



# NEW FOREST KAYAK AND CANOE CLUB

## Generic risk assessment

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<i>Reviewed 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 by:</i>	Committee Present: Justin Davis, Robert Salmon, Annie Hallam, Ya Huang, Duncan Gray, Mark Shakespeare Vicky Burden
<i>Amended</i>	10 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 Justin Davis – added shore contact procedure

*Reviewed 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024 by*

Present: Justin Davis, Annie Hallam, Duncan Gray, Mark Shakespeare, Richard Payne, Robert Wright, Jane Chapman, Rachel Hughes

Location of trip:  
(see last section of this document for A/B/C/D trip gradings/descriptions and possible examples)

**IMPORTANT: the following procedures are common for all club trips.**

- **Every trip should involve a minimum of 3 paddlers**
- *Grade A and B trips should have 1 leader to every 6 participants. Grade C and D paddles should have 1 leader to every 4 participants.*
- **It is strongly recommended that every trip (especially grade D) should have an appropriate co-leader/assistant who would be happy leading the same grade of paddle and could lead the trip back safely in case the leader is unable to.**
- *Every trip should have a **designated shore contact** (this would ideally be another member or a committee member but could be a family member/friend) who would be able to alert the committee and describe the trip plan in the event of emergency). Please share this information on the forum and with your group. The designated shore contact should be left with a copy of the shore contact procedure and the list of committee phone contacts.*

- *Every trip should have a participant with **first aid-training**. Please check with your group and make everyone aware who the first aider is.*
- *Every trip should carry the **safety/communications equipment** described in the grade descriptions. The club has full leader kit available to borrow from Annie Hallam (message her on the forum if you need it).*

### **Participant checklist /Leader checklist**

As part of the sign-up procedure for the trip, all paddlers should be instructed to read or re-read the 'participant checklist/leader checklist' document on the forum – this will be referred to as PC in what follows. This covers many of the potential hazards in this risk assessment

### **Forum posting**

When the trip is advertised on the club forum the leader will ensure that everyone is aware of the nature of the trip that is being planned including the route/weather/temperature/swell/intended length and timings of the trip and what equipment/clothing is required.

To ensure there is a record of who is on the water on a club activity, all paddlers should sign up/withdraw from the trip via this forum post rather than other means (whatsapp/messenger/email/text).

### **Beach briefing**

Every paddle will begin with a 'beach-briefing' where potential hazards will be discussed and control measures communicated. Participants should be briefed again at all key points in the trip.

This risk assessment starts with a generic template covering all the club's sea kayaking activity. Many of the control measures apply to all club activity.

Control measures that apply to **specific locations** are given after the generic risk assessment.

Control measures that could be adapted or that apply more to a **trip at a particular grade** are given right at the end in the **‘Trip grade descriptions section’** with examples of typical locations and conditions, appropriate equipment and required experience for the trip leader.

<b>Hazard/ activity</b>	<b>Risk - How might they be harmed</b>	<b>Who might be harmed</b>	<b><u>Who</u> is responsible and  <u>What</u> are we already doing to control the risks?</b>
<b>General</b>			
Late return of trip -	Due to changing conditions/illness/accident/communications failure	Leader and all paddlers	<b>Leader</b> - to ensure a shore contact is nominated and briefed and has access to shore contact procedure and list of committee contacts Shore contact procedure shared with members
Deteriorating weather conditions	Change in weather/wind/swell leading to other incidents (e.g. capsize/inability to return to start etc)	Trip leader and participants,	<b>Trip Leader</b> - to check the most up-to-date weather forecast and recheck tidal information then post a message on the forum club trips board to confirm the details and make sure that all paddlers are aware of the likely conditions. The leader should carry written notes detailing the prevailing weather, swell and tidal conditions  <b><u>Trip leader</u></b>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to have <b>alternative plan</b> or cancel event if forecast would change the grade of the trip beyond the capability of all trip members or if the trip were unable to return due to unexpected deterioration in conditions.</li> </ul>
Mist/fog/poor visibility	<p>Poor visibility means that a group can no longer navigate by sight.</p> <p>Possible disorientation and inability to follow intended course.</p> <p>Possible collision with other vessels</p>	Trip leader and participants, other water users	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b> (and preferably all other paddlers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- must carry a compass (and maybe GPS) if immediate exit from the water is not possible (ie they are not paddling within metres of the shore)</li> <li>- should organise the group so that communication is possible and paddlers stay within very close range.</li> </ul>
Lightning	Lightning strike/death	Trip leader and participants	<p><b><u>All paddlers</u></b></p> <p>Trips should NOT be started if the forecast includes thunderstorms. If the weather deteriorates into a thunderstorm the trip leaders MUST arrange for the trip to leave the water as quickly as possible and to seek appropriate shelter (preferably indoors or if nowhere else is available in a car) until the risk has finished.</p> <p>If you are in an exposed location, avoid all tall objects including trees/cliffs/telegraph poles and squat close to the ground as far as you can from the water's edge, with hands on knees and with head tucked between them. Try to touch as little of the ground with your body as possible, do not lie</p>

			down on the ground. It may help to seek lower ground or a dip or depression
Darkness (On some club trips (e.g. Weds evening paddles) the trip may end or even start in the dark - this would turn a grade A paddle into a grade B paddle.)	Paddling after dark leads to lost paddler/capsize/collision	Trip leader and participants/other water users/moored boats	<p><b><u>All Paddlers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- should wear a small, low intensity personal location light (e.g. Guardian) and paddle in a close group. Although not a legal requirement for small craft, paddlers may also have a white light attached to their kayaks.</li> <li>- be vigilant for other craft both stationary and moving and to take avoiding action</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- briefed about the need to stay as a tight group within easy verbal communication distance of the rest of the group and NEVER to leave the group without informing the leader.</li> <li>- If the group size is larger it would be advisable to split into smaller sub-groups /buddy pairs to allow communication. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Position themselves to allow close visual contact with the group and close enough to allow a quick rescue if necessary</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Leader leads a trip but lacks appropriate	An inexperienced leader may not be sufficiently trained or experienced to plan a	Trip leaders and participants	<p><b><u>All trip leaders</u></b></p> <p>should complete and submit a '<b>leaders experience record</b>' and then be approved to lead at a particular grade by the club committee (including at least two experienced paddlers who lead trips at a grade above the paddle</p>

