



# Chester Riverside Canoe Club

## Operating Procedures

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## 1. PURPOSE

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The purpose of this Operating Procedures (OP) is to outline how Chester Riverside Canoe Club is operated and managed. It provides a description of how the club runs on a day-to-day basis, covering who is responsible for carrying out certain tasks within the club as well as general responsibilities of club members, coaches and leaders.

This procedure should also be read in conjunction with the British Canoeing adopted '*Club Standard Operating Procedure updated November 2022*'.

## 2. SCOPE

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This procedure shall apply to all paddling sessions run by Chester Riverside Canoe Club.

A list of definitions and acronyms are given in Section 10, and relevant Club policies are available upon request.

## 3. THE CLUB

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Chester Riverside Canoe Club (The Club) is a non-profit-making junior canoe and kayak club, and is a registered charity with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Charity number 1154274). The administration and running of the club is managed on a voluntary basis by the Committee on behalf of the Trustees.

### 3.1 Contact details

- Chester Riverside Canoe Club
- Riverside Centre, 19 Lower Park Road, Chester, CH4 7BB
- [crccgroup.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:crccgroup.secretary@gmail.com)

### 3.2 Committee

The Club is comprised of the following key roles (other roles are available):

- President
- Chair



- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Welfare officer
- Safety officer

Committee member stand-down at each Annual General Meeting, and positions are then elected.

### **3.3 Policies**

Club policies are generally adopted from British Canoeing, and can be made available upon request.

All Club volunteers shall read, understand and agree to abide by Club policies and this OP.

### **3.4 Constitution**

A copy of the Club's Constitution is available upon request.

### **3.5 Disclosure and barring service**

All adult Coaches/Leaders, bankside support and Committee members shall undertake an enhanced Disclosure and barring service check before being authorised to volunteer or coach at the Club.

### **3.6 Safeguarding**

The Club's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually and is available upon request.

### **3.7 British Canoeing affiliation**

The Club is affiliated to British Canoeing and therefore The Club and its members are required to follow British Canoeing's conditions of affiliation.

- Affiliation Type: Junior Club
- Affiliation Number: 67668

The Club requires members, coaches and leaders to follow the operating procedures set out in this document, associated risk assessments and all relevant Club policies and



procedures, so that the Club's activities can be conducted safely and within the requirements of the Club's affiliation to British Canoeing, occupation of the premises and the Club's insurance policies.

The conditions of affiliation are available upon request.

### **3.8 Membership**

Membership of The Club is requested at the beginning of each calendar year and fees are payable before the end of March and all membership forms should be completed when joining on renewal of membership or 28 days following request by Club.

### **3.9 Participation statement**

The Club requires that all its members acknowledge and recognise British Canoeing's Participation Statement which is stated on the membership form and is read, understood and agreed to on the membership form:

**“Canoeing and kayaking are assumed risk water contact sports that may carry attendant risks. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks, and be responsible for their own action and involvement.”**

The existence of operating procedures and risk assessments do not detract from the personal responsibility of all involved in paddling activities.

### **3.10 Trial sessions**

All prospective members participating on trial sessions must submit a completed 'standard membership' form before paddling on a Club Activity.

Prospective members of The Club can attend three sessions without paying the annual membership fee, and will benefit from the same Club associate members of British Canoeing insurance as full Club members. This benefit will cease after the third session, following which membership of Club is required.

Parents/carers are welcome to paddle with their children and must complete a membership form. Lone parents paddling without their child(ren) will not be allowed unless training as an instructor as agreed with the Club.



### **3.11 Club notices**

Club notices will be emailed to members, and a Club notice board is also located in the Riverside clubhouse communal area.

### **3.12 Club welfare**

Canoeing and kayaking should be safe and fun. Everyone should be treated with respect and should give respect to others. You should feel safe and to enjoy your sport. If you feel worried about how you or someone else is being treated by another young person or adult, always report your concern to the Club's Welfare Officer:

- Welfare Officer [welfare1@chesterriversidecanoeclub.co.uk](mailto:welfare1@chesterriversidecanoeclub.co.uk)
- or
- [safeguarding@britishcanoeing.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@britishcanoeing.org.uk)

### **3.13 Discipline**

Members, parents/carers and Coaches/Leaders are expected to adhere to and uphold the applicable '*Code of Conduct*' listed below, which also outlines the disciplinary procedures for those who fail to uphold the respective '*Code of Conduct*'.

