Exmoor Canoe Club – Since 2004.

Generic Risk Assessment – Moving Water class 2 Adults Trip

Amended and checked by Dan Barnett 23/02/2024

Hazard	Those at Risk	Risk Control	Further Action
General management	All participants	Activity to be led and organized by a suitably qualified and competent coach or leader with BCU qualification or signed off on ECC internal verification process. Suitable for craft being used.	
Equipment failures	All participants	All club issued kit to be checked by the trip leader or designated person for damage or loose bolts etc. Boats, paddles, BAs, Helmets etc.	
Slips and trips	All participants	Participants to be made aware of site conditions with reference specifically to slipways, banks, moorings, bracken, brambles, roots, equipment. Appropriate footwear to be worn at all times (no flip flop type shoes) Participants instructed to keep paddles and other equipment in boats when not in use.	Coaches/Leaders to enforce need for good behaviour in managing risk.
Cuts and grazes	All participants	Coaches/Leaders to brief groups about likely causes, for example brambles, and their avoidance. Appropriate equipment to be worn.	See also slips and trips.
Manual handling injury	All participants	Participants to be taught nature of risk. Coaches/Leaders to demonstrate correct techniques for removal of boats from trailers lifting from the ground.	Refer to BC guidance.
Trailer or Storage Rack related injury	All participants	Participants to be made aware of risks specific to trailer – tipping, tripping, crush injury, head or other injury from falling boats, brake release. Coaches/Leaders to clearly instruct and demonstrate system for unloading/loading and assign roles to individuals where appropriate. Helmets to be worn at Coaches/Leaders discretion. Juniors should always be supervised when moving boats and equipment.	Coaches/Leaders to be aware of physical issues such as dyspraxia in group.
Entrapment in boat	All participants	Kayaks: Boats to be outfitted before paddling, especially footrest adjustment. Participants to be briefed to ensure feet are not behind footrests and laces are inside shoes or wet shoes preferred. Capsize practice to be encouraged after demonstration. Spray decks not to be used until calm wet exit observed. Open Canoes: Paddlers to be briefed about capsize and safe seating arrangements. Rafts: Instructor to assess risk before launch. Continuous observation from safety boat and / or shore throughout.	
Submersion	All participants	All participants to wear approved buoyancy aid and to be instructed in correct fitting and checking.	
Cold water shock	All participants	Introductory sessions to be conducted on inland water in summer months. Staff to encourage immersion through capsize drills and games during these sessions, and to	

		carefully observe individual reactions. Progression to colder water (rivers) dependent upon individual habituation. Wet suits, and cags or other suitable clothing to be worn - relevant to the conditions	
Unconsciousness	All participants	First Aid qualified staff to accompany every group and first kit carried with group. If appropriate, participants to be made aware of the need for an unconscious casualty to be turned face up in the water immediately.	
Head injuries	All participants	Participants to wear approved helmet appropriate to the activity. Coaches/Leaders to be clear about risks of games and capsize drills on flat water if helmets are not being worn.	
Hypothermia, hyperthermia, sunburn	All participants	All participants to be adequately clothed and equipped for the activity and conditions. All participants to be trained to recognise the signs, symptoms and causes of the onset of hypothermia, hyperthermia and sunburn as appropriate. First Aid qualified Coaches/Leaders to accompany (or be present) every group. Journeying groups to carry appropriate preventative equipment – spare clothing, emergency shelters, hot drink kit / extra water, suncream.	Coaches/Leaders to brief groups at their discretion – ie not novices on a taster session.
Other water users	All participants	Participants to be briefed about other water users, their activities and action upon encountering them. For other water craft, right of way should be established. For fishermen, safe distance should be established.	Coaches/Leaders should not hesitate to move a group from a busy area.
Water borne infection	All participants	Coaches/Leaders to assess water quality bearing in mind venue, season and level of flow if river or estuary. Participants to be briefed to not drink the water, and to wash hands if possible before eating. Cuts and grazes to be covered with waterproof plaster. Staff to be aware of leptospirosis and its symptoms.	
Adverse weather	All participants	Coaches/Leaders to obtain weather forecast where appropriate. Participants to have appropriate equipment and clothing to meet the worst possible weather scenario.	Coaches/Leaders to plan sessions flexibly.
Existing medical conditions	Those concerned	Main leader to ask all participants to make them aware of any relevant medical conditions before they get on the water. If there is a serious medical condition a doctor's letter agreeing to participation should also be sought. If anaphylactic reactions are to be expected adrenalin pens should be carried by the participant. Coaches/Leaders and Coaches/Leaders trained in using the device.	

Separation from the group	All participants	Leader to ensure line of site and to implement eddy hopping or leapfrogging Leader to use Buddy system for inexperienced paddlers Participants briefed about breaking out safely and waiting if the eddy is missed Group to eddy out if leader chasing	
Capsize and swim	All participants	Participants to be competent in wet exit, participants to be briefed in safe swimming technique, group should respond by making a safe eddy. Leader and /or assistant to ensure safety and recue of swimmer and rescue of equipment	Other competent members may assist
Loss of boat in capsize/ pinned boat	All participants	Group should respond by making a safe eddy exit the bank and ensure comfort and warmth. If possible the boat should be recovered on foot. If boat is irretrievable then safe evacuation of the group member(s) should be made. Leader and /or assistant to manage the safety and comfort of the group Leaders and competent group members to carry equipment for setting up boat rescue if safe to do so	Leaders to have a emergency evacuation plan for the trip appropriate for the type of group, the weather and the location
Loss of paddle	All participants	Spare paddle to be carried by the group	Mixed boat type groups to have a spare paddle of each type
rapids	All participants	Unfamiliar stretches of white water should be scouted. Leaders should assess participant's skill levels and if conditions are beyond the abilities of participant(s) portage if necessary. Any splitting of the group must be managed to ensure all are safe and moral is maintained, when this is not possible the whole group should portage	Leaders and competent group members to carry equipment for setting up safety cover
weirs	All participants	As for rapids. Leader should check for debris or damage before running, assess the best line and ensure safety cover when necessary	See rapids
Rocks and strainers, bridges	All participants	Chosen section of river should be within the technical ability of the group. Participants instructed on action to be taken on hitting rocks. Bridges should be checked for obstructions and a clear line should be obvious and clearly achievable by the group. The group should be made aware of the high hazard posed by trees strainers and the leader should ensure safe passage is achievable for the group passed fallen trees etc. or should portage Group should be aware of river communication signals in particular instructions to eddy out	Group leader to carry suitable cutting equipment to clear small strainers

Stoppers and standing waves	All participants	Feature to be inspected unless known to the leader at the water level on the day. If used for training or play, feature should be appropriate for the group with downstream conditions suitable for easy rescue of paddlers and equipment. Boat or bank side safety cover should be provided. leader needs to be aware of the comfort levels of non-participating paddlers either in the eddy or on the bank	See rapids