

SDCC COMMUNITY Risk Assessment Form

Coate Water Country Park		Date	February 2026	Assessed by	Nick (Welfare and Safety Officer) and Louise (Chairperson)
		Review Date	Formal Review Biannually in February and August		
Description of Assessment:		<p>Coate Water is assessed for use by Swindon and District Canoe Club as a base for the running of Community sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to equipment and kit stored in a metal shipping container and small wooden shed in a shared compound. • Shared Access to the lake with fishermen, Swindon Rowing Club, Scouts, Sea Cadets, Guides and Model Boat Club. • Community sessions scope follows PUK definitions for Start Discover sessions, with a duration between 90-150 minutes with PUK qualified Instructors and Coaches. 			
Address		Coate Water, Marlborough Road, Swindon, SN3 6AA.			
Location Details:	Compound	///bumps.wiping.recent			
	Slipway	///dose.actual.asking			
What3words					

What are the Hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing to control the risks?	What further action do we need to take to control the risk?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Drowning	<p>Paddlers, Volunteers and or participants in water-based activity</p> <p>Drowning - Small amount of water though nose or mouth which causes spasm in airway, so airway closes</p>	<p>All paperwork is completed and returned to club prior to the session. A minimum of 25m swimming ability is required by all participants.</p> <p>Suitable clothing is worn by participants.</p> <p>Health concerns are passed on to the Leader.</p>	<p>Observation of clothing and footwear. Conversation if not suitable so paddler and community group leader is aware of potential issues. E.G new trainers getting wet.</p> <p>Group session is shortened if weather is detrimental.</p>	<p>Duty Officer To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the Duty Officer is</p>	Start of each session	

	<p>Secondary Drowning - Where a little bit of water gets into the lungs causing inflammation or swelling so transfer of oxygen to body is difficult</p>	<p>Wearing of personal flotation device (PFD) fitted correctly. Coaches/Instructors/Volunteers have knowledge of rescue procedures, Appropriate leadership for the session, maximum ratio of 1:8, preferred ratio of 1:6, with at least 1 other adult support volunteer, 1:1 support can be arranged if required. Qualified First Aiders available either on the water or on the site.</p>	<p>Land based drills for capsizing and basic paddling skills.</p>	<p>aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>		
<p>Hypothermia (Cold)</p>	<p>Paddlers, spectators.</p> <p>Through falling into the water either deliberately or accidentally.</p> <p>From the cold weather.</p>	<p>Advise on the correct clothing to wear.</p> <p>Advise all paddlers to bring a towel and complete change of clothing with them.</p> <p>Adjustment to clothing as required</p> <p>Provide an enclosed space for changing</p> <p>Provide recreational cags for participants to borrow for sessions if needed.</p>	<p>Have foil blankets available in first aid kit, to be checked annually</p> <p>Advise participants not to deliberately go into the water when the water and/or air temperature is cold, usually between the months of October and March.</p> <p>Session leaders to be aware of who the qualified first aiders are, list to be published and put in/on the shed. A first aider to be in attendance on each course/session.</p>	<p>Duty Officer To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the Duty Officer is aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	<p>Ongoing basis</p> <p>As bookings are made</p>	

Hyperthermia/heat exhaustion	Paddlers and spectators From the hot weather. Through excessive exposure to the sun and lack of fluids	Advised on correct clothing to wear Adjustment to clothing as required Advise participants to bring drinks with them.	Send reminder email out to participants/community groups 48hrs before the event about the clothing to wear and advising them to put sun cream on before attending if hot/sunny weather if forecast.	Duty Officer To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it. Safety Officer To ensure the Duty Officer is aware of the risks. Chair to be informed of any issues.	48hrs before each course/ community session	
Traffic	Leaders and Volunteers, members of the public. Being hit by the vehicles.	Restrict access/ park in suitable place. Participants to park in the main carpark and walk up.	Awareness of members of the public and of the speed limits	Safety Officer To ensure the Duty Officer is aware of the risks. All to be aware of the hazards	Beginning and end of each session	
Manual handling	Paddlers, participants, and parents/non-paddling members. Lifting and carrying boats/equipment causing injury.	Participants shown how to safely carry kit during the safety briefing at the start of the course/session. Pair up where required to lift heavy objects e.g., craft.	Minimal heavy lifting, use of appropriate equipment Demonstrate as well as tell participants how to correctly carry the equipment from the compound to the slipway. All equipment required for the session to be out of the container and in the	Duty Officer To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it. Safety Officer To ensure the Duty Officer is aware of the risks.	Start of each session Before the start of each session	

			compound prior to the session/course commencing	Chair to be informed of any issues.		
Pollution and water quality	Paddlers	<p>Advise paddlers and participants to wash/shower soon after paddling/immersion.</p> <p>Advise paddlers not to eat or drink until hands are washed</p> <p>Avoid intentional capsizes in poor conditions</p> <p>Awareness of flotsam and bird/animal faeces</p> <p>Session cancellation due to blue green algae or Avian Bird Flu will follow Ranger Guidance.</p>	<p>Risks are higher during low water conditions - Coate Water has a spill way which controls the level of water in the lake.</p> <p>The Session Leader/Chairperson to cancel the session if the water is deemed to be too dangerous.</p>	<p>Safety Officer To liaise with the Rangers and to ensure the session leader is aware of any risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	As and when necessary. When conditions require it.	
Weather and environmental conditions	Paddlers	<p>Session Leader to check the weather forecast prior to the sessions</p> <p>Anyone taking part in the sessions needs to have appropriate skills for the conditions.</p> <p>Coate Water is classed as sheltered water.</p> <p>Access to the square gives very sheltered water.</p>	<p>Session Leader/Chair to cancel in adverse weather.</p> <p>The ability and needs of the paddlers to be taken into consideration when deciding on the activity to do in the session.</p> <p>Advice to be given to paddlers on ability to paddle conditions.</p> <p>Use of buoys to give set area to paddle within near the slip way and jetty.</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the session leader is aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	During adverse weather conditions	