experience for trip/conditions	safe route/make appropriate judgements/able to control the group or carry out/supervise rescues leading to risk to the group and themselves		so are able to make a qualified judgement about the leader's experience level)
Inexperienced paddlers	An inexperienced paddler finds themselves in conditions that lead to exhaustion/sea-sickness/medical issues/capsize/panic.	Leader/participants/other water users	<b>Trip Leader</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to ensure at the stage of accepting paddlers onto the paddle via the forum that they have the appropriate experience and skills for the grade of paddle they are joining. This should be through previous first-hand experience for grade C/D paddles or by consultation with an experienced paddler who has that experience</li> <li>- to make sure that the description of conditions/route/length of trip is clear both at the initial posting of the trip and at the beach briefing.</li> </ul>
Expected leader is ill or cannot lead the paddle	If another leader steps in they may not have the appropriate skills and experience to safely lead the trip	Trip leader and participants, other water users	Any substitution of a leader for a club trip must be agreed by the club committee before the trip launches.

Paddlers decide to continue with a trip as a 'peer paddle	they may not have the appropriate skills and experience to safely lead the trip	Leaders, Participants and other water users	<p><b>Trip leader / co-leader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- should clearly communicate to all paddlers on the forum post that this is <b>no longer a trip that is sanctioned by and safety assured by the club and no longer insured.</b></li> </ul>
Group size too large	A group that is too large for the nature of the trip may increase the risk of a paddler becoming lost or separated from help if they get into difficulty.	Trip leader and participants	<p>Trip leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure that grade A and B paddles have a ratio of 1 leader to 6 participants and grade C and D have 1 leader to 4 participants.</li> <li>- should be aware that Grade A/B paddles may exceed 6 paddlers if an experienced second is also paddling</li> <li>- Ensure that for grade C and D paddles the club's recommended group size 8 or fewer as long as a suitably experienced co-leader is taken.</li> </ul> <p>- Should ensure that without a nominated co-leader C/D groups are restricted to 1:4</p> <p>- the group size may be extended beyond 8 (check with the committee) if the conditions are appropriate and enough suitably experienced co-leaders are present to keep a ratio of 1 leader: 4 paddlers</p>
The group becomes widely spread out and lacks	The risk of a paddler becoming separated which means they cannot access help quickly.	Leaders, Participants and other water users	<p><b>Trip leader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For open-crossings or rougher water the group may split into manageable 'sub-groups' each led by a co-leader. In this case the plan should be clearly communicated to all prior to launch.</li> </ul>

group cohesion			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paddlers to be briefed before each section of the paddle about the need to stay as a tight group within easy verbal communication distance of the rest of the group and <b>NEVER</b> to leave the group.</li> <li>- be positioned to allow close visual/communication contact with the group and close enough to allow a quick rescue if necessary</li> <li>- Brief paddlers about how particular hazards are to be passed/avoided (e.g. headlands/moving water/waves around rocks) the group should proceed as a group so all are visible.</li> <li>- give clear directions about the route to the next waypoint and may assign roles to paddlers to lead /follow the group and stop at that waypoint.</li> </ul>
Lost paddler	A paddler separated from the group may not be able to carry out a self-rescue or obtain assistance if an incident occurs.	Leader and participants	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to make sure that paddlers are fully aware of the trip plan, launch and landing sites and the direction and speed of tidal flow on the route.</li> <li>- During beach-briefing paddlers should all be made aware that they <b>MUST</b> stay with the group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Carry written notes as a record of the intended route on a chart/map. This will mean that other paddlers can be easily made aware of the planned route and emergency services can be made aware of the accurate location.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><u>Participants</u></b></p>

			Read participant checklist - if possible carry your own map/chart/compass and communication and make yourself aware of the trip details during briefings
Capsize	If a paddler capsizes the group must have practised and be aware of their roles in the rescue.	Trip leader and participants	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- always instruct the group during beach briefing about the procedure for capsize and who will perform the rescue.</li> </ul> <p>At grade A - make sure all paddlers can perform wet exit.</p> <p><b><u>At all grades</u></b></p> <p>Hold onto your boat and raise paddle in the air and shout.</p> <p>Rest of group to stay <b>closely-grouped close to the rescue during rescue.</b></p> <p>Leader to have recently demonstrated proficiency and be well-practiced in wet-exit/assisted rescues (e.g. club-skills sharing session) in conditions relevant to the trip (wind/swell/current).</p> <p>Leader to be aware that rescuer's boat may need a towline to stop significant drift with tide/wind.</p> <p>Leader to have knowledge of skills of participants preferably first-hand and preferably during practice rescue sessions.</p>
Buoyancy aids not worn or are old	Drowning due to immersion	Trip leader and participants	<p><b><u>Trip leader/other paddlers</u></b></p> <p>Buoyancy aids to be worn at all times on all trips at all times (and be renewed when buoyancy has decreased with age).</p>

