

# Hampton Canoe Club Safety Plan

The club promotes recreational paddle-sport, focusing on touring using both kayaks and canoes. This safety plan relates principally to Club Activities but on a wider basis is intended to equip members with tools and information to paddle in a safe and responsible manner

STAYING SAFE ON AND OFF  
THE WATER

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the safety plan for Hampton Canoe Club.

It defines the different types of paddling activities that the club is involved with and how the club manages them so that they are led in a safe and responsible way.

It also covers the obligations of members to follow good practice in their preparation for, and participation in, all activities, trips and events organised by, or through, the Club.

The Club promotes recreational paddlesport, focusing on touring using both kayaks and canoes.

The Club has a tradition of running paddling trips on local waterways and sometimes further afield. The club also runs coaching sessions such as Hampton Paddler, Hampton Kayaker+, Hampton Canoeist+, British Canoeing (BC) Paddle Discover courses, other training sessions to work on paddle technique or rescues, and improvers sessions.

This Safety Plan relates principally to Club Activities such as, trips, coaching, and improver sessions but on a wider basis is intended to equip members with tools and information to paddle in a safe and responsible manner.

Club trips, coaching, and improvers training trips are delivered by members agreed by the Club and in accordance with the principles of good practice within the sport. These activities are distinct to peer-group paddles which are unled ad-hoc club member paddles.

# 2. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

## DUTY OF CARE

Even though paddlesport is an assumed risk sport all Club members owe a duty of care consistent with their age, skill, experience, and qualifications to their fellow paddlers on all trips or activities in which they participate regardless of how the trip is defined.

This includes a duty to speak out clearly if a member feels that a proposed trip is beyond his or her abilities or acceptable level of risk or beyond the abilities of another member of the party. All members should promote a Club ethos which encourages such openness.

All member should have read [Notes for Tourers \(basics\)](#) and [Notes for Tourers \(kit\)](#)

## MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Members with medical or physical conditions which could impact the safety of themselves or of other group members must disclose these to the trip leader or coach at or before the group briefing. If they are undisclosed and an incident arises relating to the condition then responsibility lies with that member.

### 3. THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PADDLING ACTIVITY

#### CLUB TRIPS

Club trips are organised by a trip leader who is adequately qualified and experienced, and who is listed on the club website. The leader has a duty of care to those participating, and the members who participate will have adequate skills, stamina, and equipment (so the leader may reject some requests to participate). Paddlers wear buoyancy aids.

Club activities are listed in the calendar on the website and information about the trip is generally emailed to club members.

Club trips generally take place on the Thames with no warning boards, or with yellow boards; the Basingstoke, Grand Union and other UK canals; or the Wey Navigation when it's open for paddling. Sometimes they go further afield. Often there's a stop for lunch – a picnic on the bank, or in a café or pub. Usually paddlers arrange to get themselves and their boat to and from the trip.

#### PEER PADDLES

Peer paddles are just that - competent paddlers going out together within their zone of competence, each taking care of themselves, with the paddlers comfortable doing the paddle without guidance or oversight from others. Nobody is the leader; the paddlers agree what the plan is but nobody will have to follow it. However, it's very, very rude to leave any group without saying goodbye<sup>1</sup>.

Some peer paddles are organised privately, others are organised through the club email or WhatsApp group.

Peer group activities do not appear in the club calendar.

**Solo paddling** is easy to organise; it can be thrilling, it can be scary, but there's no doubt who to blame if anything goes wrong! It's only for competent paddlers paddling well within their comfort zone. Three paddlers is a good minimum number for most paddling.

#### PADDLING TOGETHER TRIPS

Paddling Together trips are peer paddles for up to 5 paddlers who want a gentle outing, one that is a little tougher than an Improvers' training trip but not as tough as a club trip. These sessions take place on the Basingstoke or other UK canals or the Thames with no boards. As an indication, they are most likely between 4 and 8 miles.