		Appropriate warm up/skills/games for conditions				
Other water users	<p>Paddlers and participants</p> <p>Crashing into rowers.</p> <p>Becoming entangled in fishing lines.</p> <p>Getting caught in moving water caused by fire service practices.</p> <p>Being hit by motorised boats.</p>	<p>Paddlers instructed to be aware of other water users and how to take appropriate/avoiding action</p>	<p>Session Leaders and volunteers to look out for other water users and be aware of them before the session starts.</p> <p>If any emergency services are practising (e.g., fire service) at the lake the duty officer to speak with the officer in charge to find out where they will be operating and where we can/can't go. The same applies if the search and rescue services are called out to the lake for any reason as well.</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	<p>Start of each session</p> <p>As required</p>	
Access Jetties and the Slipway	<p>Paddlers</p> <p>Screws can be sticking out of them causing injury to paddlers.</p> <p>Flotsam and jetsam can collect around the jetties.</p> <p>The slipway can pose a risk of slipping over</p> <p>Being hit by a paddle when on the slipway</p>	<p>Session leader and volunteers having an awareness of the jetties, steps, and slipways.</p> <p>Inform participants of the risk posed by the jetties, steps and slipways and inform them of the safe way of exiting the water by the white pipe at the edge, and to not go near the water line</p> <p>Helmets to be always worn by all paddlers and participants when on the slipway.</p>	<p>Awareness of environmental concerns and knowledge of Coate Water as a SSSI to be discussed with participants</p> <p>Following rules and guidance set out by the Rangers and informing them of any damage to jetties.</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the Duty Officer is aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	<p>Before participants get on the water</p> <p>As required</p>	

<p>Slips, Trips and Falls</p>	<p>Paddlers, Participants, Parents, Spectators, Coaches, and others</p> <p>Slipping/tripping/falling over in the compound when the ground is wet.</p> <p>Slipping/tripping/falling over on the slipway</p>	<p>Session leader to give advice for awareness of riverbank, landing stages, jetties, steps and slipways, and adjacent grass area.</p>	<p>Appropriate cleaning and maintenance of equipment available for slipway</p> <p>Slipway to be cleaned of faeces before session begins.</p> <p>Remind participants to put equipment on the slipway in an organised way to allow space for people to move around</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the session leader is aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p> <p>All to be aware of the hazards</p>	<p>As required</p>	
<p>Sprains, Strains, and soft tissue injuries</p>	<p>Paddlers, Parents, Coaches, leaders, and others</p> <p>Incorrect/bad paddling technique.</p> <p>Not handling equipment correctly</p>	<p>Encouraged to paddle correctly</p> <p>Trained to lift/carry equipment properly</p> <p>Ask for help</p> <p>First Aider available at every session.</p>	<p>Appropriate checks on storage facilities</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the Session leader is aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	<p>Yearly</p>	

<p>Head injury during capsize</p>	<p>All water-based participants</p> <p>Hitting their head underwater on rocks, the bottom of the lake, or on the upturned craft.</p>	<p>Session leader to check water depth before participants carry out wet skills.</p> <p>All water-based participants to wear helmets during the session</p>	<p>Participants to capsize one at a time next to a session leader.</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the session leader is aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	<p>As required</p>	
<p>Cuts and abrasions, particularly to hands and feet</p>	<p>All participants.</p> <p>Cuts from equipment.</p> <p>Cuts from walking in the lake</p>	<p>Participants briefed to avoid trapping fingers between craft when taking part in games/water activities.</p> <p>All participants to wear appropriate footwear</p>	<p>Advice sent out prior to the course/community session on the correct type of footwear.</p> <p>Visual check of footwear at the start of the course/session to ensure suitability and to ensure any laces are tucked securely in.</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p> <p>Safety Officer To ensure the session leader is aware of the risks.</p> <p>Chair to be informed of any issues.</p>	<p>When the booking is made</p> <p>During the kitting up process</p>	
<p>Lone working</p>	<p>Coaches and Instructors.</p> <p>Injury from setting up or clearing away the session on their own</p>	<p>Wait until another coach/instructor/volunteer has arrived before getting out heavy equipment.</p>	<p>Coaches, instructors, and volunteers informed that no one to be left on their own at the end, all volunteers to stay</p>	<p>Session Leader To ensure kit is available if paddlers require it.</p>	<p>At the start of the courses season.</p>	

			until all equipment has been put away and secured.	Safety Officer To ensure the Session Leader is aware of the risks. Chair to be informed of any issues.		
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