

## **Regents Canoe Club Safety Policy**

Regents Canoe Club (the club) takes the safety of its members seriously and this safety policy outlines the structures and guidance documents the club has put in place to support its members to paddle safely and responsibly.

All these documents are reviewed annually by the management committee, or after an incident.

Any proposed amendments to this document should be presented and agreed at a Club General Meeting.

### **1. Introduction**

Kayaking and canoeing are assumed risk sports and the activities undertaken by Regents Canoe Club carry an element of risk, including injury or death. Members must make their own decisions about participation in any club activities and the club, run for the members by the members, encourages and empowers members to ask questions about the nature of any activity undertaken.

### **2. Individual responsibilities**

- All participants in club activities are responsible for their own actions and for making their own assessment of risks. If unsure, or if they have any questions or concerns it is their responsibility to raise these with committee members or experienced club members.
- All new members, and annually renewing members agree to abide by the limitations of club liability and conditions of membership as part of the joining and/or renewal process. It is the responsibility of members to keep their membership records up to date.
- As part of the joining/renewal process members are asked to read and abide by the club safety policy and the club risk assessments. It is the individual's responsibility to do this and the club cannot take responsibility for members who do not do so.
- It is the responsibility of members to tell river leaders or experienced members of any medical condition or previous injury concern that might affect their or other club members safe participation in any of the club activities.
- The club encourages members to seek further training at every opportunity, and provides subsidies for some training. It is the individual's responsibility to further their knowledge and training.
- Other individual responsibilities are highlighted in the risk assessments and additional supporting guidance documents covering the variety of activities undertaken by the club. It is the responsibility of club members to read these.

### **3. Club Activities, Risk Assessments and Supporting Guidance Documents**

The Management Committee (the committee) sets out Risk Assessments and supporting guidance documents as deemed appropriate for activities the club undertakes. These are published on the website and are reviewed annually, or after any reported incident where it is felt a review is needed.

#### **3.1 Club Trips.**

- A club trip is any kayaking or canoeing trip which is advertised through the RCC newsletter, Notes from Canalside (NfC) and which is added to the calendar on the RCC website by the committee, or otherwise agreed by the committee.
- RCC members may also organise peer paddles or other training with external providers, which are not co-ordinated, agreed or advertised by the club committee. While members can hire kit for these activities they would not be considered club trips and the club accepts no responsibility for these activities.
- A club trip can be organised by any club member, however, where appropriate an experienced paddler will oversee the on-river safety elements of the trip
- Trip organisers are sent a copy of the Club Trip Crib Sheet to ensure the key safety aspects of organising a trip are adhered to and also directing them to the Club Trip Risk Assessment, other supporting information and where to ask for additional help if required.
- There is a Club Trip Risk Assessment identifying possible risk and actions to minimise or eliminate risk. This should be read and adhered to by all members.
- The club trip crib sheet and trip risk assessment should be reviewed annually by the training and safety officer, or delegated to an appropriate person. All reviews should be signed off by the committee.
- Overseas trips need to ensure that all participants have personal insurance (extended to cover whitewater activities at the appropriate level) breakdown cover for the driving vehicles and trip organisers should collect a list of emergency contact detail for trip participants.

#### **3.2 Canal Sessions.**

- Each member when joining the club is given an introduction to the club and how to paddle at the canal safely, including an on the water session. Content of this session is outlined in the New Members Evening (NME) session notes and these sessions are run by current, active members. Each member should sign in and off the water at each session.
- The club will use its best endeavours to ensure each canal session has an allocated duty officer. The role of the Duty Officer is outlined in the Duty Officer Role Information Sheet, including what to do in an emergency. This is sent to

members with information of their duty dates and is in the duty folder on site. It is the responsibility of the duty officer to turn up and if they can't attend to organise cover. It is part of membership requirement to do duty nights at the canal session at least once a year.