There will be an experienced Aid in the group; they're there to open and close the club door, decide when to meet and send out an invitation. Aids are not there to look after the paddlers, though they're competent and kind folk who may lend a hand in an emergency. All paddlers are responsible for their own wellbeing when Paddling Together and have a duty of care towards each other. The names of Paddling Together Aids are on the website.

#### IMPROVERS' TRAINING TRIPS

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<sup>1</sup> If a paddler disappears unexpectedly, the others might dial 999 and request urgent assistance from the emergency services.

Improvers' training trips are for those who've recently completed the Hampton Paddler course. A club trip leader will organise a very gentle paddle, to give novice paddlers a chance to gain experience and stamina. The leader will be in charge and has a duty of care towards the paddlers. Sometimes there will be coaching as well. Afterwards paddlers can discuss with the leader whether they should move on to Paddling Together.

Improvers' training trips are listed in the calendar on the website and information about the trip is emailed to club members.

## 4. PADDLING ROLES AT HAMPTON CANOE CLUB

### PADDLERS/IMPROVERS

All members of the club are paddlers – that's the reason they are members. Paddlers acknowledge they are participating in a sport that has risks, so they take care to look out for themselves and – where feasible – look out for others too. Paddlers who aren't very experienced or adequately fit are Improvers – that's a badge they award themselves by looking to participate in Improvers trips. They decide when they're ready to Paddle Together or to seek to join club trips; a coach or trip leader might offer an opinion on that, or even suggest further experience or training that would be worthwhile.

Paddlers should also refer to [Notes for Tourers \(basics\)](#) and [Notes for Tourers \(kit\)](#)

### COACHES

Coaches are members of the club who have trained up to defined levels of skill in paddling and coaching, and offer their advice via coaching sessions and other activities.

All coaching must be led by a coach or Paddlesport Instructor. A coach must be recognised as a current coach by British Canoeing. Likewise, a Paddlesport Instructor must be recognised as current by British Canoeing. For example, their safeguarding training, first aid and CPD must be up-to-date and they must be a British Canoeing member.

### TRIP LEADERS

Club trips may be led by three different types of leaders:

- 1) **Professional trip leaders** who are duly qualified, usually with local knowledge.
- 2) **HCC Club members with BC qualifications leading trips within the BC remit**, as defined by their BC qualification. For example, a BC 4 Star Leader can lead trips on moderate water.

A trip leader should only lead activities on Moderate Water if they have an appropriate British Canoeing qualification to do so. This applies both to activities on the Thames on Red Boards and on the open ocean. Refer to British Canoeing "Environmental Definitions and Deployment Guidance for Instructors, Coaches and Leaders" and British Canoeing "River Thames Red Boards" documents for more information.

<https://www.britishcanoeingawarding.org.uk/guidance-documents/>

<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/River-Thames-Red-Boards-v2.pdf>

### 3) HCC Trip Leaders, recognised by HCC.

HCC's trip leaders have:

- up-to-date rescue skills<sup>2</sup>;
- a current one day first aid qualification; and
- completed BC's introductory safeguarding course (currently on-line, 30 minutes).

HCC pays the costs of the first aid, and safeguarding, training.

**HCC Trip Leaders' remit** is the Thames down to Isleworth, with no boards or yellow boards; and the Basingstoke, Grand Union and other UK canals; and the parts of the Wey Navigation that are open to paddling<sup>3</sup>.

Any coach or trip leader can lead a trip beyond the HCC remit by preparing a risk assessment and obtaining the endorsement of a coach with at least a three star qualification. Factors to be considered will include the qualifications and experience of the trip leader in the craft proposed, any limits proposed on numbers, and on the ratio of experienced to inexperienced paddlers. Once approved, the approval stands for that leader for that route. Sometimes the best approach will be for the trip to be a peer paddle with competent paddlers; once that has been successful, the next time could be a club trip.

