



Risk Assessments & Operating Procedures

Water Activities

Including Canoeing, Kayaking, Raft building and Stream Scramble

The following pages contain the risk assessments and operating procedures for Dukes Barn Water Sports Activities. These risk assessments have been carried out by the staff of Dukes Barn, taking into account any entries to our accident / near miss report folder.

These risk assessments are reviewed periodically

Water Activities

Canoeing, kayaking and raft building

Benefit Statement		<p>These activities provide the opportunity to undertake personal challenges and work in teams. You learn skills such as paddle strokes to propel a canoe Giving the opportunity to play canoe games, pushing comfort zones and a sense of achievement Raft building enables the learning of practical knots and design concepts.</p> <p>Dukes Barn has a range of crafts, including Kayaks and Canoes. The choice of craft for any session will be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The physical needs of the clients ■ The clients' previous experience ■ The educational aims of the session 		
What are the hazards?	Who affected and Risk	What we are already doing / control measures	Further action required	Action required Responsibility/dates due and completed
General	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operating procedures apply (see at the end of risk assessments) 	No further action at this time	
Trailer Loading	- Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It's the driver/instructor's responsibility to ensure the trailer and load are secure ■ Instructor to ensure boats and equipment are secured ■ Remove plastic clip in seats before transporting 	No further action at this time	
Equipment Failure	- Participants & Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All equipment checked before use ■ Regular checks, maintenance and renewal ■ All equipment to BCU/CEN specifications ■ All personal safety equipment checked and fitted correctly 	No further action at this time	
Extreme weather Hypothermia Hyperthermia	- Participants	<p>Instructor to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Check the weather forecast before the session and observe conditions throughout the session. ■ Instructor to consider the weather conditions and adapt the session appropriately ■ Ensure participants have adequate, appropriate clothing for the session ■ Have access to warm or cold drinks as appropriate ■ Remind visiting staff and children to protect themselves from the sun 	No further action at this time	
Deep water Drowning	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Buoyancy aids are worn, correct size, correctly fitted and monitored by the instructor throughout the activity 	No further action at this time	

Water Activities

Canoeing, kayaking and raft building

Submerged objects	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Venue choice ■ Qualified and experienced instructor ■ Footwear to be worn at all times 	No further action at this time	
Paddle misuse	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Qualified and experienced instructor ■ Briefing and supervision of their use 	No further action at this time	
Water-borne diseases (Weils)	- Participants Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider cleanliness of new / infrequently used venues ■ Cover any open wounds such as cuts and scratches with waterproof plasters. ■ Always tell participants to use hand sanitiser or wash hands before eating and shower after the session ■ See operating procedures - Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease) 	No further action at this time	
Lifting and Carrying	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Briefing on the correct manual handling techniques Minimum two people per boat ■ Close supervision of the loading/unloading of the boat on the trailer ■ Briefing on the movement of materials for raft building 	No further action at this time	
Entrapment / entanglement / Trapped fingers	- Participants	<p>Improvised canoe rafting and raft building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Briefing and supervision ■ Briefing on capsize procedure ■ Ensure no loose ropes before launching ■ Inspect raft for potential problems ■ Helmets to be worn during improvised rafting ■ Rescue boat/instructor to be on the water before launching improvised rafts 	No further action at this time	
Entrapment	- Participants -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Briefing on getting in and out of the kayak, including the releasing of spray deck if used ■ Boats fitted correctly ■ Briefing on capsize procedure 	No further action at this time	

Water Activities

Stream Scramble

		Stream scrambling involves the group travelling, usually upstream, along the bed of a stream. It can include walking, scrambling over rocks or under/over branches and passing through shallow pools.		
General	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating procedures apply (see at the end of risk assessments) 		
Slip/fall banging head	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly fitted climbing/caving helmet 	No further action at this time	
Scratches and abrasions	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full body cover Long socks to prevent wellie rub Waterproofs to be worn where appropriate 	No further action at this time	
Slippery surfaces	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing at the beginning and during the activity Close supervision by the instructor throughout the session 	No further action at this time	
Hyperthermia	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate wind/waterproof clothing when appropriate Return to the centre as soon as possible after the session The instructor will carry additional safety equipment Emergency sleeping bag, shelter etc. During cold spells, hot drinks will be provided by the instructor 	No further action at this time	
Water-borne diseases (Weils)	- Participants Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider cleanliness of new / infrequently used venues Cover any open wounds such as cuts and scratches with waterproof plasters. Always tell participants to use hand sanitiser or wash hands before eating, and shower after the session See operating procedures (page9) - Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease) 	No further action at this time	
Drowning	- Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close supervision by the instructor throughout the session 	No Further Action at this time	

Operating procedures

Canoeing Shelter Water

Instructor requirements:

Current First Aid, BCU Level 1 / site-specific accreditation or greater.

