourne Canoe Club

Normal Operating Procedures

A guideline to Coach Competencies, Standards and Expectations

Welcome to this guide for water based activities based at Pangbourne for all our paddling. This document has been prepared by the Seneschal who look after the operations of AdventureDolphin and Pangbourne Canoe Club. These guidelines are a part of the overall health and safety management of the Adventure Dolphin Charity and are a supplement to the guidance provided by British Canoeing. This is a live documents and will be updated annually at the start of each year for the following season.

Safeguarding

All active leaders and coaches are expected to :-

- Attended a session with our Welfare Officer or other related person, to discuss awareness, protecting yourself, minimum standards and reporting procedures and knowledge of where the forms are to be found etc. This is usually achieved at induction sessions
- Attend one Safeguarding course and to complete an update every three years.
- Have completed a DBS within the club.
- Complete the safeguarding self disclosure form and sign a “coaches code of conduct” form, as part of the coach/leader induction process.
- Know where to find the clubs Equity and Equality statements.
- Abide by the recommendations of the club with regard to respectful use of social media

Manual Handling

All paddlers should be encouraged to use safe lifting methods. Leaders and Coaches should introduce safe manual handling practice to their groups. Where coaches observe incorrect methods being used they should intervene and show the correct technique/s.

Normal Operations for Water Activities

Club Standard Areas of Operation

The Club divides the river into several sections. A session leader who wishes to deliver in that area should be should hold suitable qualifications for the environment in which they are working.

If a leader is asked to deliver in an area by the co-ordinator for a session, It is accepted that the leader has the ability to make decisions as to their group being able to work safely in that area.

Coaches should take into consideration known hazards in the area and be familiar with the generic paddling risk assessment.

Coaches should be aware of other river users.

In the sections below the we use the Environmental Definitions described by British Canoeing. Please refer to:-

<https://www.britishcanoeingawarding.org.uk/guidance-documents/>

Please be aware that all our operating areas are highly influenced by weather and water conditions. Adverse conditions may change a very sheltered area to a higher level of risk within the time of the planned session.

Landing Stage up to Whitchurch Bridge and down stream to the no mooring signpost.

This should be considered in line with British Canoeing's definition of Very Sheltered Water in summer conditions with no significant flow.

If a green flow exists it should be defined as Sheltered Water. Note that the flow usually affects the side of the river closest to the landing stage.

Usual access is from the landing stage or slipway further downstream. Use of grass banks should be reserved for training purposes, such as how to launch from a high bank.

Lock Cut and Whitchurch Mill Pond

This should be considered in line with British Canoeing's definition of Very Sheltered Water.

Care must be taken crossing to the entrance of the lock cut. If there is significant flow, it would be best to cross the river below the bridge stanchions. There is an area of shallow water under the bridge on the far bank.

The lock cut is considered very sheltered water and avoids river flow. Caution must be exercised whenever there may be significant river traffic. To allow boats to pass or access the landing stage, it is better to move your group to the opposite side (to the right when facing the lock).

The mill pond can have a flow of water making it difficult for novices. Please avoid noisy activities to help maintain good neighbour relations with the Mill owners. Please be aware that there is often a heavy growth of weed and a soft muddy river bed. There is also slipway in Mill Pond which can act as an escape route. Please respect the land surrounding the Mill Pond is private and no access is allowed.

In early summer nesting areas need to be avoided. These are often in the bushes in the mill pond and in the bushes at the entrance to the lock cut.

The Bridge arch adjacent to the Meadow and Upstream of the Bridge to the top of the Islands near the weir.

This should be considered as sheltered water.

In summer conditions with no flow this area is suitable for groups but care is needed with moored boats and overhanging trees and the bridge stanchions. Access is also available at the slipway between the surgery and the River Pang. There is shallow water at the mouth of the River Pang.

In winter conditions and significant flow, this is considered to be Moderate water. This is out of bounds to all paddlers unless under the leadership of a leader with moderate water qualifications, or the group has paddling competence for this environment.

Coaches / leaders may venture into the weir pool in low water conditions, great care should be exercised if any of the large radial weir gates are open. This area is out of bounds when the River is on Red Boards or if the large radial weir gates are open.

River Adjacent to the Meadow – Pangbourne Straight

This should be considered in line with British Canoeing's definition of Very Sheltered Water in summer conditions with no significant flow or wind. But, if a green flow exists it should be defined as Sheltered Water or Moderate Water in RED board conditions.

Coaches/Leaders, should know access points and be aware of hazards (overhanging trees, moving and moored boats, anglers).