Trip leaders considering a trip on the tidal Thames beyond Isleworth should make sure they are familiar with The Tideway Code which is published by the Port of London Authority.

A key responsibility for trip leaders is to know who's actually on the trip, eg to count the paddlers onto the water, and count them off at the end.

Trip leaders should also refer to [Notes for trip leaders](#)

**Trainee HCC trip leaders will be mentored** leading at least three club trips by a current trip leader participating in each trip. They'll be assessed on another trip by a different trip leader, who has at least one three star qualification or equivalent. HCC's Notes for Trip Leaders and Safety Plan are the reference documents for the assessment.

#### PADDLING TOGETHER AIDS

Paddling Together Aids are members of the club with at least Hampton Kayaker+, Hampton Canoeist+ qualifications, or similar, who go out with paddlers on gentle peer paddles.

## 5. RUNNING CLUB ACTIVITIES

#### CLUB TRIPS

A Trip Leader should follow the checklist of actions below or perform equivalent actions.

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<sup>2</sup> HCC trip leaders demonstrate rescue skills. They perform at least one rescue each year of each type of craft they accept on their trips; they perform at least one self-rescue each year from any type of craft from which they lead HCC trips. Each three years they attend an HCC session on Incident Management, or equivalent. 'Craft' means those that require a distinct rescue technique: K1, K2, canoe, sea kayak, white water, SUP, etc

<sup>3</sup> Usually the Wey can be paddled from Godalming to the Thames. At times of high flow, it is closed to navigation, but paddling is still safe and permitted between Town Lock and Walsham Flood gates (the Wey is a canal for this stretch).

#### Before the trip:

1. Complete a trip summary form describing the proposed trip. See Appendix A for a sample.
2. Determine the trip grading to classify the level of expertise required by participants. See Appendix E for trip gradings.
3. Complete a trip participant's form with a list of names and phone numbers. See Appendix B for a sample.
  - These documents can be stored on-line or on-paper. Medical data must not be recorded where it can be viewed by other club members.
4. Review the generic risk assessment in relation to the proposed trip.
5. For trips away from home reaches, complete a trip risk assessment which must be shared with all participants. See Appendix D for a sample.
  - Note that trips within the club's 'home' reaches, i.e. Chertsey Lock to Isleworth and all of the Wey Navigation and Basingstoke canals are covered by a single Home Waters Risk Assessment.

#### On the day of the trip:

1. Do a dynamic risk assessment and assess the river and weather conditions on arrival at the trip location (and earlier if practicable) to decide whether the trip can take place and if so whether participation must be restricted, for example, by experience.
2. Operate in accordance with the risk assessment for that stretch of water/trip.
3. Brief other assistant leaders if appropriate and brief all the paddlers on the plan for the day.
4. Verbally health-screen all participants to check if there are health issues that the group should be aware of.
5. Carry a first aid kit, a spare hat and cag, and a fully charged mobile phone.

All trip leaders must read and adhere to **Notes for Trip Leaders**. Available on the website [here](#).

#### After the trip:

1. If an incident happens during a club trip, Club Activity Leaders must complete a near miss/accident form as soon as possible, and no later than 3 days after the event.

Improvers' training trips generally run in daylight when conditions are reasonably benign with low river flows and good weather, but may run in other conditions.

The session leader will follow this checklist:

1. A few days before the session, email club members to let them know a session is running.
2. The Improvers Leader can limit the number of improvers, or ask other experienced paddlers to join them if the group size is large.
3. Check all improvers have their boats setup correctly and have a suitable paddle and buoyancy aid.
4. Check if any improvers have a medical condition.
5. Check their level of competence, if the session leader isn't already aware of it. Eg Have they paddled recently? Do they capsize often? When did they do their course/assessment?
6. Advise of current hazards on the river, especially rowing boats and fishermen.
7. Keep the group together on the water and paddle at an appropriate pace so that everyone has a safe and enjoyable outing.