<p><b>Other vessels</b> - especially in the Solent area, paddles may cross the path of both large and small vessels some of which can't slow down or can't see kayakers.</p>	<p>Collision with other vessels</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants, other water users</p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b>  - to brief paddlers clearly (at beach briefing and on water when necessary) about the intended plan for crossing shipping channels/river channels or busy areas.  This should include} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- paddling as a tight group or splitting into smaller sub-groups led by a competent assistant leader.</li> <li>- Vigilance and caution by all paddlers about traffic approaching at speed from a distance.</li> <li>- Giving priority to all Other vessels</li> </ul> </p>
<p>Slippery rocks/slipways /seaweed etc</p>	<p>Slips/trips and falls – injuries to head/ankle etc</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants</p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b>  Leader to be aware and brief participants of the nature of possible launching/landing spots and to identify the safest possible landing-spots with fewer slip hazards (algae/seaweed/smooth rock etc).</p>
<p>Lifting/carrying kayaks onto car</p>	<p>Back/shoulder injury</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants</p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b>  - promotes and uses safe methods.  Two paddlers to lift kayaks onto car roof using good lifting technique to avoid bending at waist. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that Kayaks are carried by two paddlers to reduce risk of injury during lifting – especially on slippery surfaces.</li> </ul> </p>

<p>Kayaks and other equipment in crowded car parks/beaches</p>	<p>During loading/unloading kayaks another paddler or member of the public is hit by a kayak or paddle. Equipment is left in a position where it may present a trip hazard.</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants, other beach users</p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader/All paddlers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be vigilant and aware of the presence of other beach/car park users.</li> </ul>
<p>Kayaks fall off/blow off car during loading/unloading</p>	<p>Damage to people or property including cars nearby</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants, other beach/water users</p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader/all paddlers</u></b></p> <p>During breezy conditions, paddlers to make sure the equipment is safely secured on the roof immediately (working together to ensure the boat is held safely while securing</p>
<p>Rocks /surf at landing/launching site</p>	<p>Capsize and collision with rocks/groynes etc leading to injury</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants, other beach users/water users</p>	<p><b>Trip Leader</b></p> <p>-be aware of the nature of launching/landing spots and to choose a safe landing-spot appropriate to the grade of trip and paddling skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- brief paddlers accordingly about plan for launching/landing when necessary (e.g through surf, on steeply-shelving beach, off rocky-foreshore.</li> <li>-</li> </ul> <p>If a rocky landing is to be undertaken, the leader and group should be practised and briefed about safe strategy for exiting the water.</p>

			e.g Experienced paddler to launch/land first to provide safety cover on the water and to assist paddlers onto/off the beach. Another paddler to provide safety cover on the water.
Lost hatch cover/damage to kayak	Kayak no longer seaworthy and becomes swamped	Trip leader and participants,	<p>Trip leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to carry repair kit with materials that would allow a repair to a fibreglass or plastic kayak. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Epoxy resin glue</b></li> <li>- <b>Flashband/denso self-adhesive tape/surf wax</b></li> <li>- <b>Emergency hatch-cover or equivalent.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>(This is considered essential on grade C/D trips when the trip-plan may move beyond easy egress from the shore to safety)</p>
Rock-hopping – rocks!	– collision with rocks, capsize in confused or moving water around rocks	Trip leader and participants	<p><b>All paddlers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Helmets to be worn at all times.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Trip leader</b></p> <p>-briefing should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make paddlers aware that paddling near rocks can reveal unpredictable risks and that they are making a choice.</li> <li>- Paddlers to make sure that another group member has a clear view of them as they enter/leave a feature</li> <li>- Make sure that the group stays together and waits for paddlers to emerge from a feature</li> <li>- Leader to be well-practised in rescue from gullies and channels e.g. back-deck rescue, contact tow, towing swimmer using rear or front toggle</li> <li>- Be satisfied that other paddlers have practised rescues sufficiently</li> </ul>

<p>Tide-race play and surf/moving water (grade C/D trips only)</p>	<p>Capsize, separation from boat leading to difficult rescue scenarios that escalate to become dangerous</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants, other water users</p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b> Identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Location of eddy currents and locate 'safe' spots to rest</li> <li>- Keep an adequate distance to avoid other paddlers to avoid collision.</li> <li>- A plan to ensure no paddler becomes separated from the group. This may be to 'buddy-up' padding in sub-groups of 2 or 3 with one paddler providing a safety overview from an eddy.</li> <li>- <b>Ensure helmets are to be worn</b> in case of collision or need for rescue in waves.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Leader and all paddlers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>to be vigilant about the presence of other craft (including yachts, powerboats as well as other kayaks.</b></li> </ul>
<p>Surf play (grade B/C/D)</p>	<p>Capsize, separation from boat, boat collides with other paddlers/swimmers/ paddler surfs upside down and hits head on rocks</p> <p>rip currents</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants, other beach/water users/surfers/ swimmers</p>	<p><b><u>All paddlers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Helmets to be worn</b> at all times in surf</li> <li>- Surf etiquette. One paddler on a wave section - priority to the paddler taking off nearest to the peak.</li> <li>- Exercise caution to avoid collision with boats heading out to sea.</li> </ul> <p><b>Trip Leader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to brief paddlers about surf etiquette and hazards specific to surf including:</li> <li>- Choose a location that avoids areas used by other water-users (e.g. surfers/swimmers/body-boarders)</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In larger surf (grade C/D) on some beaches rip currents may be present which would endanger a paddler out of their boat. This should be identified and briefed to the group</li> </ul>
Ongoing chronic Medical conditions (eg asthma/allergies/angina/diabetes)	Paddler becomes unwell during the trip and this jeopardises the safe completion of the trip.	Trip leader and participants	<p><b><u>All paddlers</u></b> Paddlers MUST make leader (and other paddlers if necessary) aware of their condition and location of medicine (inhaler/epipen/GTN spray for angina/dextrose for diabetes).</p> <p><b><u>Trip Leader</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- should enquire at beach briefing if there are any medical issues and where medication is kept.</li> </ul> <p><b>Leader or another paddler</b> should ideally have recent (within 3 years) first-aid training (e.g. 16 hour outdoor first-aid) and all the group should be aware of which other paddlers are similarly trained.</p>
Exhaustion	Could delay trip make it hard to complete the trip safely for all paddlers	Trip leader and participants,	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b> Spare food to be carried in case of tiredness/hunger. Leader to be aware of paddlers range and endurance from first-hand experience or discussion prior to signing them up on trip. Leader and other paddlers (at grade C/D to carry towlines) and be practiced at inline towing/supported tows</p>
Sea-sickness (or other incapacitating illness that	An ill paddler requires supported tow or rest on the beach and this makes it harder to complete the paddle	Trip leader and participants	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b> Paddlers to be briefed as follows (beach briefing and participant checklist)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leader to check health and fitness of all paddlers on the day and be aware of their skills and endurance before they sign-up for the paddle.</li> </ul>

