

# North Avon Canoe Club: Covid 19 Risk Assessment

Date Carried Out: **17 June 2020**

Assessment Carried Out by: **Alec Small (Secretary)**

Review Due: **16 June 2020** (if not earlier with policy changes)

Note: A standard Risk Assessment outlining Hazards, controls and actions, doesn't really apply to the present issue. In essence, there is one overall hazard: transmission of the virus which causes Covid 19.

All of the other, more conventional, risks and hazards associated with paddlesports activity are covered in the standard risk assessment.

Activity	How may the risk be adequately controlled?	What further action may be required?	Review Comments
Group Composition.	<p>Covid secure structured and organised outdoor activity can be delivered by Coaches, Leaders, Clubs and Delivery Partners - for an <u>unlimited number of participants</u>, provided that appropriate steps are taken to make it Covid secure.</p> <p>Trip organisers to confirm final attendees in advance of paddling.</p> <p>Informal paddling can continue outdoors in groups of six (the rule of 6) or two households.</p>	None envisaged at this time.	<p><i>“Organised and structured activity must be formally organised by a qualified personal instructor or coach, NGB, club, company or charity and follow British Canoeing guidance.</i></p> <p><i>Clubs must be currently affiliated with British Canoeing for their club activity to be recognised as ‘organised and structured and covered by British Canoeing insurance.’”</i></p>

Paddlers in isolation/symptomatic paddlers	These people cannot paddle.	none	None needed.
Travel to the water	<p>In line with guidance, sharing travel between households is not allowed.</p> <p>If the 'put in' is not large enough to accommodate changing etc. A suitable meeting point should be selected, away from the put-in, with enough space for up to 6 vehicles to park and drivers to socially distance, while changing.</p>	None	This will be reviewed in line with changing guidance.
Shuttles:	<p>For organised club trips <u>car sharing is not permitted</u> with someone from outside your household or your support bubble unless your journey is undertaken for an exempt reason. Sport and physical activity is not yet an exempt reason.</p> <p>For non-official trips, car sharing should be avoided entirely.</p> <p>Wherever possible trips should aim to begin and end at the same location.</p>	See Car sharing below	This will be reviewed in line with changing guidance.

	<p>Alternative methods of shuttling should be considered, (walking, cycling)</p> <p>The final shuttle plan must be confirmed to the group in advance of travelling.</p>		
Changing/boat prep:	<p>Participants are to change and undertake all kit preparation which can be carried out elsewhere before arriving at the put-in, if there is not space there.</p> <p>Trip organisers are to ensure that participants are aware of the plan and locations for changing.</p> <p>Aim to minimise time spent at the put-in.</p>	None	This is arguably good practice regardless. I don't see any likely issues in need of review.
Car sharing:	<p>Car sharing is not to be done as a planned activity. It should be reserved to emergencies or unplanned incidents.</p> <p>Share transport with the same people each time. Open windows for ventilation</p> <p>Face away from each other Consider seating arrangements to maximise</p>	None	<p>This will be reviewed in line with changing guidance.</p> <p>This is taken from current guidance here: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers</a></p> <p>Review 5.4.21: Car sharing is specifically not allowed for organised club trips, informal trips should also avoid it, but are not subject to the same scrutiny.</p>

	<p>distance between people in the vehicle</p> <p>Minimise the number of people who need to share a vehicle.</p> <p>Driver and passengers are to wear a face covering.</p> <p>Clean cars between journeys using standard cleaning products - make sure you clean door handles and other areas that people may touch.</p>		
<p>On the Water:</p>	<p>Paddlers should maintain a 2-metre social distance where possible.</p> <p>Only people within the same household may paddle tandem, or swap boats.</p> <p>No boat or equipment swapping outside of your own household.</p> <p>Preference is to be given to self-rescues and swimming to the bank over deep water contact rescues.</p>	<p>Ensure trips are well within paddlers' competence.</p>	<p>This will be reviewed in line with changing guidance.</p>

	<p>If a deep water contact rescue is required, aim to assist the swimmer without touching them.</p> <p>If you do need to make contact, sanitise points of contact and hands afterwards.</p> <p>No sharing of food or drinks.</p>		
<p>Extra Equipment:</p>	<p>Paddlers should consider carrying the following items on trips:</p> <p>Face Covering(s)</p> <p>Tissues/handkerchief.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser gel.</p> <p>Anti-bacterial wipes.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>This will be reviewed in line with changing guidance.</p>

## NACC Covid-19 Trip Organisation Instructions:

### Trip selection:

1. In line with recent club activities, events will ordinarily be advertised either on the club website, or as is more likely, Facebook. Careful consideration should be given to the location of the paddle.
2. Due to the inherent social-distancing difficulties with car shuttling, preference is to be given to trips which begin and end at the same location. Be these either 'round trips' such as the Bristol Harbour Loop, Bathampton Loop, or Talybont Loop<sup>1</sup>. Or 'there and back' trips, such as sea paddling, lake paddling, or canal paddling. White water trips will obviously prove to be the most difficult trips to organise in this manner. (Fortunately, this is not currently a major issue as we move into summer and water levels are low. Symonds Yat remains a viable paddling location, situated as it is, within England.)
3. Ensure that the trip is well within the capabilities of the paddlers. Bearing in mind that most club members have not paddled as much as they would normally, so will likely be out of practice.
4. At this point in time. British Canoeing has mandated that organised club trips This does not prevent individual paddlers organising such trips, bearing in mind the relevant guidance for car sharing: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>
5. Consideration should be given therefore to alternative methods of shuttling. For instance, cycling may be a viable alternative in many situations: i.e. Kerne Bridge to Symonds Yat, The Dart Loop from Newbridge to Holne Weir.) Careful discussion must take place before final confirmation about the plan for the shuttle and the plan should be confirmed before anyone travels, so that everyone knows who needs to bring a bike etc.
6. Before finalising the trip choice, access and other new restrictions need to be checked. Is the car park open? What are the toilet options?