## 6. PADDLING WHEN IT'S COLD, DARK OR FASTER FLOW

### PADDLING ON YELLOW BOARDS

Paddling on yellow boards is manageable for a fit paddler; going upstream can be hard work and care is needed going downstream as you can be going much faster than normal. Flow varies a lot by breadth and depth. You should be confident in your ability, and the ability of those with you.

1. Safely build up experience of how the faster flow affects paddling, steering and turning
2. Plan ahead for objects and conditions downstream from you
3. Make sure you leave enough room between you and fixed objects such as pontoons, moored boats and trees
4. If passing a weir, paddle on the opposite bank
5. Prepare for the possibility of capsize and carry a change of warm clothing, and a spare hat in your dry bag

### PADDLING AFTER DARK

Paddling after dark can be a great experience on a calm night; with the reflections of boat and streetlights it can be very tranquil. But there are a few precautions needed:

1. Put a white light fore and aft on your boat so that other boats can see you, (put them in a small clear bag if not waterproof). A head torch or light on your buoyancy aid is also very useful as the light is higher above the water and if you fall in you're easier to spot.
2. Wear reflective clothing and/or light coloured clothing. Reflective strips on your paddle are also good to catch attention.
3. Keep an extra sharp lookout for rowing boats which can be travelling very fast and their light is very low down so not always easy to see.
4. Buoyancy aids must be worn.
5. Go out with a partner so you can keep an eye on each other in case either gets into difficulty.

### PADDLING IN THE COLDER WEATHER

1. If you're unsure of your abilities, or the river conditions, paddle with a more experienced member.
2. Wear layers of quick drying clothes, a waterproof top and a warm hat.
3. Carry a change of clothes with you in a dry bag.
4. Consider buying rubber paddling boots and gloves (members have a 10% discount at Whitewater Canoes in Shepperton Marina).
5. Buoyancy aids must be worn.
6. Before setting off check the weather forecast.

## 7. FEEDBACK

Feedback after a trip or activity is encouraged, particularly if there are safety issues e.g. fallen trees cutting a particular route off. This should be by email to the trip leader and/or the Committee, as relevant.

This feedback enables the committee and members to learn from any mishaps, accidents or other problems and also to understand what went well. The committee will review the feedback when necessary.

## 8. DISCLOSURE BARRING SERVICE (DBS) SCREENING

Supervisors and relevant coaches, instructors, helpers and volunteers are subject to DBS clearance in accordance with the guidelines of British Canoeing when working with vulnerable adults or young people.

### CHILD PROTECTION AND OTHER POLICIES

The Club has adopted relevant child protection policies, that are displayed in the clubhouse, and all members must comply with these.

## 9. POTENTIAL CLAIMS ON THE BRITISH CANOEING 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY PUBLIC LIABILITY POLICY

When on club trips or during coaching all members have the benefit of the Club's 3<sup>rd</sup> party public liability insurance arranged by British Canoeing (subject to exceptions relating to coaching and leadership in a commercial context).

Through members BC 'On the Water' membership they have 3<sup>rd</sup> party public liability insurance when on peer paddles.

In the event of any incident involving non-trivial injury the trip leader or coach must complete the incident report form. These need to be submitted to the committee as well as to British Canoeing.

## 10. MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EQUIPMENT

The Club provides a wide range of boats and safety equipment for use by members.

- It is the member's responsibility to use all club equipment safely and to prevent any loss or damage. Risk of loss or damage rests with the member. The boats are fragile and should be treated gently. Always get someone to help you carry a boat if needed.
- All equipment must be cleaned and inspected prior to putting it away.
- Any defects to the equipment must be reported using the boat repair log in the clubhouse, so that it can be taken out of service until it is fixed or repaired.

