

Risk Assessment

Name of activity/ event/ location	DofE Canoe Expedition: Shore and on-water training, practice & assessed expeditions	Date of risk assessment	10 July 2020 Reviewed on 31 Mar 2023	Name of who undertook this risk assessment	Steve Hankin
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Hazard Identified? / Risks from it?	Who is at risk?	How are the risks already controlled? What extra controls are needed?	What has changed that needs to be thought about and controlled?
Unsecure trailer / roof-rack loads	Leaders & accompanying persons	Check trailer / roof-racks before travel. Experienced person to secure loads. Tow at correct speed & take extra care.	
Getting lost	Leaders & persons accompanying young people.	Ensure precise destination and recommended route are known to all beforehand. Travel in convoy where roads are less well known by drivers.	
Access / egress	Paddlers & On-shore helpers	Adequate route planning and scoping out the access and egress points ahead of the on-water activity will be undertaken, with points of access and egress clearly identified with directions and key landmarks to spot. Alternative points of egress and instructions on who to communicate with, will be identified and included in the route plan in the event that the intended one is missed.	
Poor behaviour / conduct	Paddlers	Activity carried out under Scouting Code of conduct, health and safety, welfare and safeguarding policies. Appropriately experienced and qualified Leaders in place for the activity.	
Unsafe equipment	Paddlers	Equipment checked prior to and after use, and removed from use if found to be unsafe.	
Injury from manual handling	Paddlers & On-shore helpers	Instruction in canoe handling and safe lifting techniques. Working in teams to unload/load canoes and carry heavy kit.	
Slips, trips & falls	Paddlers & On-shore helpers	Wearing of appropriate footwear and advised of likely trip hazards in the environment.	
Sprains, strains & soft-tissue injuries	Paddlers & On-shore helpers	Warm-up. Instruction in canoe handling and safe lifting techniques. Working in teams to unload/load canoes and carry heavy kit, maintaining social distancing as appropriate. Instruction in good paddle techniques.	
Insect bites, stings, blisters, minor cuts and grazes	Paddlers & On-shore helpers	First aid kit always to be available.	
Lyme disease infection from Ticks	Paddlers & On-shore helpers	Recommendation for all to check regularly for Ticks and safely remove any found. Recommendation to be made before and after outdoor activities, for checking to be done daily (whilst on expedition) and for 3-4 days afterwards.	
Infection from Leeches	Paddlers	Recommendation for all to check regularly for Leeches and safely remove any found. Recommendation to be made before and after water activities, in particular on canals.	
Burns from cooking stoves	Paddlers	Instruction in safe use of expedition stoves. First aid kit always to be available.	

Additional information can be found in the [Safety Checklist for Leaders](https://scouts.org.uk/safety) and other information at scouts.org.uk/safety

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Injury from misuse of equipment	Paddlers	Instruction in correct & safe use of all equipment. Paddlers buddy-up to check correct fitting of each others' buoyancy aid. Adequate supervision by experienced Leaders where techniques are being learnt.	
Exhaustion	Paddlers	Sessions & expedition legs planned to suit participants. Planned and ad hoc rest breaks catered for in the Route Plan. Food always available.	
Drowning	Paddlers & On-shore helpers	Wearing of buoyancy aid when on the water and bank-side. Instruction in capsize and rescue procedures. Relevant supervision for novices. Advised to keep away from bank when not wearing a BA. Throw-bag always to be available.	
Entrapment in canoe on capsize	Paddlers	Teach capsize drill and rescue procedures. Canoes are easy to exit. Appropriate footwear & clothing to be worn.	
Exposure / Hypothermia	Paddlers	Wearing of appropriate clothing, instruction in fast rescue procedures after capsize, and first aid. Means to prepare hot drinks & food always to be available. Spare clothing, emergency blanket and group shelter always to be available.	
Hyperthermia	Paddlers	Wearing of appropriate clothing and instruction in rescue techniques and first aid skills. Drinking water always to be available.	
Rocks, strainers & sweepers	Paddlers	Paddlers advised to avoid and negotiate around rocks, trees and visible obstructions that are overhanging, floating or submerged. Advised on correct action in event of entanglement with trees or pinning on rocks.	
Other water users	Paddlers	Paddlers instructed to be aware of other water users and how to take appropriate/avoiding action.	
Canal locks	Paddlers	Paddlers advised never to enter a lock.	
Poor water quality	Paddlers	Risk of Weil's Disease is considered very low but paddlers will be advised of signs & symptoms to be alert for after paddling. Paddlers advised not to ingest water and to wash/sanitise their hands after paddling. Cuts and abrasions should be covered with a waterproof plaster. Enhanced hand-hygiene from use of sanitiser in place with Covid precautions.	
Adverse weather conditions	Paddlers	Dress appropriately for conditions. Paddlers monitor themselves and others in hot and cold conditions. Paddlers are trained in rafting-up to assist with more challenging conditions on the water and to get off the water if necessary. Closeness of 'remote' supervision of paddlers by the Leaders whilst on expedition will be determined by the weather conditions. Leaders supervising the expedition will intervene and suspend the journeying if necessary.	
Equipment breakage during use	Paddlers	Equipment inspected before use. Repair kit (duck tape etc) always to be available. Spare paddle(s) carried by Leaders.	
Review due: March 2024			

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