- Parent / Carer Code of Conduct
- Junior Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct of Coaching Workforce

### **3.14 Qualifications and competence**

Coaches or Leaders shall either hold direct British Canoeing Awarding Body (BCAB) / British Canoe Union (BCU) coaching or leadership qualifications, or have undertaken an assessment with the Club in accordance with British Canoeing Club-remit framework (termed 'Club-remit'.

Any Coach or Leader who holds a Club-remit sign-off, shall renew this every three years, unless an equivalent or higher formal BCAB qualification has been obtained.

Coaches and Leaders are expected to meet and maintain the BCAB requirements to hold their Coaching or Leadership qualification.





All Club Coaches/Leaders shall be authorised on an annual basis by the Committee to coach or lead groups as deployed by the Club.

Coaches and Leaders are to be deployed as per the remit of either their valid BCAB coaching/leader award (see <https://www.britishcanoeingawarding.org.uk/environmental-definitions-and-technical-advice/>), or Club-remit and authorisation.

### **3.15 Training and development**

The Club encourages all members and coaches/leaders to develop their coaching and leadership journey. The Club are able to provide financial assistance by means of a bursary to support members and coaches in their development as coaches or leaders.

### **3.16 General Data Protection Regulations**

Membership details will be kept in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR 2018) as detailed with The Club GDPR policy.

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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### **4.1 General**

All members of CRCC, parents and coaches/leaders are responsible for adhering to these Operating Procedures, associated policies, and all subsequent revisions.

### **4.2 The Committee**

The main roles of the Committee members are outlined below, and further detail and role descriptions can be made available upon request.

- **President:** This is a unique role provided by Ian McMullen to provide support to each Committee member and act as the conduit between the Trustees and the Committee.
- **Chair:** To provide leadership and ensure an efficient and well managed club. The Club Chair is responsible to The Club Committee and members.



- **Secretary:** To ensure the club's administrative functions, including membership and legal requirements of governing documents are reviewed and maintained. The Club Secretary is responsible to The Club Committee through the Club Chair.
  
- **Treasurer:** To produce accounts and monitor finances to ensure the club remains solvent. The Club Treasurer is responsible to The Club Committee through the Club Chair.
  
- **Welfare Officer:** Is responsible for acting as a source of advice about safeguarding and protecting children and adults at risk, promoting good practice and for coordinating action within the club on receipt of any concerns or referrals.
  
- **Safety Officer:** Is to advise The Club on the requirements, policies and procedures for all aspects of health and safety. The Club Health and Safety Officer is responsible to the Committee through the Chair.

Other Committee roles are available (for example Coach Co-ordinator), and those roles and responsibilities are defined by the Committee as and when needed and volunteers are available.

#### **4.3 Lead Coach**

A Lead Coach shall be designated for each session, and shall be responsible for chairing the Coaches briefing meeting prior to the start of the session, and for reviewing the proposed session and contingency planning. In the event of differing views, the Lead Coach's decision is final.

#### **4.4 Coaches and Leaders**

Coaches or Leaders coach or lead canoeing or kayaking activities at The Club. The Club maintains a list of authorised members who are approved by the Committee to undertake coaching on Club sessions. This is reviewed and updated regularly.

All Coaches/Leaders are to undertake a Coaches/Leaders induction.



#### **4.5 Bankside support**

Bankside support is provided by a designated responsible adult(s) who can support on-the water activities from the bankside, as well as being responsible for the premises during activities. In the event of an incident, and under the instruction of a coach/leader, may enact the Major Incident Response Plan in the event of an emergency. Bankside support can undertake specific training as and when required.

#### **4.6 Inductions**

All volunteers at The Club shall undertake an induction prior to being deployed.

### **5. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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The Club has adopted British Canoeing's Health and Safety Policy which is provided in the communal area on The Club noticeboard, and is available upon request.

#### **5.1 Risk assessments**

All Coaches/Leaders shall assess risks before setting out on the water, consider environmental factors, their skill level relative to the water and other conditions, equipment needs, clothing and the capability of those they are paddling with. Hazards and associated mitigating actions for paddling from the Riverside Centre are captured in The Club risk assessment and it does not remove the need for Coaches/Leaders to assess risks for themselves and conduct dynamic risks assessments through the session. The Risk Assessments also covers some off-the-water activities at the Riverside Centre. Site specific risk assessments should be prepared and approved for activities undertaken that are not currently risk assessed.

It is recognised that risk assessments are based on a specific set of circumstances at a particular moment in time. Therefore, Coaches/Leaders should undertake their own dynamic risk assessments, continually identifying hazards and assessing risks throughout the duration of their activities. The Coach/ Leader will take appropriate mitigating actions.