**Hampton Canoe Club, Bell Hill, Hampton, Middlesex**

Trip date : 28.10.2017

Session leader: John Green

Session leader qualifications: BC 2 star, FSRT, outdoor first aid

Phone : 07798 123456

Activity : Shepperton Lock to the club

Distance: 6 miles, 1 portage

Waterway: Thames River

Get in location: Shepperton lock

Get out location: Club

Grade/difficulty of trip: Intermediate

Time to meet at club: 9am

Description : This trip is 6 miles in total, with 1 portage. There will be a coffee stop in Walton.

This part of the Thames paddled is non-tidal, but can be busy with river traffic, rowing boats and other river users. There are many overhanging trees. There is a towpath on one side which gives reasonable access along the entire length of the river. There can be a strong flow after heavy rain but this is not predicted to affect this trip. Portaging of the locks can be difficult with some high banks to negotiate so we will try to use the locks if that is possible.

Expected conditions : **River flow is low but the weather is forecast to be wet and very windy.**

Maximum Numbers : 10 adults

Timings : This trip takes about 2 hours which includes about 1.5 hours of paddling and a half hour stop for coffee.

**Hampton Canoe Club Trip Group Details**

**Date:**      **Number of people in group:**      **Number of boats in group:**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone number</b>	<b>Lift needed / offered</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

To be completed by trip leader prior to launching and carried on trip.

Medical condition data cannot be recorded on this sheet if it is held online and can be viewed by club members.

## APPENDIX C GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Hazard	Who is at Risk	Severity	Risk	Existing control measures	Further controls / other action
<b>Drowning</b>	Paddlers	High	Low	<p>It is mandatory for children under the age of 16 to wear a buoyancy aid (BA) at all times. For adults it is highly recommended that a BA is worn and for many club activities this will be stated as a requirement by the trip leader as a pre-requisite to join a club activity. Adults paddle without a BA at their own risk.</p> <p>Where paddlers chose not to wear a buoyancy aid for personal reasons it is strongly advised that you<sup>4</sup>: -                      Undertake a dynamic risk assessment, consider the environmental factors and take appropriate precautions. Being prepared and thinking ahead can eliminate many risks.                      You should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reliable self-rescue skills</li> <li>- The ability to swim</li> <li>- Checked your boat and equipment thoroughly before you set out</li> <li>- Be able to use your craft for floatation in the event of capsizing and consider if there are any measures you can take to avoid being separated from your craft</li> </ul> <p>All members have to attend either a Hampton Paddler/1 star course or an assessment to join the club; rescues are covered</p>	<p>Trip leaders/coaches assess that they and the participants are paddling within their remits.</p> <p>Trip leaders/coaches are to provide a safety briefing before getting on the water.</p> <p>Floating test and condition checks for club BAs are carried out annually.</p>

