

## Warminster Adventure Sports club

### Paddling Standard Operating Procedure – Agreed by Committee June 2021

WASC is a thriving and supportive mixed activity club of like-minded folk interested in sharing skills and experiences in the great outdoors.

The club is British Canoeing affiliated, which provides public liability insurance, and all members receive membership of this body. Events are run under the guidelines of British Canoeing to insure that foreseeable risks are minimised.

#### **Events**

Main events are calendared on the WASC facebook page. The event description includes:

- location of event
- meeting place
- date, time and forecast length of activity
- maximum number of participants for whom the event is open
- name of the activity organiser
- standard of kayaking required to participate in the event
- any foreseen risks
- what participants need to bring
- whether participants will be expected to help move / transport equipment

All events on the Facebook page must be run by a leader, coach or instructor approved by the club. Organisers have the power to refuse members on a event, if it is deemed unsuitable for them in terms of their ability or any other appropriate factor.

Ad hoc events can also be arranged via the WASC Paddling chat group. These events may or may be organised by a leader, coach or instructor approved by the club and may not be formally calendared, thus they are not necessarily covered by the British Canoeing insurance. WASC committee members or event organisers of ad hoc events should make it known to members that these events are not covered by BC insurance.

#### **Personal Equipment**

The club will provide each member, if required, with equipment conforming to British Canoeing standards, to include:

● A buoyancy aid of correct size and capacity for the paddler ● a helmet that fits securely with adequate fastening ● a spray deck of sufficient size and fit for the boat being paddled ● a kayak or canoe of suitable shape, model and maintenance for the water being paddled ● wetsuits to fit, as available ● cags to fit, as available.

A fee of ● £2.50 for <3 hours ● £5 >3 hours ● £10 overnight hire is charged in addition to the membership fee for the use of club kayaks/canoes.

Club equipment is marked as club property.

Organisers will carry a waterproof first aid kit, which should be stored after use in the kayak trailer.

Paddling equipment is checked once per year by the equipment officer (Bill Fryer) and co-opted members/non-members, so as to be in line with BC standards. Logs of equipment checks are kept and stored. Equipment deemed unfit for use or requiring maintenance work is removed or clearly labelled.

Equipment is also checked prior to events, and any problems regarding equipment experienced during an event are reported to the equipment officer (Bill Fryer).

NOTE - Any personal equipment that is used is the owner's responsibility and the owner should ensure that it conforms to the necessary standards for the activity being undertaken. The person organizing the activity may however prevent an item of equipment being used if they feel that is unsuitable for the activity being undertaken. The club assumes no responsibility for any personal equipment used.

### **Risk Assessment**

A formal risk assessment has been carried out for paddling. Individual trips are risk assessed by the organiser, with any foreseen risks being mentioned on the calendar and at the start of the event.

### **Organisers**

All programmed trips will be led by experienced leaders, who have either received qualifications through BC, or are at a comparable level in terms of rescue training, first aid, leadership and paddling standard. Where a river is unfamiliar to a leader, this will be made known to the members, so that they are aware of the increased risk.

### **Trip Plan**

A trip plan should be completed and recorded for each event. A post event form may also be completed giving details of incidents and advise to other leaders running similar excursions.

A waterproof trip plan template and pen is stored in the kayak trailer.

### **Equipment Rental**

Club paddling equipment (including kayak/canoe, pfd, paddle, helmet and cag) can be hired for individual use by club members only, at the rates stated above.

Arrangements must be made with the equipment officer (Bill Fryer) or the chair (Naomi Styles) to collect equipment and get payment details. Officers must check the ability of those renting equipment and their intended plans before lending out equipment, and have the right to refuse rental and suggest alternative routes where necessary.

### **Storage**

Club kayaks/canoes and the trailer are stored in a locked, covered facility. The keyholders are the equipment officer (Bill Fryer) and the chair (Naomi Styles). Other paddling equipment may be stored with the trailer or at the equipment officer (Bill Fryer)'s home. Any changes to the storage of

paddling equipment by club members, temporary or permanent, must be made known to the equipment officer (Bill Fryer).

### **Transportation of Kayaks**

The club owns a canoe/kayak trailer. When tying boats onto the trailer, paddlers must ensure that all boats are correctly tied off. As per the law the driver must check for a secure load before every journey, including different legs of the same journey. They should also check tyre pressures and lights, plus wheel nut tightness. Trailer drivers must hold the correct license and use a suitable vehicle. Any faults with the trailer should be reported to a member of the committee promptly.

Where personal cars are used to transport kayaks, care must be taken to secure the kayak/canoe and ensure that the car is safe to drive, with no restrictions to driver visibility or movement.

Where personal cars are used to transport members, each person must have and use a seatbelt. Single young people must not be transported with a single adult who is not a parent.

### **Personal Responsibilities**

Whilst the club aims to cover the majority of safety aspects for the members, responsibility for personal behaviour ultimately rests with individual club members. These responsibilities are: ● Read and understand the club's Operating Procedures, which are to be freely available on the website. ● Declare on the membership form any medical conditions or allergies ● Be able to swim at least 50 metres in light clothing ● Always pay attention to and adhere to the advice and instructions of the club member leading the activity ● Inform the trip/group Leader of any medical conditions or injuries that could prove problematic during the course of the activity ● Always carry any necessary inhaler or other personal medication that may be required that is not kept in the first aid kit ● Not jeopardise the safety of others during club activities ● NOTE: The decision to paddle always rests ultimately with the individual. On trips the club member shall: ● Ensure that they wear a correctly fitting buoyancy aid and as provided by the club, and a helmet on white water. ● Alert the Leader to any possible problems with their equipment ● Inform the Leader if they have any doubts about their ability/desire to participate further in the club activity ● Raise and discuss any safety concerns ● Only get on the water when and where instructed to do so

### **Child Protection & Safeguarding**

Children under the age of 18 cannot participate in an event unless a parent is present. Any safeguarding concerns or incidents should be reported to the organiser, the Welfare Officer (Louise Weissel) or a member of the committee.

### **Training**

Introductory kayak training is available to 1\* standard, led by a qualified coach. These will take place in sheltered water. Introductory training is not essential to attend a club event, although new members will be either observed or interviewed to establish their level before allowing them to take part in more demanding events. Training events are organised according to demand and the coach's availability.

### **Emergency Operating Procedure**

In the event of an incident or emergency, leaders should follow first aid and emergency training given during any training they have received to the best of their ability given the situation. However, they have no responsibility to attempt rescues if it puts themselves or the group at risk.

In the event of a serious incident, the trip Leader (or most highly trained first aider) should take charge and delegate responsibilities. He/she should ensure that appropriate emergency services are contacted (use 112 as it provides a GPS position) and head counts are taken. Communication restrictions should be imposed, an incident log written and Canoe England must be informed where a member has to be hospitalized.

Details of next of kin are held securely by the club. The leader can obtain details of next of kin by contacting a committee member.

Any health and safety incidents should be logged, including the time and date, nature, names and numbers of casualties and the condition of the casualties. The club will keep the First Aid kit up to date and fully stocked.