#### **5.2 First aid**

All coaches are trained in first aid and will have an appropriate first aid kits with them when on the water. A bankside first aid kit is located within the Club office at the Riverside Centre. An



Automated External Defibrillator is located on the external wall adjacent to the office door of the clubhouse.

### **5.3 Emergency contact details**

Prior to paddling the Riverside Centre, members are required to be checked in and checked out before and after the sessions. In addition, full emergency contact details for our members are held securely on-site.

### **5.4 Accident reporting**

The Club Committee must be notified of any accidents or incidents that have occurred during the session as soon as practicable after occurrence and the accident book completed. The accident report book is kept in the first-aid kit box on-site.

Paddling activity accidents and incidents should be reported using the British Canoeing [online reporting system](#). This is used to report all paddling related incidents, whether a member of British Canoeing or not. Note that near misses should also be reported using this system, as well as actual incidents.

### **5.5 Major incident response plan**

A 'Major Incident' is defined by British Canoeing as "either a very serious single incident or combination of incidents which could lead to loss of life, a serious injury or where there is substantial damage". The Club has adopted the [British Canoeing guidance](#) that outlines the steps that need to be taken in the event of a major incident. A copy is provided on The Club notice board.

### **5.6 Fire and evacuation**

In the event of a fire, all personnel must assemble at the top of the grassed area by the entrance gate. The river attendance register will be used to support a roll call of members. A copy of the fire evacuation plan is provided on The Club noticeboard.

### **5.7 Covid-19**

The Club will enact the latest Covid-19 procedures and risk assessments in-line with the latest government advice and that of the governing body, British Canoeing.



## **6. THE PREMISES**

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The Riverside Centre (The Premises) including the jetty, is a shared facility for the members Queen's Park High School, Deva Canoe Club, and Chester and Cheshire Scouts. The Club has exclusive use of The Premises from 09:00 to 13:00 on a Sunday. On the occasion this may not be possible (for example when a rowing regatta is programmed), in which case alternative arrangements will be made.

The management and maintenance of The Premises is the responsibility of Queen's Park High School. Any issues should initially be directed to The Club Secretary (contact details in Section 3.1).

### **6.1 Access**

Access to the main site is managed through a small number of key holders. During club sessions, the site, changing rooms, toilets and boat shed will be available to all members.

### **6.2 Parking**

Members are to park on the grass on the upper level. Limited parking is available for Coaches and bankside support at the lower level. Vehicles are to be reverse parked.

### **6.3 Changing rooms, toilets and showers**

Separate male and female changing rooms, toilets and showers are available for members, and are to be used in accordance with The Club's '*Changing room Policy*', which is available upon request.

### **6.4 Communal area**

The Club has use of the Riverside communal area where seating is available, and warm drinks can be provided at the end of a session.

### **6.5 Locking up**

All accessible areas to the building, including the end of a session, the office in the end bay, the end-bay, and main office, shall all be locked,. The gates to the jetty, the tow-path, and the Riverside Centre from the Lower Park Road shall be closed and locked at the end of each session.



There is a list of designated key holders which is maintained by the Chair and Secretary.

## **7. EQUIPMENT**

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### **7.1 Equipment storage**

Club kayaks, canoes, paddles, helmets, cagoules, personal floatation devices/buoyancy aids, tow-lines, throwlines and miscellaneous equipment (including a selection of assorted wetsuits) are kept in the end-bay at the Riverside Centre. An inventory of equipment is held by the Committee and is to be maintained regularly.

The storage of personal craft at club is at the discretion of The Committee. Where personal equipment has been left with The Club for 12 months or more after a member has either not paid their annual membership or actively coached within 12 months, then CRCC will assume ownership, either allowing use by other members or selling it to recoup unpaid fees as well as make space for other equipment.

Members store their boats at their own risk and are advised to take out insurance for loss or damage, however caused.

### **7.2 Club equipment safety checks**

All equipment that is used during a session shall be checked that it is in safe working order by a Coach/Leader. Any defective equipment shall be clearly marked using either black and yellow tape or marked as 'Not to be used', dated, and segregated away from non-defective equipment. A member of the Committee shall be informed, who shall inspect the equipment and make a decision to repair or discard it.

Club personal flotation devices/buoyancy aids shall be weight tested with a 60 Newton test weight on an annual basis. Any that fail to provide sufficient buoyancy shall be removed from service and the shoulder straps cut prior to disposal, to prevent any further use.