develops during the trip)	within the planned timings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leader to be proficient and practiced at setting up supported tows to deal with the need to two a seasick casualty to shore without capsize.</li> <li>- Warm spare clothes carried as standard equipment for all paddles</li> <li>- Emergency shelter carried as standard leader equipment on grade C and D paddles (and maybe B grade paddles if deemed advisable due to weather/location)</li> <li>- Leader to include the following instructions in trip briefing:  "Communicate honestly, clearly and at an early stage how you are feeling about the conditions and your own health and energy levels. If you feel fatigued, anxious about the conditions or seasick it is important to tell the leader immediately.</li> </ul>
Head injury during rescue	In swell especially there is a risk that a kayaker may sustain a blow to the head from their own or a rescuing kayak	Trip leader and participants,	<p><b>All paddlers</b>  Paddlers to be briefed prior to trip as to whether helmets will be essential or advisory e.g the trip-plan will include swell and or rocks. Leader to instruct paddlers to don helmets when necessary  And suggest that helmets are carried for grade C/D trips as a matter of course in case of deteriorating conditions.</p>
Minor incident/illness /injury develops into more serious situation	If an incident occurs it could develop and jeopardise the safe completion of the trip (even if it seems minor at the time)	Trip leader and participants,	<p>Leader or another paddler should ideally have recent (within 3 years) first-aid training (e.g. 16 hour outdoor first-aid) and all the group should be aware of which other paddlers are similarly trained.  Leader to carry a first aid kit.</p> <p>This may be extended to personnel at the NCI (National Coastwatch institution) observation posts on channel 65 in the area. This procedure</p>

			<p>will make the coastguard aware of your location in case further assistance is required in case it is reported is made by other boat users/walkers etc</p> <p>Following any minor incident that may develop (e.g. towing a seasick paddler) the trip leader should contact the coastguard and make them aware of the situation. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seasickness/exhaustion/medical incident <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for a tow</li> <li>- Broken/lost equipment</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The coastguard should be informed when the trip is completed.</p>
Cold water/weather /immersion/in appropriate paddle clothing	Hypothermia - major medical emergency.	Trip leader and participants,	<p><b>All paddlers</b></p> <p>to wear clothing appropriate to the season, water-temperature weather and conditions and ensure that they carry</p> <p><b>Trip leader</b></p> <p>Paddlers to be briefed prior to the trip (beach briefing, forum posting and participant checklist) to carry appropriate spare clothing to deal with changes in the conditions. This should include warm clothes to wear during rest-breaks to avoid cooling down.</p> <p>- to be satisfied before launch that all paddlers are appropriately dressed for the conditions.</p>
Sunburn/dehydration		Trip leader and participants,	<p><b><u>All paddlers and leader</u></b></p> <p>Participant checklist/leader's briefing to remind paddlers of need to carry and use sunscreen and plenty of fluids.</p>

Need for Towing	Exhaustion/minor injury/illness (not requiring emergency measures) requiring a tow over some distance	Trip leader and participants,	<p>Trip leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Towline and knife to be carried by. At briefing all paddlers to be made aware of who is carrying a towline.</li> <li>-</li> <li>- Leader to be proficient and practiced (eg club skills session) at towing (and releasing tow underwater) using a long towline/supported tow/inline tow in the conditions relevant to the trip and to be aware of the proficiency of other paddlers.</li> </ul>
Major injury/cardiac arrest/anaphyl axis	If group is not self-sufficient in first aid/equipment until emergency services arrive,	Trip leader and participants/other water users/other beach users	<p><b>Trip leader</b>  Outside help should be summoned immediately through 999 call / MAYDAY broadcast on channel 16.</p> <p>Leader or another paddler should ideally have recent (within 3 years) first-aid training (e.g. 16 hour outdoor first-aid) and all the group should be aware of which other paddlers are similarly trained.</p> <p>First-aid kit to be carried by leader – contents to include appropriate bandages for bleeding/burns and traumatic bleeding.</p> <p><b>300 mg dissolving aspirin to be carried in case of suspected heart attack/chest pain</b></p>
Coastguard unaware of location of group in emergency (eg	Communication with coastguard (and NCI and RYA safetrx) before trip	Trip leader and participants,	<p><b>Trip leader</b>  A shore contact who knows the anticipated time of return MUST be established before the trip.</p> <p><b>Trip leader</b></p>

