



NEW FOREST KAYAK AND CANOE CLUB

NFKCC TRIP LEADER CHECKLIST

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SUMMARY

The following summary outlines some of the considerations that a club trip leader would be expected to have made prior to and during a trip. For a summary of the On the Beach items to consider go [here](#).

In any club trip (including 'peer paddles') there must be someone taking responsibility as the overall leader although **every member has a responsibility for looking after their own health & safety and that of the group**. It should not be assumed that the "leader" will always make the right decisions. If in doubt you should raise your concerns.

IMPORTANT SAFETY RULES

- Every trip should involve a **minimum of 3 paddlers**
- Grade C and D trips should have a ratio of 1 leader to 4 other participants. Grade A and B trips should have a ratio of 1 leader to 6 other participants.
- It is strongly recommended that all trips should have an **appropriate co-leader/assistant** who would be happy leading the same grade of paddle.
- Every trip should have a **designated shore contact** (this could be another member, a partner or a committee member who would be able to alert the coastguard and describe the trip plan in the event of emergency). Please share this information on the forum and with your group and follow the shore contact procedure on the forum and website.
- Every trip should have a participant with **first aid-training**. Please check with your group and make everyone aware.
- 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).

The following checklist is for club trips that appear on the forum club trips section and calendar. However, most points are relevant to ANY paddle involving club members ('eg peer paddling').

Important Safeguarding Notes

Physical contact with other paddlers

In kayak trips some situations may arise in which physical contact is required (e.g Rescue, first aid incident, rolling practice, supported tow e.t.c). Wherever possible

consent for this should be sought and given. However, all paddlers should be aware that in some real-life rescue situations this consent may have to be assumed.

Disclosure and your responsibility

If a fellow paddler were to disclose (or you become aware of) something which you feel is a safeguarding concern, please consult the club's safeguarding policies and follow the guidance there.

WHO IS ON THE WATER?

VERY IMPORTANT: Please use **ONLY** the forum for all communication about the trip – so we know who is on the water. Please don't use other communication (e.g messenger, email, text, whatsapp groups etc .

It is important for the club to know who is on the trip and the forum is where we will look for the information to access this information in an emergency.

If the plan changes (e.g. a participant can't make it or the route changes) the trip leader **MUST** make sure that either the record on the club forum is updated, or if this is not possible the shore contact is informed. This could also be a text to the club chair Justin Davis 0772 9991401.

The trip leader may also choose to leave details of the number of paddlers and the trip plan with the coastguard as well immediately before the trip leaves.

By agreeing to lead a paddle you agree to follow these procedures and guidelines. Please ensure that you consult the list before every paddle that you lead.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

The minimum requirements for a club trip at different grades are:

Equipment by Grade

Equipment	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D
Mobile phone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
VHF			Yes	Yes
Electronic/pyrotechnic flare			Yes	Yes
Light	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Compass		Yes	Yes	Yes
Map/chart		Yes	yes	Yes
Towline	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Spare paddle	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
First-aid kit (see below)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Warm pack (see below)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency shelter		Maybe	Yes	Yes
Kayak-repair kit		Maybe	Yes	Yes
Emergency hatch-covers/air bag/beach ball etc		Maybe	Yes	Yes
Spare high energy food/drink	yes	yes	yes	yes

A trip leader may well carry or advise some or all the extra equipment suggested below depending on the conditions or location. Leaders will also have personal preferences about specific items.

Leader Equipment

Communication/emergency location
Mobile phone
VHF
RYA safetrx (free mobile route tracking app)
Whistle
PLB
Electronic flare
Pyrotechnic flares
Kayak light
Personal safety equipment
Buoyancy aid
Spraydeck
Spare paddle
Personal light/waterproof headtorch
Helmet/hat/sunglasses
Knife
Navigation
Compass (deck), Compass (Hand-held)
Waterproof watch
Ordnance survey Map, Marine Chart
GPS
Rescue equipment
Towline
Stirrup pump
Short tow
Paddlefloat
Rescue sling/tape for 'stirrup rescue'

Warm pack (for injured/sea-sick/hypothermic casualty)
Emergency high energy food
Emergency shelter
Spare warm clothes/hat/gloves
Large Waterproof poncho/cagoule
Foil 'Space-blanket'
Hand-warmer
Inflatable carry-mat
First-aid kit (see below)
'Ouch-pouch'
(for on-the-water first aid – carried in deck hatch/day hatch)
Soluble aspirin (300 mg)
Trauma bandage/ambulance dressings
Kayak repair kit
Emergency filler for punctured hulls (eg Denzo tape/flashband/surf wax)
Shrink-wrap (to wrap round repaired hull)
Emergency hatch covers/beach ball/air-bag (in case of lost hatch-cover)
Multitool/allen keys/screwdriver
Cable-ties
Survival kit
In isolated locations the leader may also carry a survival kit with emergency food and fire-lighting equipment.