<sup>4</sup> British Canoeing Paddlesafer Feb2020

<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/Paddlesafer-V3.pdf>

				and coaches can check that members can swim in the case of capsizing.	
<b>Hypothermia/ Hyperthermia</b>	Paddlers	High	Medium	<p>Trip leader/coach to check that all participants are appropriately equipped with sufficient clothing for the prevailing weather.</p> <p>The trip leader advises participants in advance of the trip what the prevailing weather will be and what kit they need to bring via the club email.</p> <p>Advise participants to drink enough water, wear sun protection e.g. hat, sun cream if conditions are forecast to be extreme, i.e. very cold or very hot.</p> <p>Rapid cooling is required when overheating and seek medical advice.</p>	<p>Trip Leaders/coaches to carry an appropriate group shelter and survival bag in their safety kit (if the trip is remote or shelter is sparse e.g. The River Wye).</p> <p>Trip leader to carry a spare hat and cag with the first aid kit.</p> <p>Trip leader is to carry a mobile phone for emergencies.</p>
<b>Lifting (Back Injuries)</b>	Paddlers	Medium	Medium	<p>All paddlers shown correct manual handling techniques.</p> <p>Equipment stored appropriately in a safe manner.</p> <p>Junior boats to be stored on lower racks or adults to get them down from higher racks.</p>	<p>All new paddlers to be issued with guidance and advice at their first session.</p>
<b>Water pollution/ infection or illness incl. Weil's disease</b>	Paddlers	Medium	Low	<p>All open cuts/wounds must be covered up.</p> <p>Swimmers should avoid swallowing the water.</p> <p>Rescue sessions shouldn't be held after really heavy rain for a couple of days due to the run-off from the roads containing pollutants.</p> <p>Paddlers advised to wash their hands after paddling and before eating during a trip.</p> <p>Paddlers should shower at the earliest opportunity after a capsized or swim.</p>	<p>Details of Weil's disease and what to do about it to be on display on the club notice board.</p> <p>The trip leader/coach must carry a first aid kit.</p> <p>In the event of an incident, recommend that the paddler seeks medical attention.</p>
<b>Head Injuries</b>	Paddlers	High	Low	<p>Activities to be closely supervised and participants warned about dangers from paddles and activities in close proximity to the bank, obstacles and fellow paddlers.</p> <p>Trip leader/coach must ensure that helmets are worn when in white water/rocky environments or playing at the weirs.</p>	<p>All head injuries must be reported on an incident/accident form.</p> <p>Anyone suffering a head injury should seek medical attention.</p>

<b>Slips, trips and falls</b>	Paddlers Spectators	Low	Medium	<p>Wearing of suitable closed footwear with good grip to protect against stones/broken glass etc. on the river bottom.</p> <p>Use of appropriate equipment.</p> <p>Trip leader/coach to include a safety briefing of hazards and these should be dynamically assessed as the trip commences</p> <p>Provision of a first aid kit.</p>	
<b>Other river users</b>	Paddlers	Medium	Low	<p>Trip leader/coach must give a safety briefing explaining the rules of the waterway that is being paddled.</p> <p>Trip leader/coach needs to have good group control.</p> <p>An extra vigilant watch is to be kept for un-coxed rowing craft which cannot see other river users.</p> <p>Boats should be illuminated at both ends with a white light and the paddler may wear a head torch or a light on their buoyancy aid when paddling during low light or at night.</p> <p>Paddlers should all have whistles in case they need to alert another river user when verbal sounds won't be heard.</p>	<p>If an incident occurs, it needs to be reported and followed up with the other party involved if applicable.</p>
<b>Equipment</b>	Paddlers	Low	Medium	<p>Paddlers should inspect their equipment before use for any defects.</p> <p>If defects are found, equipment should be returned to the club and faults noted in the maintenance sheets for repair.</p> <p>Damaged equipment should be clearly labelled so it is not used unknowingly.</p> <p>Boats should have adequate buoyancy.</p> <p>Trip leader/coach should carry a suitable repair kit (Gaffer tape, tools if necessary, a spare rudder if multiday).</p>	
<b>Lost person/separation of the group</b>	Paddlers	Medium	Low	<p>Trip leader/coach must take good group control measures and ensure pace is suitable for group.</p> <p>Leader/coach to brief the group of the route at the start of the journey and to recap when stopping for breaks.</p> <p>Leader to ensure that contact is not lost with the back of the group.</p>	<p>Participants to have the leader's phone number and the leader to have all the participants phone numbers.</p>
	Paddlers	High	Medium	<p>Avoid disturbing the wildlife in an unnecessary manner.</p>	

<b>Wildlife (e.g. swans)</b>				In the event of seeing wildlife, do not disturb it and if possible keep a discreet distance from it.	
<b>Trees/ obstructions (bridge pillars etc.)</b>	Paddlers	High	Low	Trip leader/coach to make safe decisions when crossing upstream of fixed obstructions, such as bridge columns or islands, based on the conditions of the river. Trees should be given a wide berth. Overhanging trees such as willows should not be paddled under. Trip leader/coach should carry a knife.	Trip leaders to ensure that they are leading within their remit.
<b>Pre-existing medical conditions</b>	Paddlers	High	Low	Trip leader/coach to ask for any relevant medical conditions to be highlighted prior to the trip via email. Trip leader/coach to verbally medically screen group prior to launching. Participants should carry their own personal medication.	The club holds a list of medical conditions that can be checked if necessary.