<p>group not returned on time)</p>			<p>Make sure the coastguard know where the group is BEFORE a minor incident develops further (eg before the trip).  The trip leader may decide on certain trips to make the coastguard (and maybe NCI) aware of a trip plan and other details prior to launch . This should <b>MUST</b> happen for longer open crossings (Lundy crossing/Chalk-to-chalk) and is a sensible precaution for all trips where the party is in an exposed or isolated location (e.g. Needles-Freshwater). The leader may also decide to use RYA safetrx to log the course taken by the group in case of incident.</p>
<p>Emergency requiring urgent assistance</p>	<p>Paddlers need to communication in emergency</p>	<p>Trip leader and participants,</p>	<p><b>Trip Leader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>to carry at least one communication device</b> appropriate to location and grade of trip.</li> </ul> <p>Unless the leader is incapacitated, communication to the coastguard should be their responsibility unless they clearly delegate that role to another.  If a VHF radio is carried the user should be appropriately trained in it's use (and have a licence).  Grade A This could be <b>VHF or mobile phone</b>.</p> <p>Grade B This could be <b>VHF or mobile phone</b>.</p> <p>Grade C/D This <b>must include</b> VHF  Leaders on grade B/C/D trips will also choose to carry other forms of communication e.g. mobile phone,</p>

			<p>personal locator beacon/emergency pyrotechnic flares/electronic flare/emergency light.</p> <p>They should be aware of the recommended use and dangers of pyrotechnic flares (which are no longer recommended by the RYA for small craft).</p> <p>All paddlers to be briefed about location of emergency communication and devices within the group.</p>
Major incident /emergency	Emergency evacuation/search and rescue needs to know how many paddlers are on the water and who they are	Trip leader and participants,	<p><b>Trip leader</b></p> <p>A designated shore contact who knows the expected time of return should be established and noted on the forum post</p> <p>(eg spouse/partner/family or possible a committee member or other club member e.g. club chair Justin Davis 07729991401)</p> <p>The trip leader is responsible for making sure that a shore contact is aware of the identity and number of paddlers on the water and their identities</p> <p>The club's established way to do this is by using the forum club-trips board.  <b>ALL PADDLERS MUST SIGN UP FOR THE TRIP USING THE FORUM.</b></p> <p>This will mean that the club can access information about who is on the trip. The trip-leader is responsible for making sure that the list is correct and updated with any late changes. Participants MUST SUPPORT this process by communicating via the forum if they can't make the trip (as well as by other means if necessary).</p>

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**Additional control measures for specific locations in Hampshire and Dorset**

**Beaulieu river – Bucklers hard to Coastguard cottages GRADE A (B in dark)**

<b>Hazard/activity</b>	<b>Risk - How might they be harmed</b>	<b>Who might be harmed</b>	<b><u>Who</u> is responsible and <u>What</u> are we already doing to control the risks?</b>
Kayaks and equipment	Trip hazards	Pedestrians and other boaters/paddlers	Brief group of paddlers about the need to keep the path clear of kayaking equipment
Bucklers Hard Slipway	Slippery surface - falls	NFKCC paddlers	Brief group of paddlers about the slip hazard – use the foreshore instead
Boat traffic at Bucklers Hard	Collisions	NFKCC paddlers and other boat users	Brief group of paddlers about the need to watch out for yachts using the Beaulieu river and keep to the edge of the navigation channel .

Tidal flow near slipway and other pontoons	Kayak/paddler trapped against pontoon	NFKCC paddlers	Brief paddlers to hold position away from the pontoons South of slipway
Choppy water near mouth of Beaulieu river (wind against tide)	Inexperienced paddlers – capsize in unexpected choppy water	NFKCC paddlers (particularly less experienced)	Brief paddlers about expected change of conditions when reaching the mouth of the river
Night paddling on the Beaulieu river – collisions with moored/moving vessels	Collision leading to capsize/ separated paddler capsize or	NFKCC paddlers and other boat users	Paddlers should use a low intensity personal light attached to their BA. Brief paddlers about the need to avoid moored boats and pontoons and buddy up during darkness.

## 2. Calshot Activities centre to Lepe Country park (coastal paddle) (Grade B)

Hazard/activity	Risk - How might they be harmed	Who might be harmed	<u>Who is responsible</u> and <u>What are we already doing to control the risks?</u>
Ship/yacht traffic from/to Southampton Water	Collision/capsize/injury	Paddlers and other boat users	Trip leader – plan a route that avoids entering the shipping channel East of Calshot spit.  Brief participants about intended route.
Rough/faster-moving water East of Calshot spit and Lepe spit (wind over tide conditions)	Capsize	Paddlers	<b><u>Brief participants about the expected change in conditions as they head West from Calshot spit over Lepe spit</u></b>
Offshore current East of Lepe spit	Capsize	Paddlers	<b><u>Brief participants about the tidal stream (ebb tide) that flows strongly offshore.</u></b>
Windsurfers/kitesurfers/swimmers	Collision and injury	Paddlers and other water users	<b><u>Brief paddlers to avoid and be aware of other water users – particularly in choppy conditions</u></b>

**3. Eastern Solent - Wootton Creek – Hillhead – Solent Forts - Bembridge – Portsmouth  
(Grade C)**

<b>Hazard/activity</b>	<b>Risk - How might they be harmed</b>	<b>Who might be harmed</b>	<b><u>Who</u> is responsible and <u>What</u> are we already doing to control the risks?</b>
<b>Ships</b>	<b>Collision /injury</b>	<b>Paddlers/other boat users</b>	<b>Trip leaders should plan a course that spends minimum time in the main shipping channel. Listen on channel 12 and keep a vigilant watch for large vessels entering and leaving the East solent area.</b>
<b>Ferry/hovercraft/yacht traffic</b>	<b>Collision /injury</b>	<b>Paddlers/other boat users</b>	<b>Trip leaders and all paddlers should keep a vigilant watch for the Wootton Creek ferry crossing to Portsmouth and Hovercraft crossing between Ryde and Portsmouth and yachts in the area. Allow boats to cross safely.</b>
<b>Strong tidal flow/eddies</b>	<b>Capsize/injury</b>	<b>paddlers</b>	Trip leader – make group aware that strong tides and therefore significant eddies form around the Solent forts and near the North Sturbridge buoy which create choppy conditions.
<b>Crossing Portsmouth harbour entrance</b>	<b>Collision /injury</b>	<b>Paddlers/other boat users</b>	Trip leader - contact QHM (Queen’s harbour master) on VHF channel 11 to ask for permission to cross the entrance to the harbour.  To enter Portsmouth harbour Kayaks should use the small boat channel on the West of the entrance