First Aid Kit

First aid kit
First-aid courses advise against administering any medicine except 300 mg soluble aspirin to be taken in the case of suspected symptoms of heart-attack/chest-pains (NOT FOR SUSPECTED STROKE). Other medicine is suggested for personal use only. Participants should be advised to carry their own.
All incidents
Disposable Gloves, pencil, paper/casualty record
Suspected heart attack
300 mg dissolving aspirin
Unconscious casualty
Face-shield (for CPR)
Major bleed
Trauma bandage/ambulance dressings /Large Wound Dressings
Tools
Trauma shears/scissors, tweezers, safety pins

Minor cuts/grazes
Plasters, Alcohol Wipes Gauze Swabs, Steri-strips, Melolin Wound Dressing Pads
Fractures/sprains
Triangular bandage, Crepe Bandage/Elastic Bandage, Vet-wrap/tape/Duct Tape, Splint
Burns
Burns dressing/clingfilm
Eye irritation
Sterile eyewash

PLANNING

Ensure that your trip has been approved at a **committee meeting** so you have the **committee's** authority to lead a trip at this grade in this area and in these tidal and weather conditions. Refer to the **trip grade descriptions below**.

Discuss and complete a **leader experience record** with at least two other experienced committee members to decide what grade is right. This makes sure that the club has evidence that your **recent** experience and skills practice (including first aid) are appropriate for the trip in line with advice from British Canoeing.

Important

If due to illness etc, the leader can no longer lead the paddle and another leader is to step in, the change should be agreed by at **least two** committee members who are experienced sea paddlers **and have the experience to make that judgement** – ie they **MUST have experience of leading paddles at that grade**. If this doesn't happen, the trip cannot go ahead as a calendared club trip.

It is considered good practice for all paddles and especially for more advanced paddles for the leader to also take a **second leader** with similar experience. It may be that they can step in to lead the trip as long as they are also appropriately trained/experienced and this has been agreed by the committee.

Follow the **trip planning procedure** below.

TRIP ON THE FORUM

Advertise & arrange the trip prior to the event on the forum club trips board. You may wish to advertise it on facebook, but all arrangements and signing up must be on the forum (as not everyone uses facebook).

At this stage the leader **MUST** (please!) include the statement:

'By signing up to join the trip you are agreeing to the terms on the TRIP PARTICIPANT CHECKLIST and RISK ASSESSMENT on the website'.

It may be helpful to include a link to documents on the website or the pinned forum post

At this early stage ensure that the following are clear to participants:

Approximate On/off the water timings, grade, group size, duration and length of trip, likely tidal flow and swell height, launch and landing conditions (eg

surf), essential / desirable equipment (including clothing, helmets, VHF etc as appropriate).

In line with our environmental policy, encourage paddlers to share transport where possible.

DETAILED PLANNING

Re-read the generic risk **assessment** on the forum/website and consider the safety measures your trip will need to take.

Ensure that you have **detailed knowledge** of the capability of all participants for **THIS TRIP**. This could be from **shared previous experience, discussion** with the paddler themselves or other experienced members of the club who have paddled with them. This could involve health issues, fitness, experience, skills etc. **As trip leaders we have a duty of care to find out!**

Consider contingencies for change in conditions before/during the paddle e.g.,

a. Shortening/changing the route and b. Alternative location/route

Consider **emergency plans** in the case of injury or ill-health (e.g., sea-sickness, cramp, asthma) including location of alternative landing spots/escape routes with access to public paths or roads.

Personal paddling and rescue skills

Make sure that your paddling and rescue skills are appropriate and recently practised for the grade of paddle you are leading. You should be experienced at paddling at least a grade above the paddle you are leading (or at grade D).

One or two days before the trip

Check the most up-to-date weather forecast and recheck the tidal information then post a message on the forum club trips board to confirm the details about meeting, launching, landing times etc and a clear description of the final trip plan. Confirm the list of participants and insist that if anyone cannot attend, they post this on the forum.

This will ensure that the club knows what the final format of the paddle will be and who is involved.

Give final advice about essential clothing and equipment. You also may wish to remind paddlers about food, sunscreen, spare clothing, and hydration.