Key briefing points/risk management:

- The instructor will brief the group at the start and again during the session
- All cuts to be covered; wash hands before eating
- Correctly fitting buoyancy aids will be worn throughout the session.
- Helmets will be worn when the instructor deems necessary
- Wind/waterproof clothing will be worn if appropriate
- The instructor will maintain effective group control throughout the session
- The instructor will consider the weather conditions and adapt the session appropriately

NOTES

Emperor Lake- Chatsworth

- Take particular care when driving through the car parking area, especially for toddlers and parents with pushchairs.
- Drive slowly through the woods: walkers will be in all areas.
- Use the agreed one-way system at all times to avoid the need for reversing with the trailer on narrow sections of the track.
- Ensure canoes do not knock into the outlet structure at the end of the lake.
- Take care near banks to avoid damage to wildlife, vegetation and the bank sides.
- Report to the house entrance gate to collect the fob to open the gate to gain access to track up to the lake. Return the fob at the end of the day

In the event of an emergency requiring the assistance of emergency services, call the Chatsworth emergency team on T: 01246 565399

Chesterfield Canal

Water Activities

- Due to health risks associated with dog faces, ensure the area is cleared before the group leaves the minibus (trowel and sand in canoe store)
- Ensure ONLY rafted canoes use locks.
- Rafting spars must not protrude beyond the gunnels
- Ensure only rafts containing responsible staff are near ladders or lock gates (risk of “catching” paddles, wooden cross pieces or ends of canoes).
- Ensure NO TRAILING ROPES (i.e. all painters etc., are inboard)
- Ensure DB staff member is at the lock gate prepared to shut off the water in an emergency.
- Hollingwood Lock: on exiting the lock, ensure rafted canoes steer well clear of overflow (If significant water is flowing, block the inlet to reduce water flow)
- Where canoes remain rafted together **at all times**, it is acceptable for participants to wear wellingtons, unlike other canoeing situations where they are unsuitable.

Operating procedures

Canoeing Moving Water

Instructor requirements:

- Current First Aid, NGB awards for the activity being undertaken and or site-specific trained with relevant experience

Key briefing points/risk management:

- All participants should wear appropriate clothing for the planned activity, including footwear – not wellingtons. Participants should wear foul weather gear in wet, windy or cold conditions
- All cuts to be covered; wash hands before eating
- The instructor should always carry a first aid kit together with a throw line, a tow rope, and a knife; additional safety equipment, including an emergency shelter, sleeping bag, and hot drinks, may be carried if deemed necessary
- Each participant must wear a correctly fitted buoyancy aid and helmet. Spray decks may be worn at the instructor's discretion
- The group should be appropriately briefed before the session. The importance of staying together, helping each other and additional hazards including trees, slippery rocks, water features and other users should be highlighted.
- The instructor should always be in a suitable position to supervise the whole group.
- All equipment used should meet BCU/CEN specifications and should be suitable for their purpose.
- Instructors should inspect all equipment at the start of any session and remove any item they are not happy with for inspection by the Head of Centre.

Operating procedures

Improvised Rafting

Instructor requirements:

Current First Aid, Minimum BCU level 1 coach, site-specific accreditation or greater.

Venues:

- Flat water is usually within Derbyshire. Regular venues include:
- Emperor Lake – Chatsworth, Chesterfield and Cromford canal
- **Key briefing points/risk management:**
- All sessions will be led by an appropriately qualified experienced canoeist - minimum BCU/UKCC level 1 Coach, site-specific accreditation or more significant, who will make necessary assessments during the session
- All cuts to be covered; wash hands or use hand sanitiser before eating and drinking
- Footwear to be worn at all times
- The instructor will brief the group at the start and again during the session
- Correctly fitting buoyancy aids and helmets will be worn at all times on the water
- Wind/waterproof clothing will be worn if appropriate
- All rafts will be accompanied by a safety boat (kayak or canoe), and the instructor will carry a knife
- The instructor will maintain effective group control throughout the session
- The instructor will consider the weather conditions and adapt the session appropriately

Operating procedures Stream walking

Instructor requirements:

- Current First Aid, minimum qualifications ML/WGLA/LCMLA level 1, familiar with the venue, approved by Head of Centre

Key briefing points:

- All participants should be wearing appropriate clothing. Depending on the age and ability of the group and the weather conditions, this will usually include full weatherproof clothing, Wellingtons and a correctly fitting climbing or caving helmet.
- The instructor should always carry a first aid kit—additional safety equipment including an emergency shelter, sleeping bag, and hot drinks to be taken.
- The group should be appropriately briefed before entering the stream. The importance of staying together, helping each other and the slippery and irregular nature of the stream bed should be highlighted.
- The instructor should always be in a suitable position to supervise the whole group.
- More hazardous elements of the stream may require extra supervision, including ‘spotting’ or, in some cases, additional support from a rope.
- Once the activity is finished, the instructor should ensure a prompt return to Dukes Barn to prevent participants from chilling.