**2. Eastern Solent - Lepe beach – Cowes - Medina river- Gurnard - Wootton Creek  
(Grade C)**

<b>Hazard/activity</b>	<b>Risk - How might they be harmed</b>	<b>Who might be harmed</b>	<b><u>Who is responsible</u> and <u>What are we already doing to control the risks?</u></b>
<b>Precautionary Zone</b>	<b>Collision/injury</b>	<b>Paddlers/other boat users</b>	<b>Trip leader</b> – plan a course that avoids entering the precautionary zone (marked with red boundary on imray chart). Keep a constant watch for ships approaching from Southampton water or from the Eastern and Western Solent
<b>Cowes Harbour entrance/red jet/Red funnel ferry</b>	<b>Collision/injury</b>	<b>Paddlers/other boat users</b>	<b>Trip leader</b> – Brief paddlers to cross the harbour entrance as a group, waiting for a gap in the yacht/ship traffic. Be aware that the Red-jet, Red funnel ferries or other vessels may move at any time.
<b>Strong tidal flow</b>	<b>Capsize – leading to collision/injury</b>	<b>Paddlers/other boat users</b>	<b>Trip leader</b> – brief group about the strong currents (up to 3kts) that flow across the harbour entrance and near pontoons leading to choppy conditions
<b>Gurnard Ledge – strong tides and tide-race</b>	<b>Capsize/injury</b>	<b>paddlers</b>	<b>Trip leader</b> – brief paddlers about the choppy conditions expected North of the beach at Gurnard especially in wind over tide conditions (eg SW wind against ebb tide)

Wootton ferry	collision	Paddlers/other bot users	<u>Trip leader – brief paddlers about the possibility of imminent arrival /departure of the feffy from Wootton Creek</u>
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**Western Solent - Lepe beach – Newtown Creek - Yarmouth**

Hazard/activity	Risk - How might they be harmed	Who might be harmed	<u>Who is responsible</u> and <u>What are we already doing to control the risks?</u>
Carrying kayaks to the water	Trips Collision with other beach-users	Other beach-users,	All participants Be aware of other beach-users, children etc
Launching/landing at Lepe beach	Collision with other water/beach users	Other beach-users, swimmers, wind-surfers, paddleboarders	<u>All participants</u> Exercise caution when approaching/leaving the beach, especially in windy/choppy conditions. Swimmers may be hard to see even in small chop
Beaulieu river entrance	Collision with yachts	Participants/other water users	<u>Trip leader</u> Brief group about traffic entering/leaving the Beaulieu river especially in the marked channel.
Commercial vessels Yacht/motor cruiser traffic in Western Solent	Collision with yachts	Participants/other water users	<u>Trip leader</u> Brief group about the need for a tight group when moving across the Solent on busy days, even well outside the shipping lane. When crossing the shipping lane take the route that crosses as quickly as possible.

<b>Lymington-Yarmouth Wightlink ferry</b>	<b>Collision with ferry</b>	<b>Participants/</b>	<u><b>Trip leader</b></u> <b>Brief group about the need for a tight group when approaching Yarmouth and to wait for the ferry to cross before entering the harbour entrance. Be aware and take account of strong tidal flows past Yarmouth</b>
<b>Hamstead ledge and Black Rock reefs/tide races</b>	<b>Capsize</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<u><b>Trip leader</b></u> <b>Brief participants about the possible area of rough water around the green Black Rock channel marker West of Yarmouth and the hamstead ledge green buoy North of the Newtown Creek entrance</b>

### 3. Western Solent – Yarmouth/Keyhaven Marshes/Lymington

Hazard/activity	Risk - How might they be harmed	Who might be harmed	<u>Who</u> is responsible and <u>What</u> are we already doing to control the risks?
Strong tidal flows/rough water in wind against tide	Capsize	Participants	<u>Trip leader</u> Brief group about rough water and waves to be found particularly around the Lymington Bank red channel marker.
Strong tidal flows towards Hurst gap	Capsize	Participants	<u>Trip leader</u> Move as a tight group on an appropriate heading to stay East of the entrance to Hurst Narrows. If the tide-race is to be avoided, it is advised to cross the shipping lane well East of Lymington
Traffic in Keyhaven marshes	Collision	Participants/ other water-users	<u>Trip leader</u> Brief participants to be aware and give way to the Hurst Castle ferry and other vessels moving in the Channels through the marshes

#### 4. Keyhaven – Needles

Hazard/activity	Risk - How might they be harmed	Who might be harmed	<b><u>Who is responsible</u> and</b> <b><u>What are we already doing to control the risks?</u></b>
<b>Launching through Shore break/rocks on ocean side of spit/Strong tidal flows to East/West</b>	<b>Capsize</b>	<b>participants</b>	<b><u>Trip leader</u></b> If there is any shorebreak, ask an experienced paddler to launch first to provide rescue/cover as the group launches. Brief paddlers to group up and stay inshore out of the strong East or West flowing currents.
<b>Traffic in Keyhaven marshes</b>	<b>Collision</b>	<b>Participants/ other water-users</b>	<b><u>Trip leader</u></b> Brief participants to be aware and give way to the Hurst Castle ferry and other vessels moving in the Channels through the marshes
<b>Entering Hurst gap via the marshes - rough fast-moving water/tide race on ebb</b>	<b>capsize</b>	<b>participants</b>	<b><u>Trip leader</u></b> Brief group about the strategy for crossing/entering the tide-race. Be aware of a fast South-flowing stream as you round the end of the spit with wave-trains and rough water. Appoint more experienced paddlers to go first/last and possibly use the inshore eddy to re-group.