**Sample Risk Assessment document****Hampton Canoe Club, Bell Hill, Hampton, Middlesex**

Trip date : 28.10.2017

Session leader: John Green

Session leader qualifications: BC 2 star, FSRT, outdoor first aid

Phone : 07798 123456

Activity : Autumn Tints, Boulters Lock to Marlow and return

Distance: 13 miles, 2 portages each direction

Waterway: Thames River

Get in location: Boulters lock

Get out location: Boulters lock

Grade/difficulty of trip: Intermediate

Time to meet at club: 9am

Description : HCC routinely run day trip outings on the Thames and other local waterways for club members paddling open and closed cockpit kayaks and open canoes.

This trip follows the standard model of a trip leader with one or more assistants and in this case a total of 7 paddlers all in open cockpit K1's and a K2.

This trip is 13 miles in total, launching above Boulters Lock, heading upstream, portaging Cookham lock, Marlow lock. There will be a stop in Marlow for lunch and a rest before returning to the launch point.

The part of the Thames paddled is non-tidal, but can be busy with river traffic, rowing boats and other river users. There are many overhanging trees and a towpath on one side which gives reasonable access along the entire length of the river. There can be a strong flow after heavy rain but this is not predicted to affect this trip. Portaging of the locks can be difficult with some high banks to negotiate so we will try to use the locks if that is possible.

Expected conditions: **River flow is low but the weather is forecast to be wet and very windy. If this is the case the trip may be shortened to turn around at the Bounty pub (8 miles) or at the island beyond (10 miles) as paddling back into the wind will be exhausting and cold and there can be substantial waves on the reach heading south to Boulters lock. (wind is forecast to be southerly 24 mph gusting 41mph! @13:00)**

Maximum number : 10 adults

Timings : This trip takes about 5 hours which includes up to 4 hours of paddling (with portaging) and 1 hour of stops and breaks at a cafe for rest, food and drink.

Because conditions can change at any point, the final decision rests with the Club Activity Leader as to whether the trip has to be modified, participation declined or completely cancelled for safety/operational reasons. In the event of cancellation, the Club Activity Leader must ensure that all participants fully understand the reasons for the cancellation.

Paddlers : All adult club members including one coach of widely mixed ability from recent joiner to experienced member.

**Generic Risks:**

Hazard	Is the risk adequately controlled	What further action is necessary to control the risk
Drowning	Buoyancy aids to be worn. All paddlers can swim 50m	Pre-trip briefing to warn of hazards which might cause a capsize or fall into the water
Hypothermia	All paddlers to wear appropriate clothing and to have a spare set of clothes in case of capsize	Pre-trip briefing to warn of hazards which might cause a capsize or fall into the water
River hazards	Guide all paddlers around any hazards. Keep a sharp lookout for any upcoming hazards such as weirs and float debris	Pre-trip briefing to warn of hazards
Collision with boats, bridge piers etc	Keep a sharp lookout for other boats and river traffic	Pre-trip briefing to warn of hazards
Fatigue	Ensure all paddlers are rested and eat and drink sufficiently	Pre-trip briefing and monitoring of all paddlers during the trip.

**Trip specific Risks:** Paddlers will all be briefed in advance of these specific hazards at briefings pre-launch and at the lunch break.