### Trip Organisation Administration:

---

<sup>1</sup>Noting of course that Wales maintains its own Covid Regulation and entry may be barred at various times, trip organisers need to check beforehand.

7. Once announced, a trip requires a designated organiser. It is the organiser's responsibility to ensure that those interested are aware of the restrictions, and to ensure that the final composition is known in advance of travelling.
8. In particular with white water trips (if possible), try to keep to known rivers and trips, ensuring that the trip is comfortably within the capability of the group. This is particularly relevant in terms of knowing which eddies are where, so that social distancing can be maintained.
9. Following advertisement, the day before the trip is to take place the organiser will confirm, with a clear post on the activity, as well as direct communication with each paddler/household, who is on the final list to attend. (Either phone call, text message, WhatsApp etc.) This is to ensure that the trip has enough attendees to make it safe, and to ensure that 7 or more people don't travel in error.
10. The participants must reply to the organiser to confirm their attendance.
11. The participant will also supply the organiser with a completed copy of the COVID 19 consent form, as recommended by British Canoeing. The form also includes a box for an emergency contact. Consent forms should be sent electronically in advance of the trip. Paper forms are not required.
12. The trip organiser is to confirm, after discussion, the final shuttle plan, if one is required.
13. The trip organiser is to clearly identify the initial meeting point for the trip. This needs to be large enough to accommodate the admin which takes place therein, as well as close enough to the water that people travelling in kit will not be too uncomfortable.
14. In the vast majority of trips, this meeting point will not be an issue and the put-in will be adequate for the task. However, in many situations, the put-in may not be suitable, and a meeting point slightly away from the put-in should be selected instead.
15. Withdrawals on the day should be notified both on the activity post, and direct to the organiser.

#### Car Sharing:

16. As mentioned above, at this point in time, the club cannot allow car sharing. (Except when it becomes necessary through emergencies or other unplanned incidents.) The current

guidance is that you should only share cars if you “have to”. Planning a trip which requires a shuttle does not fall into that category, as paddling is not ‘necessary’ travel.

#### Club Equipment/borrowed equipment:

17. Sharing boats and equipment is a particularly problematic aspect of the process. It should be avoided where possible.
  
18. Where it is not avoidable, kit needs should be identified early so that arrangements can be made with either the club, or other paddlers. Equipment should be cleaned beforehand, and points of contact wiped down on transfer. Upon return, borrowed kit needs to be thoroughly cleaned.

#### Day-of-Paddle Admin:

19. Paddlers are to travel to the meeting point/put-in without sharing transport between households.
  
20. Where possible, paddlers should aim to travel in their paddling clothes, and have as much personal admin completed as possible beforehand.
  
21. If a meeting point away from the put-in is to be used, everything that can be done away from the water should be. Paddling clothing put on, boats loaded, airbags inflated, throwbags packed etc. The aim is to minimise the time spent at the put-in. Popular paddling spots may be crowded and the safest place to socially distance is on the water. Therefore, the aim should be to get the boats off vehicles and into the water as swiftly as possible.
  
22. If the trip does require a shuttle, there will be other barriers to consider, as non-drivers will not be able to wait on the water for drivers to return, trip organisers need to factor this into their plans.

#### Manual Handling:

23. Ideally, shared lifting in these circumstances is to be discouraged as much as possible. If a boat can be carried solo, it should be.
  
24. Where that is unavoidable, or unsafe, it should still be minimised. Try to ensure that people stick to the same end of a boat when they lift it and that lifting is done without mixing pairs of paddlers. (i.e. if Person A helps Person B, B should then help A. Neither should help C.) Consideration should be given to wiping down points of contact and sanitising hands after carrying boats.

### On the Water:

25. It is likely that the actual paddling will be the most straightforward part of the day as there is often more space to operate.
26. Social distancing is to be maintained as much as possible, with 2 metres distance recommended between paddlers. On white water, this means that sharing eddies should be avoided if they cannot accommodate the necessary spacing. (Which is why trip leaders who know the river should be identifying suitable eddies in advance.)
27. Only members of the same household may paddle tandem, or share equipment. Solo paddlers must not swap paddles or boats.
28. Rescues are, of course, the tricky point of a trip. Horseplay and deliberate swims should be avoided, or left to places where the paddler can effectively self-rescue, either in the water, or by swimming to the bank.
29. If a deep water rescue needs to be attempted, aim to assist other paddlers without touching them, utilising methods which minimise contact.
30. It needs to be stressed that social distancing is secondary to life-or-death safety concerns, such as unconscious paddlers or entrapment hazards. A potential risk of infection is secondary to an imminent risk to life.
31. Do not share food or liquids.

### Getting off the Water:

32. As with the above sections, try and minimise time spent in close proximity to others, give people space at the take out and only offer help if it is necessary to do so. It is preferable to let someone fall out of a boat in shallow water, than to help them.
33. The end of the trip will likely be very similar to the start, try and minimise time spent at the get out.
34. Once home, wash all equipment and clothing, including boats.

Emergencies:

35. Emergencies should be dealt with largely as before. If the emergency services are required, call them and follow all advice given. Maintain social distancing where possible, but do not prioritise a potential risk of infection over an imminent risk to life.

Review:

36. All of this policy will be reviewed as British Canoeing and Government Guidance changes.

5 April 2021