Canoes shall be inspected on a regular basis, and at least annually. A check shall include (but not limited to) checking for:

- Hull deformation, including splits
- Raised or loose bolts
- Loose rivets



- Loose, aged or inappropriately sized grab loops
- Damaged thwarts
- Aged or insufficient painters
- Aged or incorrectly fitting buoyancy.

Kayaks shall be inspected on a regular basis, and at least annually. A check shall include (but not limited to) checking for:

- Hull deformation, including splits
- Raised or loose bolts
- Loose seats, pillar buoyancy
- Missing bolts on footrests
- Missing deck plugs
- Missing air-bags (if originally fitted).

### **7.3 Manual handling**

Paddlers should take care when moving or lifting people or equipment. Paddlers shall listen to the Coaches briefing with regard to moving boats, and follow British Canoeing's information on injury prevention:

- <https://www.britishcanoeingawarding.org.uk/resource/preventing-kayaking-injuries/>

Members are expected to assist others in carrying boats where required to reduce the risk of injuries.

Loading and unloading canoes on and off the trailer shall be undertaken by Coaches/Leaders or under the direction of a Coach/Leader. Moving the trailer in and out of the end-bay shall be undertaken by Coaches or under the direction of a Coach/Leader.

### **7.4 First aid**

A first aid box is kept during sessions within the office. A Coach or Leader in charge of a group must carry a first-aid kit suitable for the environment as part of their equipment whilst on the water.



## **7.5 Kayaks, canoes and other craft**

To ensure that both boats and other craft (for example stand-up paddleboards) and equipment fulfil their maximum life expectancy the following guidelines for use should be followed:

- Boats are to be treated with care at all times. All members have a duty to ensure that boats remain serviceable and available for other members to use and enjoy.
- Following use, boats are to be emptied of water, cleaned if necessary, particularly of sand, and returned to their allocated racks.
- Any damage is to be reported to a member of the Committee or Coach/Leader immediately and a note put on the piece of equipment which shall not be used until the fault has been rectified or the item discarded.
- Boats are not to be modified in any way without the permission of The Committee.
- All club boats should be carried to and from the water and not dragged across abrasive surfaces such as concrete, tarmac or sand. Craft should be carried with assistance from others. If you are unable to carry a particular craft obtain help from a fellow paddler.
- Seal launching of club boats is only permitted as part of a coaching session or club trip, when suitable locations will be identified by the Coach/Leader.
- Where a member damages or loses club equipment, the circumstances of that damage or loss will be investigated and any costs for repair or replacement may be incurred at the discretion of the Committee.

## **7.6 Personal Floatation Devices / Buoyancy Aids**

The wearing and use of personal floatation devices (PFDs) / buoyancy aids is compulsory when on or near the water, this includes when accessing and using the jetty. The PFD/buoyancy aid must be correctly fitted and used in accordance with the manufacturers' guidelines.

## **7.7 Helmets**

Helmets shall fit correctly and be deemed so by the Coach/Leader. Helmets are to be worn by all paddlers whilst near or on the water, including the jetty.

## **7.8 Paddles**

Paddles shall be used and returned to where they are stored within the end-bay.





### **7.9 Dry cags**

Dry cags are stored within the end-bay and should be hung on hangers after each use.

### **7.10 Group safety equipment – activities from Riverside Centre**

For activities that are run from the Riverside Centre, the Coach/Leader shall be responsible for ensuring they carry group safety equipment during the activity and should refer to the relevant risk-assessment(s). The Coach/Leader will have access to Club equipment but it is the Coach/ Leader's responsibility to ensure the equipment is in good working order before use.

Consideration should be given to the following equipment, and is at the Coaches/Leaders discretion and judgment depending on the nature of the proposed activity and environmental conditions:

- Mobile phone with bankside support contact numbers
- Appropriate first aid kit
- Group Shelter
- Emergency foil blanket
- Knife
- Throw line
- Tow line
- Sling/Karabiner
- Spare canoe paddle (if canoes are being used).

The above list is a minimum, and the Coach/ Leader may carry additional equipment if required.

### **7.11 Group safety equipment – off-site activities**

For off-site activities, the Coach/Leader is responsible for ensuring they carry additional equipment during the activity, and should refer to the relevant risk-assessment(s). The Coach/Leader will have access to Club equipment but it is the Coach/ Leader's responsibility to ensure the equipment is in good working order before use.



Consideration should be given to the following equipment, and is at the Coaches/Leaders discretion and judgment depending on the nature of the proposed activity and environmental conditions:

- Mobile phone with support contact numbers
- Appropriate first aid kit
- Group Shelter
- Emergency foil blanket
- Spare clothes
- Means to make a hot drink
- Sun protection (e.g. sun hat, non-allergenic sun block/screen)
- Spare paddle(s)
- Knife
- Throw line
- Tow line
- Sling/Karabiner
- Spare canoe paddle (if canoes are being used).

