

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR: Stand Up Paddle Boards: Sessions on canal, sheltered river sections and sheltered lakes and Gd1 rivers.

Reviewed by **Ian Sheldrake** 1st October 2025

HAZARD	Severity	Likelihood	LIST OF CONTROL MEASURES	OVERALL RESIDUAL RISK RATING (Low/Med/High)
Drowning	High	Low	- Participants Under 18 must wear appropriate buoyancy aids throughout the activity. - Participants Over 18 will be offered appropriate buoyancy aids throughout the activity for use on canal and lakes. ALL PARTICIPANTS TO WEAR Helmet and Buoyancy aid on moving river - In the case of capsize, staff to ensure all participants involved are accounted for and safe. - Buoyancy aids checked by staff prior to the session beginning. - Staff vigilance throughout the session to ensure buoyancy aids are worn correctly. LEASH - all participants wear the leash always attached to the board if paddling on a Lake where likelihood of being separated from a board is high. will not be used on the river due to risk of entangling with trees or on a canal as likelihood of become separated from board is low.	Low

Hypothermia	Medium	Low	• Staff to ensure that clothing is appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions. • Goggles to be issued whenever participants require them. Special attention to be paid to appropriate headwear. • Staff to ensure participants have appropriate spare clothing available after the activity • Leader to bring extra windproof tops and bottoms on journeys	Low
Hard edges of canal and barges	Medium	Low	• During the initial briefing participants are briefed on the dangers of falling from a standing position onto hard edges. And that even hitting the board will hurt, cause winding and dizziness. A demo of falling in instead of onto the board given. • Participants will be given clear instructions during the initial briefing that they must move to the kneeling position when within 1 boards length of a hard object for their own safety. • Staff vigilance and reinforcement throughout the session. • Participants will be offered a helmet if they wish to wear one on canal sessions.	Low
Shallow water injuries	Medium	Low	In shallow water (less than chest deep) with inexperienced or vulnerable paddlers without the skill to remain standing in that environment. • Paddlers should always be advised to get into a 'safe-position,' or as some prefer, on their knees to reduce the possibility of un-expected dismounts in shallow water.	Low
Losing contact	Low	Low	• Participants briefed as to the distance they are allowed from staff supervision. A clear system of recall to be arranged prior to the session. • Staff to ensure that contact is not lost at the back of the group.	Low
Objects in water/debris/shallow areas	Low	Low	• There are isolated islands of debris. Although visible from a distance, care should be taken to notice these in advance and take the necessary steps to avoid. • Participants told of the danger and must wear appropriate footwear.	Low

			- Participants briefed on not jumping / pencilling into water where they cannot see bottom because of risk of injuries to ankles and piercing injuries. - Participants required to kneel down in shallow areas.	
Objects from bridges	Medium	Low	There are several bridges (including footbridges) along the rivers and canals, which can be used by young people (children) to throw bricks or other objects. The bridges are visible from distance and participants need to be alert when approaching the bridge.	Low
Weil's Disease –ill health	Medium	Low	- Ensure that all participants are aware of waterborne disease and the general signs and symptoms of the disease. (part of registration form) - Encourage all participants to wash their hands as soon after the activity. Encourage participants to take showers if they either fall in or decide to swim in the river or canal. - Participants warned to seek medical assistance if they believe they have been infected.	Low.
Hyperthermia, sunburn and dehydration	Medium	Low	- Ensure participants are made aware of the dangers when appropriate. The need to cover up and protect the head to be of prime importance. - Staff to carry spare clothing, drink and sun block where appropriate.	Low
Anglers – caught by hooks/line	Low	Low	- Participants warned to steer away from anglers' lines wherever possible. - Participants warned of the dangers of old line and hooks left in overhanging trees at specific sites throughout the session.	Low
Equipment failure – injury to participants	Medium	Low	- All equipment used to be checked prior to use by the supervising staff. Any damaged or suspect equipment to be withdrawn from service until repaired or scrapped. - Boards inflated to pressure recommended on board to ensure correct support and stability for enhanced balance. - Annual recorded checks to buoyancy aids and boats to be carried out as per BCU instructions.	Low

Notes

- All leaders should be aware of **Venture Out** 'Emergency procedures' prior to delivering any sessions.
- All coaches to carry first aid kit and repair kit and appropriate equipment for weather conditions
- It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure equipment is safe and appropriate for use prior to each session.
- It is the responsibility of the coach to alert the **Director (Ian Sheldrake)** of broken or damaged equipment, or injury or near miss and to record this information in the Accident and Emergency book. If unclear how to complete this, then contact Ian immediately for support.
- If the coach is unsure of any relevant safety-related matters the problem should be resolved prior to the session
- This is an adventurous sport and some risk is assumed by participants. Removal of all risk is not only impossible but detrimental to the development of participants. However risk versus benefits have to be considered.