<p><b>Hurst tide-race</b></p>	<p><b>Capsize/collision</b></p>	<p><b>participants</b></p>	<p><b><u>Trip-leader</u></b>  Brief group on strategy for entering the tide-race. Brief on the need to avoid collision if surfing. Wear helmets.  This may involve ‘buddying up’ in pairs, or appointing front and back-markers. Outline a ‘secure area’ for paddlers to remain, using the inshore eddy near the castle as a ‘rest-zone’.</p>
<p><b>Boat/ship traffic through Hurst Narrows</b></p>	<p><b>Collision</b></p>	<p><b>Participants/ other water-users</b></p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b>  Brief group on strategy for crossing to the Isle of Wight to stay out of the shipping lane eg head East of tide-race towards fort Albert then turn South-West towards the Needles South of Warden green buoy or Travel offshore from NE Shingles cardinal – red Mid-Shingles buoy before Crossing towards Alum bay.</p>
<p><b>Shingles bank /waves/fast tidal flows and confused water (West of NE Shingles Cardinal - Mid-shingles (red)-shingles elbow (red) - SW Shingles (red)</b></p>	<p><b>Capsize</b></p>	<p><b>Participants</b></p>	<p><b><u>Trip leader</u></b>  Be aware of the possibility of large <b>breaking waves and fast currents</b> over the shallow shingle banks and plan accordingly when there is any swell at all. Brief paddlers about the hazard and capsize procedures if this route is taken.</p>

<b>Needles races Ebb tide and flood tide – very rough/confus ed water through gaps and to West of the Needles reef</b>	<b>Capsize/collisi on with rocks</b>	<b>participants</b>	<u>Trip leader</u> Take careful account of the skill level, knowledge and experience of your group when planning any trip round the Needles. Brief paddlers about strategy/capsize procedure for crossing the very shallow reefs between the Needles rocks and around the base of the lighthouse. These can cause unexpected breaking waves. Fast-flowing water through the gaps leads to wave-trains on flood and ebb when there is any swell.
<b>Scratchells bay – shore break</b>	<b>Capsize/separa ted kayak and paddler/ rockfalls</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<u>Trip leader</u> Exercise caution when deciding to land at Scratchell’s bay. Even a small SW swell can lead to significant dumping waves on a steep shingle beach. Brief paddlers about a safe order for coming ashore.

### 5. Needles - Freshwater

<b>Hazard/activi ty</b>	<b>Risk - How might they be harmed</b>	<b>Who might be harmed</b>	<b><u>Who</u> is responsible and  <u>What</u> are we already doing to control the risks?</b>
<b>Exposed coastline with no</b>			<u>Trip-leader</u> Exercise caution before taking any group from the Needles to Freshwater taking into account wind/swell and group experience/fitness

<b>egress/access, SW sea-breeze in Summer</b>			
<b>clapotis, breaking waves over isolated rocks</b>	<b>Capsize/collision with rocks</b>	<b>participants</b>	<u>Trip Leader</u> Brief paddlers about large clapotis near the steep cliffs between Scratchell's bay and pepper rock. Make sure paddlers are aware of the hazards and briefed about capsize procedure.
<b>Breaking waves over reefs to the East and West ends of Freshwater beach.</b>	<b>Capsize/collision with rocks</b>	<b>participants</b>	<u>Trip-leader</u> Brief paddlers to stay well offshore if any groundswell is present, it is less likely to form breaking waves at the centre of the beach although this can happen. Brief on strategy for launching and landing appointing experienced paddler to act as safety cover.

### **Club trip grade descriptions**

#### **Grade A trip - limits of operation**

General club paddle on sheltered water with light wind F3 or less). Open to all paddlers in the club. A leisurely trip with plenty of stops, scenery, etc. Not a strenuous outing, but hopefully good fun... (if the wind is stronger or finishes in darkness this would become a grade B trip).

**Examples:** Beaulieu river from Bucklers Hard to Beaulieu river

Hamble river Swanwick to Curbridge

Itchen Bridge to Woodmill

### Equipment

A club trip at grade A would be expected to carry **at least** a mobile phone, towline, spare paddle and a first-aid kit and spare warm clothing. If the trip might involve paddling after dark, paddlers should carry a light - this would turn a grade A trip into a grade B trip.

### Leaders

*The leader should always have experience of paddling in conditions more severe than the trip they are leading. The leader could:*

Hold a touring/ sea kayak award/be qualified at BC 'Sea kayak leader' level (or above).

***or***

The leader has extensive recent experience of paddling in level A conditions in the location and experience of leading groups of paddlers in the possible conditions. The leader can demonstrate an assisted rescue and how to tow another paddler (e.g. in club rescue practice sessions).

Ideally, the leader is first-aid qualified (at least the 8 hour outdoor course) within the last three years and has completed the BC online safeguarding training.

### **Grade B trip - limits of operation**

Generally coastal paddles staying close to shore - potentially some slightly choppy seas, wind below force 4, tide approx 2 knots max. Plenty of opportunity for landing and resting. You are not required to be able to roll or self-rescue. These trips **will not** involve open crossings (e.g to the isle of Wight). It will be specified if any specific previous experience is required.

It is helpful if participants have practiced rescue and towing techniques and some may carry their own towline.