The above list is a minimum, and the Coach/ Leader may carry additional equipment if required.

## **7.12 Trailer**

It is the Committee's responsibility to ensure regular safety checks are conducted on the trailer and to ensure road worthiness.

Club will need to check that any driver towing the Club trailer is licensed to do so.

It is the responsibility of the driver to drive the vehicle towing the trailer in a responsible manner, showing due caution and courtesy to other road users.

The driver is responsible for ensuring the security of load on each occasion the trailer is used.

The driver is responsible for making transport arrangements and ensuring these can be adapted in an emergency.

Where vehicles are used to tow Club trailers, the driver must ensure adequate insurance arrangements are in place, and loading guidelines are followed.



### **7.13 Booking equipment**

Equipment may be borrowed by a member of The Club subject to agreement and completion of the relevant form. The borrowed equipment is for their exclusive use, and within the designed and intended use of that particular piece of equipment, and shall be used either under the supervision of a directly qualified British Canoeing Coach or Leader. Club accepts no liability or responsibility for the use of Club equipment that is borrowed.

Where a member damages or loses club equipment, the circumstances of that damage or loss will be investigated. This investigation will refer to the age and condition of the equipment prior to the damage or loss as well as the event itself. Members borrow club equipment on the understanding that it will be returned in a similar, or better, condition and that they will be responsible for funding any repair or replacement. Any replacement will normally be on a like for like basis. Fair wear and tear is expected.

### **7.14 Personal equipment**

Personal equipment may be used for Club activities so long as the equipment is safe to use and is used in accordance with the manufactures intended use. Any PFDs/buoyancy aids shall be weight tested with a 60 Newton test weight at the Coach/Leaders' discretion (in accordance with Section 7.2). Should the equipment not be deemed suitable for use by the Coach/Leader, then the equipment is returned and an explanation shall be given to the member and their parent/carer and Club equipment shall be used instead.

### **7.15 Clothing**

Paddlers must wear clothing appropriate to the weather conditions, water temperature and location of the paddling activity being undertaken. This may include wetsuits, dry-suits and/or cagoules, suncream.

Paddlers are required to wear appropriate footwear securely attached to their feet. Wetsuit boots or shoes, old trainers are suitable. Bare feet or Croc-type footwear are not permitted. Paddlers may wish to carry food, water and/or sunscreen according to the weather conditions and length of session.

A dry change of clothes should be brought to club, along with a towel, and is essential during autumn and winter months. Coaches and leaders may ask a paddler not to go on the water if they are unsuitably clothed or equipped, and their decision is final.



Attention is drawn to the increased risk for outdoor activities between October - March due to weather/water conditions and increased risk of hypothermia.

## **8. CLUB SESSIONS**

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Regular Club sessions generally take place from the Riverside Centre on a Sunday morning. On occasion, some sessions are run from alternative venues, for which the relevant parts of this document will apply, in association with the respective and relevant risk assessment.

### **8.1 Registration**

Registration for a session must be made before the session by Thursday 5pm and paid for by Friday 5pm.

### **8.2 Cancellations**

If in the event that a member is unable to attend a session that they have registered for due to unforeseen circumstances (for example illness), then their registration and payment will carry forwards. Prior notice will be given if the session cannot run due to environmental factors such as adverse weather or river levels.

### **8.3 Attendance register**

A register of pre-paid and registered paddlers will be available for the Lead Coach for each session, which will also document the time and height of high tide.

### **8.4 Aspirant Club Coaches/Visiting Coaches**

All Aspirant Club Coaches or Visiting Coaches must provide their details for each session and comply with this procedure and all relevant procedure and risk assessments, along with evidence of their previous experience and BCAB qualifications.

### **8.5 Bankside support**

Bankside support shall be present during Club sessions, who will act as the point of contact in case of an emergency, and to support the smooth running of sessions as required.



## **8.6 Parents or Carers**

Parents/Carers, family or guardians are welcome to drop-off paddlers and observe the session and are expected to act in an appropriate manner and in accordance with the Parent/Carer's Code of Conduct when they are on The Club premises or near to the Club's paddling activity.

## **8.7 Behaviour**

Anyone not complying with this procedure, associated policies, or with the requests of the Coaches/Leaders or members of the CRCC Committee will be required to leave.