Finalise your **shore contact** and make sure they have a copy (paper or email) of the shore contact policy including the list of committee contacts (see club trips page on forum)

ON THE BEACH

A summary of the tasks to consider for the trip are the following. More details follow the summary.

1. Pre-trip/beach talk
 - a. Leader's kit
 - b. Communications
 - c. Forum advertising trip & signup
2. Trip
 - a. Check health/fitness paddlers & participant kit
 - b. Double check your kit
 - c. Beach talk summary
 - i. Introduce new members
 - ii. Explain route plan and map
 - iii. Describe expected conditions, tide, key points
 - iv. Overview trip timings: on-the-water, off-the-water, snack, relief, lunch
 - v. Review Incident procedure
 - vi. Let leader know if uncomfortable at any moment
 - vii. Do not leave group w/o letting leader know
 - d. Check in with paddlers
 - e. Look after new members, buddy them up if necessary
 - f. Make sure all paddlers safely land at end
3. Post-trip
 - a. Notes/assessment
 - b. Add trip to trip list
 - c. Emergency/near miss procedure

Make sure the forum post is updated with the name of all participants and the intended route and approximate return time. Make sure your shore contact knows these details and that you have agreed **what time you will contact them to report your safe return**

Every paddle should be start with a beach briefing including:

- the leader should check that participants are carrying **appropriate** buoyancy aid (that is 'sea-worthy' and hasn't lost its buoyancy) , clothing , spray deck, spare paddles.
- check the health and fitness of paddlers on the day.

- ensure that all paddlers are made aware of details of the plan, timings, tides, expected conditions.
- remind paddlers that it is their responsibility to follow the instructions given by the leader.
- Participants **MUST** be reminded of their responsibility to need to stay **within close range** (that makes spoken communication easy) of the leader at all stages of the trip and to keep checking their position.
- Make sure that paddlers **DO NOT** leave the group without making the leader aware of what is happening (eg joining another group, landing etc).
- Make sure that paddlers know that they should never be out of sight of the group and leader. Watch each other through features when rock-hopping.
- Participants should be asked to communicate clearly how comfortable they feel at all stages of the trip (before they become unwell, fatigued or anxious).

Give paddlers a realistic idea of when they can expect a 'comfort break' and when lunch or snacks may be!

Discuss possible incident procedures

Clearly state what should happen in the case of an incident (eg capsized) e.g. stop and maintain position and await instructions. Who should do the rescue etc.

Discuss communication in the case of major incident. All communication with the coastguard/other agencies should happen through the trip leader or deputy or designated other.

A beach briefing will also be needed after breaks or lunch to discuss the next phase of the trip.

Looking after new members

If your group includes members who are new to the club, please welcome them, introduce them to the group and ensure that you share your knowledge and experience with them during the trip. If necessary, buddy up with them with another paddler.

DURING THE PADDLE

The leader should organise the paddle in such a way as to ensure the safety of the trip and to make sure that paddlers follow the guidelines given above. This should include:

- Apply the **CLAP** mnemonic: **C**ommunicate, **L**ine of sight, **A**voidance of hazards, **P**ositioning.

Ensure that the group is aware at all times of what to expect in the next stage.

Ensure that the group stays close together. This should be the same at the end and at the beginning of the paddle.

Maintain a high level of vigilance regarding the well-being of all members of the group. Be aware of how they are paddling in the conditions and use this information in your decision-making.

Ensure that the group follows the club environmental policy and that all paddlers are aware of the need to avoid damage or disturbance to plants or animals and their habitats.

Be aware of other water-users at all times and lead the group in a way that avoids hazards and takes account of local legislation (e.g. precautionary zone in the Solent, Moving exclusion zone for large vessels), prohibited landing etc . Cross all navigation channels at right angles. Alter course to clearly signal the group's intention to give way safely to yachts.

AFTER THE PADDLE

Ensure that all paddlers are safely off the water and are fit to travel home.

Contact your shore contact (see [shore contact procedure](#)) and report your safe return.

Debrief the group or individuals when necessary and make sure that all paddlers have had the chance to discuss and review any incidents that happened (capsizes, rescues etc).

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

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:

- Seasickness/exhaustion/medical incident
- Need for a tow
- Broken/lost equipment

The coastguard should be informed when the trip is completed.

This may be extended to personnel at the NCI (National Coastwatch institution) observation posts on channel 65 in the area. This procedure 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.

IMPORTANT - In case of near misses or accidents

Please complete an incident/near miss form. In case of a major emergency – follow the club's emergency procedure – see forum or website