**Examples:**

Lepe to Calshot, Lymington-Keyhaven, Lymington – Lepe

Hillhead-Gilkicker point, Warsash – Hillhead, Poole harbour,

Eling-Hythe (although this is a busy shipping/boating area and the leader/participants should be vigilant about shipping movements and other smaller craft)

Equipment

A club trip at grade B would be expected to carry at least a mobile phone, first-aid kit, towline, spare paddle and spare warm clothing. If the trip might involve paddling after dark, paddlers should carry a light.

The leader may also decide to carry a VHF radio and an emergency shelter under certain conditions.

Leaders

*The leader should always have experience of paddling at the grade above the trip they are leading. The leader could:*

Hold a touring/ sea kayak award/be qualified at BC 'Sea kayak leader' level (or above).

***or***

The leader has extensive recent experience of paddling in level C conditions in the location and extensive experience of leading groups of paddlers in the possible conditions. The leader can demonstrate current skills in essential rescue/towing skills (e.g. in club rescue practice sessions). They may have completed the BC sea kayak leader training and the coastal navigation/ tidal planning courses or have extensive experience of planning trips close to the shore in tidal conditions in this location.

Ideally, the leader is first-aid qualified (at least the 8 hour outdoor course) within the last three years and has completed the BC online safeguarding training.

### **Grade C trip - limits of operation**

More testing/advanced conditions or longer paddles where paddle fitness is important. Potentially some choppy seas, wind force 4 or less, tide approx. 2 knots max. Swell up to 1m. Longer gaps (up to 2Nm) between landing opportunities (more committing paddles) with the potential for more difficult landings and some moderate surf on some trips. All trips across the Solent to the Isle of Wight will be at this level or higher due to the strong tidal flow in the Solent.

NB A trip to the Needles on the Isle of Wight could also expose a group to local stretches of fast-moving water (up to 4kts on Springs) through Hurst gap and also at the Needles race which would make it a grade D trip.

Paddlers on the trip would be well known to the leader who would have knowledge of their paddling skills before the trip. They would have recently practiced rescue and towing techniques and **MUST** be able to re-enter their boat in an assisted rescue in the conditions described.

Participants **MUST** carry their own towline.

## Leaders

*The leader should always have experience of paddling in conditions more severe than the trip they are leading. The leader could be*

Qualified at BC 'Sea kayak leader' level

## **Or**

The leader has extensive recent experience of paddling in level C conditions in the location and extensive experience of planning trips and leading groups of paddlers in the possible conditions in the location. The leader can demonstrate a high level of current skills in essential rescue/towing skills (e.g. in club rescue practice sessions). They are likely to have completed the BC sea kayak leader training and coastal navigation/tidal planning courses.

Ideally, the leader is first-aid qualified (e.g 16 hour outdoor course) within the last three years and has completed the BC online safeguarding training.

## Equipment

A club trip at grade C would be expected to carry a VHF radio as well as a secondary means of attracting attention (e.g. mobile phone/plb/flares/electronic flare) and a first-aid kit, warm spare clothing, spare paddle, kayak repair kit and emergency shelter.

## **Examples:**

Lepe to Gurnard

Lepe/Lymington/Keyhaven to Newtown Creek

Lepe to Wootton Creek

Lymington – Newtown Creek (Be vigilant as the Lymington-Yarmouth ferry operates in the area and tidal flows are strong).

Ringstead to Kimmeridge bay (F3/0.5m swell)

### **Grade D trip**

#### Participants

These trips are for advanced/experienced paddlers who are capable of looking after themselves in fairly testing conditions.

These trips may well extend beyond the technical Sea kayak leader remit (old 4\*). They may include wind at the top end of F4 or above and swell of more than 1 metre. You would be expected to have a reliable roll in 'moderate' seas (1 m waves and above), be highly proficient and well-practised at assisted rescues and towing techniques and be able to execute a self-rescue if required. The trip may involve landing through surf or paddling through tide-races. There may be extended stretches (above 2 Nm) without the opportunity to land.

Paddlers on the trip would be very well-known to the leader who would have detailed recent first-hand knowledge of their paddling skills. Participants MUST carry their own towline and are likely to carry their own vhf/plb.

#### **Examples:**

The grade D trip covers all paddles above grade C. The level of demand will depend on the wind speed/direction and tidal conditions and season and there is likely to be a high degree of 'dynamic, on-the-water' risk assessment and decision-making in addition to detailed advance trip-planning. These are possible examples

### Trips involving Tide-race conditions

Hurst gap tide-race

Needles tide-race

Peveril Point (Swanage) tide-race

Old Harry tide race

### Exposed open-crossings

Keyhaven-Needles (crossing from spit to Fort Albert)

Keyhaven Spit-Needles across Shingles bank

### Exposed stretches of coast

Needles - Freshwater

Kimmeridge – Swanage

Lulworth – Kimmeridge

### Equipment

A club trip at grade D **MUST** carry a VHF radio and other means of attracting attention (e.g. plb/flares/electronic flare) and a first-aid kit, spare paddle, repair kit, warm spare clothes and emergency shelter. It is likely that most participants would carry their own personal emergency location equipment.

## Leaders

*The leader should always have experience of paddling in conditions more severe than the trip they are leading. The leader could be:*

Qualified at British canoeing 'Advance sea leader' level

Or

Qualified at BC 'Sea kayak leader' level with significant experience of paddling in the range of level D conditions in the location and significant experience of leading groups of paddlers in the possible conditions.

Or

The leader has extensive recent experience of paddling in level D conditions in the location and extensive experience of leading groups of paddlers in the possible conditions. The leader can demonstrate a high level of current skills in essential rescue/towing skills (e.g. in club rescue practice sessions). They are likely to have completed the BC sea kayak leader training and open-water navigation/ tidal planning courses or have extensive experience of planning sea trips in tidal conditions.

Ideally, the leader is first-aid qualified (16 hour outdoor course) within the last three years and has completed the BC online safeguarding training.