Water Activities

Leptospirosis (Weil's disease)

Leptospira are naturally aquatic organisms found in fresh water, damp soil, vegetation, and mud.

In the last 25 years, we have been unaware of any cases of the disease at the venues used by Dukes Barn.

At the Emperor Lake venue at Chatsworth, no rats have ever been spotted in the area, and at Chesterfield and Cromford canal, only the occasional water vole has been seen.

Other outdoor providers use Chesterfield and Cromford canal for water sports and recreation, fishermen and the Chesterfield & Cromford canal society narrow boat teams.

We are in regular contact with the Derbyshire countryside ranger service, who would inform us of any instance of the disease.

As a precaution.

- All open wounds to be covered with waterproof plasters
- Wash hands or use hand sanitiser before eating or drinking
- Shower after activity
- Footwear always to be worn

The following information is from the British Canoeing Union

Leptospirosis is a disease that can be passed from animals to humans. Leptospirosis is caused by bacteria of the genus *Leptospira* (referred to as Leptospire), which infects various wild and domestic animals. The animals can then spread the Leptospire in their urine. Common animal reservoirs (maintenance hosts) include rodents, cattle and pigs.

Human infection occurs through exposure to water or an environment contaminated by infected animal urine. It has been associated with various occupations such as farming which can involve direct or indirect contact with infected urine or recreational pursuits. In the UK, such activities include canoeing, windsurfing, swimming in lakes and rivers, potholing and fishing.

How do animals carry Leptospirosis?

Infected animals carry the bacteria in their kidneys. They can excrete Leptospire in their urine for some time and spread the infection to other animals or humans coming into contact with the urine. Often the infected animal does not become ill. For example, both rats, which carry the type known as *Leptospira Icterohaemorrhagiae*, and cattle, which have another strain (*L. hardjo*), appear sick.

Water Activities

How do humans become infected?

Humans are considered to be a dead-end or accidental host of *Leptospire*s. Infection may be acquired by direct or indirect contact with affected urine, tissues, or secretions. *Leptospire*s enter the body through a cut or damaged skin but may also pass across damaged or intact mucous membranes and the eyes.

What are the symptoms?

Leptospirosis can be used to describe infections in humans and animals caused by any pathogenic strain of *Leptospire*. In humans, it causes a wide range of symptoms, although some infected people appear healthy. All forms of Leptospirosis start similarly. Leptospirosis is an acute biphasic illness. Some cases may be asymptomatic or may present in the first phase with the onset of a flu-like illness, with a severe headache, chills, muscle aches and vomiting. This is known as the bacteraemia phase, when the *Leptospire*s spread through the blood to many tissues, including the brain. This phase may resolve without treatment. In some cases, an immune phase may return with a return of fever, jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), red eyes, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, or a rash. In more severe cases, some organs may fail, e.g. the kidneys or meningitis. Generally, patients will recover within two to six weeks, but some may take up to three months. After infection, immunity develops against the infecting strain, but this may not fully protect against disease with unrelated strains.

Diagnosis.

As many of these symptoms are the same as for other diseases, diagnosis of Leptospirosis is based on clinical suspicion confirmed by laboratory testing of a blood sample. There is a specialist reference laboratory for Leptospirosis in the UK, which doctors can consult.

How soon after the exposure do symptoms occur?

Typically, symptoms develop seven to fourteen days after infection, though rarely, the incubation period can be as short as two to three days or as long as thirty days.

How is Leptospirosis treated?

Leptospirosis is treated with antibiotics such as penicillin or doxycycline, which should be given early in the course of the disease. Intravenous antibiotics may be needed for people with more severe symptoms.

Can Leptospirosis be prevented?

No human vaccine is available in the UK that is effective against Leptospirosis. For people who may be at high risk for short periods, primarily through their occupation, taking doxycycline (200mg weekly) may be effective.

Ways to avoid contracting Weil's disease are very simple:

- Avoid capsizing drill or "rolling" in stagnant or slow-moving water, mainly where rat infestation is evident.
- Wash or shower after canoeing.
- Cover minor cuts and scratches with waterproof plasters before getting in your boat.
- Wear trainers or wetsuit boots to avoid cutting your feet.
- If you have flu-like symptoms after canoeing, go to your GP and advise that you are a canoeist.

More information can be found here:

www.hpa.org.uk