## **8.8 Go-paddling events**

Go-paddling events take place from Club and are organised in accordance with British Canoeing events policy. British Canoeing forms need to be filled out for these events. Resources and further information can be obtained from the British Canoeing Clubhouse.

# **9. CLUB ACTIVITIES**

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## **9.1 Coaches briefing**

A Lead Coach shall be identified for each Club session. The Lead Coach shall organise a Coaches Briefing prior to accessing the water. The briefing session should take place away from the paddlers and discuss the paddling options for the session. This should take into consideration (but not limited to), the environmental conditions (weather, river level, height and time of high tide, water quality), group composition, experience and competence, available coaches experience, competence, BCAB qualification/Club-remit.

Any relevant and appropriate feedback from the previous session should be fed-back to the current session Coaches to inform their decision making.

## **9.2 Group briefing**

A nominated Coach will brief the members of the session. This will cover (but not limited to) weather conditions, time and height of high tide, river level, other river users, any hazards relating to the ramp and jetty, size of group, coaches present and roles, and the aims for the session and proposed objectives.



### **9.3 Access and egress from the Riverside Centre**

The access ramp and jetty shall be inspected before the session, with particular attention given to raised metal screws, loose planks, splinters, sharp metal trims, and slip hazards. These shall be communicated to the paddlers during the group briefing.

Paddlers shall assist each other to safely take the boats to the jetty as directed by a Coach/Leader. Consideration should be given to members of the public on the tow path. At the end of a session members shall support each other with the safe egress from the water and convey equipment safely to the Club as directed by the Coaches/Leaders. Club equipment should be returned to where it is kept and members are encouraged to take responsibility for return of the equipment they have used. Any defective equipment should be reported to a Coach/Leader.

### **9.4 Water quality**

All rivers, however clean they might appear contain a level of natural contamination from things such as rotting vegetation, insects and animal activity. In addition to this there may be other types of contamination including algal blooms (blue green algae), sewerage or chemical contamination. Illnesses are normally caused by bacterial infection, viruses or toxins in the water.

Surfers Against Sewage have a useful online tool <https://www.sas.org.uk/map/> (which is available as an App) which shows an interactive map of real-time CSOs (combined sewage overflows) and PRFs (pollution risk forecasts), with data available real-time updates for Upper Dee Lane and Eccleston.

Leptospirosis (Weil's disease) is a potentially fatal bacterial infection that can be spread by rat urine, though it can also be transmitted by cat, fox and rabbit urine. Transmission is usually through an open wound or abrasion but can also be caused by ingestion of contaminated water. Symptoms are lethargy, diarrhoea, headaches, vomiting and muscle pain; sometimes referred to as flu like symptoms, if untreated can be fatal. Should you have symptoms ensure you tell your doctor that you have been in on or near the river.

Prevention measures against water borne infection are largely common sense:

- Cover all cuts and abrasions with waterproof plasters
- Always wear footwear to avoid cutting the feet
- Avoid capsize or rolling practice in suspected waters
- Where possible shower soon after the activity



- As a minimum always wash your hands as soon as possible after paddling and wash your face too before eating or drinking (top tip – carry a small amount of hand sanitiser with you where possible)

## **9.5 Post-session briefing**

A nominated Coach/Leader will debrief the members of the session. Coaches/Leaders should reflect and review the session and consider feedback from group debrief. Coach to coach feedback and review is to be encouraged and facilitated.

## **9.6 Tides**

The River Dee below the weir is tidal, and it can also be tidal above the weir during some Spring tides. During a flooding Spring (incoming) tides that overtops the weir, the effect can be seen upstream at the Iron Bridge gauge approximately 9.2km (5.7 miles) upstream (and beyond up to Farndon on exceptionally high tides). Following slack water, a large volume of water ebbs (outgoing) downstream which can maintain elevated flows at Chester weir and steps for a considerable period of time following high water.

Tides that over-top Chester Weir and the upstream area, create stronger than normal flows for a period of up to 3-4 hours after the flood. Coaches and Leaders should always be aware of predicted tide times and height as well as wind-direction. During powerful tidal events, Coaches and Leaders should exercise caution and consider that the weir environment is likely to fit the definition for Moderate Whitewater throughout the period.

The time and height of high tide for Chester is taken relative to Gladstone Dock, Liverpool. The following adjustments should be used as a rule of thumb:

- Add 1 hour and 8 minutes to the time for Liverpool Gladstone Dock to get the time for Chester.
- Add a further hour between 29<sup>th</sup> March – 25<sup>th</sup> October to allow for British Summer Time
- Anything above 29ft (8.8m) is over the weir
- Anything above 31ft (9.1m) is over the lower Groves footpath
- Anything over 32ft (9.7m) will completely cover the Groves path.