Hazard	Is the risk adequately controlled	What further action is necessary to control the risk
Multiple small weirs and bridges	Point these out and guide paddlers away from the hazard	
Big weir above Boulter's Lock	Point this out and guide paddlers away from the hazard	
Cookham lock and Marlow Lock	Brief paddlers on route to locks (there are many channels), look out for boats exiting and entering the lock, and outflow when lock is emptied.	If using the lock keep clear of other boats and follow lockkeepers instructions. Help paddlers with portage and launch

Marlow weir	Brief paddlers on exiting/portaging Marlow lock to keep right well away from this vast weir. And to keep left on the return	Keep clear of boats approaching the lock
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## APPENDIX E HCC TRIP GRADING

The information below is for general guidance. If in doubt, speak with one of the Club Coaches or the Trip Leader.

The Trip Leader will make the ultimate decision as to whether someone can take part in their trip. This decision will be based on numbers of interested participants, participant skill level, and river/weather conditions leading up to the day of the trip.

If you have any concerns about the trip, contact the Trip Leader in good time to discuss the plans and river/weather conditions. If you need to cancel your participation, please contact the Trip Leader as soon as possible.

Be realistic about your skill, experience, and fitness level. Remember, you might be 'paddle' fit, but trips can involve multiple or difficult portaging and therefore require a different level of stamina. You should be able to perform a self-rescue/be rescued.

Some trips may be in different craft e.g. canoes or closed cockpit kayaks and therefore members will have to be trained in those areas.

River flow should be considered before setting out on the water, e.g. yellow boards on the river Thames.

### **Clothing, equipment, hydration & nutrition**

Please ensure that you have appropriate clothing with you on the trip, which should include extra layers and something wind-proof even on the hottest day. We advise that you always take a change of dry clothes in case you capsize.

Many trips involve stopping at a local café (or pub!) along the way. However, make sure that you have sufficient food with you to last the trip.

It is very important to keep yourself hydrated during trips. Some paddles are quite gentle, but you are still expending energy and need to take on fluids.

We also advise taking the following in a dry bag:

- A basic first aid kit
- An emergency energy bar or similar
- A spare hat and a change of clothes

Please take responsibility for your own wellbeing as you cannot rely on the Trip Leader or other participants to provide items!

## Trip Grading

All HCC members are required to have passed the Hampton Paddler, BC 1 Star course, have been assessed and their skill level approved by a Club Coach, or equivalent.

All participants must follow the Trip Leader's instructions, and follow them quickly in the event of any incident.

### NOVICE GRADE

Trips are suitable for all, including new members. You will have practised rescues and be comfortable with what to do should you capsize. You should be able to paddle around three to five miles and portage at least once.

Trip examples: return trips to Sunbury Weir or Thames Ditton, and improvers sessions

### INTERMEDIATE GRADE

Trips are suitable for members who have paddled regularly and competently for some months. You will have practised rescues and be comfortable with rescuing others. You should be able to paddle up to ten miles and able to portage more than once.

Trip examples: return trip to Walton Bridge, Shepperton Lock, or Kingston

### INTERMEDIATE PLUS GRADE

Trips are suitable for members who have paddled regularly and competently for some months. You will have practised rescues and be comfortable with rescuing others. You should be able to paddle more than ten miles and be able to portage regularly. You should be comfortable in varied river/weather conditions.

Paddling skills approaching BC 2 star, Hampton Kayaker+ or Hampton Canoeist+.

Trip examples: Longer day trips such as the River Mole with tough portages or weekends away to the Wye Valley - 18+ miles, and night paddling. Any trip which has shootable weirs or rapids (helmets are highly recommended).

### ADVANCED GRADE

Trips are suitable for members who are strong and proficient paddlers, and competent and knowledgeable in rescues. You should be able to paddle more than ten miles and able to portage regularly. You should be comfortable in very challenging river/weather conditions. Paddling skills BC 2 star, Hampton Kayaker+ , Hampton Canoeist+ or above or skills approved by Club Coach or Trip Leader..

Trip examples: Longer, more technical day trips, Club holidays abroad which could include sea kayaking.