- There is a duty folder at the club, with information, incident forms and contact numbers in. There is a first aid kit and a throwline.
- It is the responsibility of the safety and training officer to check, or delegate to an appropriate member, annually, that the duty folder information is up to date, the first aid kit is up to date and the NME session notes and canal risk assessment is reviewed. All reviews should be signed off by the committee.
- There is a canal session risk assessment identifying possible risk and mitigating actions. This should be read and adhered to by all members.

### **3.3 Pool Sessions**

- The Pool Sessions have an allocated duty person to assist new members with spraydeck tests and techniques for practicing independently in the pool. The rota should be made up of experienced volunteers by a committee member annually.
- There is a Pool Session Risk Assessment identifying possible risk and mitigating or eliminating actions. This should be read and adhered to by all club members. The Pool Session risk assessment should be reviewed annually by the safety and training officer or delegated to an appropriate person. All reviews should be signed off by the committee.

### **3.4 Training and Courses**

- The Club runs two introduction to White Water courses and additional 'coached' trips each year. Coached trips and the IWWK course must meet the criteria for a coached trip set out in the guidelines on the RCC website and agreed by the Safety and Training Officer.
- There is a IWWK course risk assessment. This should be read and adhered to by all club members. The Risk Assessment should be reviewed annually by the training and safety officer, or delegated to an appropriate person. All reviews should be signed off by the committee.
- The club believes that training in safety awareness and practice is essential and will endeavour to organise and promote to members appropriate courses from time to time during the year to include, First Aid, IWSR, alongside leadership and coaching courses where interest is expressed. Subsidies will be made available to club members for certain training at the discretion of the committee and according to the availability of club finances. The subsidy amount should be agreed at a General Meeting.

## **4. Equipment**

- The Club understands the importance of the safety of its kit. A kit inventory is kept along with kit purchase date and an annual check and audit of the kit is carried out.
- Kit is maintained regularly and individual club members are reminded of their responsibility to check kit for safety before use and of any faults noticed.
- Kit is a standing item at the committee meetings and monthly updates on maintenance or requirements are discussed.
- There is an Equipment Risk Assessment which should be read and adhered to by all members

## **5. Learning, Incidents and Emergency Plan**

### **5.1 Learning**

A culture of ongoing learning is embedded in the club, often undertaken informally by groups at the river via pre and post paddle group debriefs. This is encouraged. It is the individual's responsibility to listen, contribute and learn from these. Each river trip they go on to help build on the safe paddling ethos of the club, and to highlight any instances where improvements can be made.

The committee via the safety and training officer, will endeavour to keep up to date with any current safety recommendations which need to be considered in relation to RCC club safety.

All club trips require a trip report on which any on or off river learning points can be shared by the trip organiser. A leaders meeting will be organised by the club at least once a year to highlight and discuss any leadership questions or concerns and any club-wide safety updates will be circulated in NFC. A lessons learnt form is available for learning points to be shared with the club as a whole.

### **5.2 Incidents**

Any incident on a club trip or at a club session requiring hospital attendance/treatment to a club member or a near miss, should be recorded separately on an Incident Report Form, by the injured party, or their river leader as appropriate. This should then be sent to the safety and training officer at RCC. Details of any incident or injury requiring hospital attention will also be passed to British Canoeing for their records on Sports injuries and to note to the insurers in case of any resulting claim.

### **5.3 Emergency Plan**

In the event of a major incident or injury the following should take place:

- Seek medical assistance as soon as possible
- If the incident is serious or the injured person is taken to hospital in an unconscious state then the most experienced river leader should take control of the situation and liaise as appropriate with the emergency services.

- Do not discuss the incident with the media or any other body other than the emergency services. This should be relayed to the whole group.
- A member of the committee should be contacted as soon as possible to assist with accessing any next of kin details where appropriate and to contact the chair or delegated next committee member to support the river leader.
- An incident form should be filled in as soon as possible and sent to the safety officer
- The committee will then review the safety policy and risk assessment in light of the incident. They may also need to inform British Canoeing and liaise with insurers.