A copy of Liverpool Gladstone Dock tide times for the year is on The Club notice board.

Where there is a difference in opinion on the proposed activity (with respect to tides and river flow), then the designated Lead Coach's decision is final.



It is important to note that the wind increases the height of the tide and brings it in earlier so keep that in mind when planning an outing. It is also very important to note that careful consideration should be given to the time and height of high tide, and any decision to cross the weir head. Sufficient depth of water needs to be maintained to cross back over the weir towards club so that all members of the group can safely pass. The group should be fully briefed as to the timings and contingencies for egress below the weir if required.

Trips that paddle upstream either from or to the Club should take into account the height and time of tides and consider this to avoid paddling against the strong flows.

#### **9.7 Other river users**

All self-propelled water-craft are to stay on the right of the river. The River Dee at Chester is used by rowers, powered craft, rowing boats, pedalos, and other kayakers/canoists. All paddlers are to follow directions and instructions given by the Coach/Leader.

#### **9.8 Seasonal constraints**

The Club run paddling sessions all year round subject to weather conditions and river levels. The itinerary for the session may change and include land-based activities (for example throw line practice) if the weather conditions are less favourable for an enjoyable session. Members should arrive suitably clothed for the activity and follow the advice of the Coaches/Leaders.

#### **9.9 The Dee upstream of Chester Weir**

This section covers the River Dee from the Riverside Centre upstream of the Chester Weir and the relevant risk assessments should be referred to. This stretch of water is suitable for beginners, and is at the discretion of the Coach/Leader to conduct dynamic risk assessments throughout the session based on the environmental conditions and ability of the group.

Trips that paddle upstream either from or to the Club should take into account the height and time of tides and consider this to avoid paddling against the strong flows (see Section 9.6).

#### **9.10 Chester Weir and Steps**

This section of the River Dee covers the River Dee relating to the steps to the side of, and including the weir main face, and the relevant risk assessments should be referred to.





The Club has been provided with technical independent advice provided by Jamie Greenhalgh of Paddle 365, dated 4 September 2022 on the use of the weir by The Club for those that do not have as a minimum a direct BCAB White Water Leader, White Water Coach or Moderate Water Endorsement. This is provided in Appendix A and shall be read, understood and abided with by Club Coaches and Leaders, and is reproduced in part below:

*'Chester Weir is a moderate white water play spot, that stands alone within a sheltered water environment. At both the top and at the bottom of the feature the waterway fits the environmental definitions for Sheltered Water. For this reason, club leaders are given special training to lead groups at this weir only while the venue fits this description. The Weir at Chester is a highly dynamic environment that can change quickly, so club coaches and leaders should be vigilant and cautious in their planning to ensure sessions here are always safe and enjoyable for their participants, and to ensure they do not put themselves and others at risk by working outside their environmental remit unintentionally.'*

The competency for Club Coaches and Leaders to take groups to the weir within their deployed remit are either:

- Direct British Canoeing/BCU Coaching or Leadership qualification for moderate water environments
- Assessed, signed-off and authorised by Club to lead groups on the weir in accordance with the British Canoeing framework for Club-remit.

The competency for Club members to use the weir are either:

- Prior experience of paddling at the Club, competent to control their craft independently and perform a self-rescue/ safe capsize. Meeting the requirements of the former BCU 2 Star is a useful guide for competence.
- The discretion of the Lead Coach can be exercised as to the suitability (or not) of an individual to paddle at the weir.
- The group competency shall be taken into account when determining if a paddlers competence is suitable.

The Coach shall satisfy themselves that the steps and weir environment is within the remit of their deployment before taking a group to the bottom of the weir and shall be discussed and agreed at the pre-session Coaches Briefing. Any decision to use the weir and/or steps shall be taken in consultation with the designated Lead Coach, whose decision whether to use it or not, is final.



The Coaches/Leaders shall conduct dynamic risk assessments throughout the session based on the environmental conditions and ability of the group.

### 9.11 Night paddles

The Club runs night paddling sessions, these are either run from the Riverside Centre, or from Eccleston. Consideration should be given to the time and height of high tides (see Section 9.6), and to avoid paddling against the strong flows.

All paddlers paddling after dusk must show glow-sticks that are visible from front and rear and adhere to the specific activity risk assessment, and ensure that sufficient lighting and batteries are carried.