Below Pangbourne Meadow to Mapledurham Lock

This should be considered in line with British Canoeing's definition of Sheltered Water in Summer conditions. But in Winter conditions, when the river is on Yellow and Red Boards or the river is affected by wind, should be considered as Moderate Water.

The section below the meadow is more serious with limited exit and assistance points, it is much more open to the wind and waves. It is at least a 20 min paddle back to the club in good conditions from the Oratory School Rowing Club (which is half way to Mapledurham).

Leaders in this area should have first aid training and carry a first aid kit and with appropriate kit for the conditions. Leaders should consider if a mobile phone would be appropriate taking account of the group and environmental conditions at the time.

The Thames above Whitchurch Lock and The Thames below Mapledurham Lock

This should be considered in line with British Canoeing's definition of Sheltered Water in Summer conditions. But in Winter conditions, when the river is on Yellow and Red Boards or the river is affected by wind, should be considered as Moderate Water.

The distance away from the centre should be taken into account. Leaders in this area should have first aid training and carry a first aid kit and appropriate kit for the conditions. Carrying a mobile phone is required.

The kit required by marathon and sprint paddlers should be discussed with the session leader. At a minimum this will include a mobile phone and the number of the session leader and an ETA agreed prior to departure. All members of the paddling group should be encouraged to carry a suitable emergency kit.

Out the Normal Areas of Operation

If a leader wishes to run a club trip out of these areas then a trip planning form should be submitted to the Trip committee for consideration and the trip should have been approved.

Leaders will need to have reviewed the general paddling activities Risk Assessment and to consider any specific safety requirements for their trip.

General Advice For River leaders

Rules of the River (stay Right) should be observed. Generally pass oncoming river traffic by steering right. If passing close to other boats make your alteration of course obvious, to save any confusion.

Revised by CH,EE, KD 19/09/19

Know where to find support and how to access it.

Know how to give clear and simple instructions and the importance of briefing a group before activity commencing.

Know how to set boundaries and the principles of leading a group .

Understand the importance of being back on time

Ensure the Session Leader / Coordinator knows where you plan to go and approves it.

Incident Management

Leaders should know how to manage an incident and know how to report it (use the incident report form).

Please refer to “Emergency Action Plan Document”

Personal Skill and Fitness

Coaches and leaders should consider their current personal skill and fitness levels, when choosing the area of operation.

Equipment

All members should look after and respect club equipment, the building and facilities. An equipment found damaged or broken should be taken out of use and boats placed in the compound with a do not use notice attached other equipment to be placed in quarantine, a damage report completed.

Use of Buoyancy Aids

Our normal procedure is to wear buoyancy aids for all water activities.

The exception to this rule is specific to Pangbourne Canoe Club and subject to supervision by the session coordinators.

The following exceptions -

- Marathon paddlers ranked in Division 6 or above, in summer conditions (1st April – 31st October) when the River is not on Yellow or Red Boards (Note paddlers u.18 must provide written parental approval for this)
- If using a crew boat with a lower ranked paddler (Division 7 – 10) a buoyancy aid must be worn by the whole crew.

Helmets

It is not club policy to wear helmets for all activities on The Thames.

Helmets should be worn for river trips on graded water or when paddling over weir drops.

Helmets should be worn for sea trips in anything other than sea state two (smooth) without rocky or surf landings.

Helmets may be required for specific activities where a risk assessment suggests this would be appropriate.

Consistency for Coaching and Leading Standards

In order to give a quality and enjoyable experience to our participants, it has been agreed that our sessions should include:-

- A initial welcome should be provided and participants given information about the lay out of the building.
- A register should completed at each session.
- Medical forms must be available and should be reviewed by the the coach / leader.
- Meet and greet group at beginning of session and provide a “session brief”.
- Any helpers should be briefed as to what they are expected to do.
- The Coach should ask their group about experiences and expectations.
- A warm up activity should be included.
- Then coach delivers session.
- At end of session (possible by water) Summarise what has been done
- Get feedback from participants
- Coaches should try to inform participants about membership, temporary membership, trips, future assessments and social events.
- Return and clean and secure all equipment
- If the session is part of a ongoing course a record of progress should be completed after each session. This can be in the form of a course checklist. This allows another coach, who may be covering, to provide a suitable session for the groups needs.
- Report any incidents or near miss events
- Coordinator should brief their team of any notices (from Seneschal/ trips/ charity/ BC) at start or end of session.

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- Coordinators should complete a session report.
- Coordinators should report equipment and building issues to the Facilities Group.

Data Retention

All members should be sensitive to the issues of the General Data Protection regulations.