The Coaches/Leaders shall conduct dynamic risk assessments throughout the session based on the environmental conditions and ability of the group.

### 9.12 Off-site paddling

This operating procedure shall apply to all Club activities undertaken off-site, and a site-specific risk assessment shall be completed. All Coaches/Leaders shall read, understand and abide by the site-specific risk assessment.

## 10. ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS AND LANGUAGE

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DEFINITIONS	
<b>Club Activity</b>	Any activity that is run for Club members and who have registered for that activity
<b>Lead Coach</b>	Nominated Coach to lead the session (but not necessarily as a single group) and co-ordinate the Coaches Briefing
<b>Coach</b>	A British Canoeing or British Canoe Union qualified Coach of any level.
<b>Leader</b>	A British Canoeing or British Canoe Union qualified Leader of any level, or someone who does not hold direct formal British Canoeing or British Canoe Union qualifications and has been assessed and authorised to lead sessions.
<b>Bankside support</b>	A Club member or Committee member who remains bankside and coordinates any support from the bankside as and when required



<b>ACRONYMS</b>	
<b>BCAB</b>	British Canoeing Awarding Body
<b>BC</b>	British Canoeing
<b>BCU</b>	British Canoe Union (pre-cursor to BC)
<b>CRCC</b>	Chester Riverside Canoe Club

<b>LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>“Shall”</b>	Where the provision is mandatory
<b>“Should”</b>	Where the provision is preferred
<b>“May”</b>	Where an alternative is acceptable

**11. LOG OF CHANGES**

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Change Number</b>	<b>Issue Number</b>	<b>Details</b>
18/06/2023	-	01	Original Procedure



**12. APPENDIX A – TECHNICAL ADVICE**

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**Leading developing paddlers at Chester Weir in Sheltered Water Conditions**  
**Jamie Greenhalgh, 4 September 2022**



## Chester Riverside Canoe Club Activity Document

### Leading Developing Paddlers at Chester Weir in Sheltered Water Conditions

Technical Advice given by Jamie Greenhalgh on 04/09/2022

#### Session Aim & Risk - Benefit Assessment

Chester Weir is a fun and accessible introductory whitewater venue. In sheltered water conditions, this venue presents fantastic potential for developing paddlers to hone their skills and have fun with their peers, and because it is so close to home, this venue is accessible by many who would feel more comfortable there than in a more wild outdoor context. In all paddlesport activity, participants are exposed to an environment that is potentially hazardous, but it is our firm belief that the personal benefits to be derived from immersing oneself in that environment outweigh the potential risks. Involvement in paddlesport can deliver a real benefit to physical health in terms of fitness, core strength, fresh air and vitamin D; as well as benefits to mental health by connection with the natural world, opportunities for socialising, and the growth in self-esteem we can gain when developing boating skills.

Whilst paddling at Chester Weir, CRCC leaders should work within their risk assessments and operating procedures to ensure safe enjoyable learning can take place.

#### Understanding Conditions and environmental remits at Chester Weir

This Weir is a moderate white water play spot, that stands alone within a sheltered water environment. At both the top and at the bottom of the feature the waterway fits the environmental definitions for Sheltered Water. For this reason, club leaders are given special training to lead groups at this weir only while the venue fits this description. The Weir at Chester is a highly dynamic environment that can change quickly, so club coaches and leaders should be vigilant and cautious in their planning to ensure sessions here are always safe and enjoyable for their participants, and to ensure they do not put themselves and others at risk by working outside their environmental remit unintentionally.

**River Levels-** The water level of the River Dee contributes to conditions on the Weir. Higher levels will create to greater power in the Weir's rapid steps, at times creating powerful hydraulics. They will also mean river flow above the weir and below it will fit better with

the environmental definition 'Moderate Whitewater'. Leaders should exercise caution and if they are unsure about water levels, consider alternate activity.

**Spring Tides** - Tides of greater than 9m from Liverpool will flood Chester Weir and the upstream area, creating stronger than normal currents for a period of up to 3 hours after the flood. Leaders should always be aware of predicted tides, and during powerful tidal events, Leaders should exercise caution and consider that the environment is likely to fit the definition for Moderate Whitewater throughout the period.

Reference - Environmental Definitions and Deployment Guidance for Instructors, Coaches and Leaders- From British Canoeing, April 2018

<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/British-Canoeing-Environmental-Definitions-Deployment-Guidance-for-Instructors-Coaches-Leaders-Apr18-v1-1.pdf>



**13. DECLARATION**

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You are required to declare that you have read, understood and will abide with the requirements of this procedure.

**END OF DOCUMENT**