

SAFETY POLICY

FOR ALL CLUB MEMBERS

Cuckmere-based sessions:

- If you are bringing a junior member, please sign them in on the sign-up sheet at the start of the session (9.00 am) and sign them out at the end.
- All paddlers involved in programmed activities must be equipped with a kayak or canoe containing appropriate buoyancy and wear a buoyancy aid, helmet and suitable clothing as deemed necessary by the duty coach.
- The ratio of learners to coaches/leaders on the water must not exceed 8:1 including unqualified helpers. A coach may decide to delegate tasks to an adult club member but must remain on the water and in overall charge of the group.
- If a coach is not available to take responsibility for a programmed activity, then the activity will be postponed.

Additional information concerning away trips:

- Before participating in a programmed activity members must give details of swimming ability and any relevant medical conditions to the trip organiser. Any medicine possibly required during a session must be carried by the member.
- Any member aged 8-12 taking part in a programmed activity must have a parent/ guardian on the water with them or on land by the water. A member aged 12-18 must have a parent/ guardian available by phone and at a relative close distance to the club activity.
- Activities not on the CVCC programme but involving club members are undertaken at their own risk.

GUIDELINES FOR COACHES

Before taking a group on the water you must brief them to ensure that they:

- know who the coaches are
- know what the boundaries of your activity are
- disclose any relevant medical conditions they may have
- remove any jewellery that may cause injury to them or others
- know what is expected from them in terms of behaviour on the water
- have all signed on to the coaching session form

The Cuckmere Meanders on a calm day are classed as **Very Sheltered Water** (VSW) (easy bank side access and less than 100m wide). This is within the remit of Paddlesport Instructors and above.

The Cuckmere River on a calm day with a slack tide could be classed as **Sheltered Water** (SW). This is gently moving water no more than 400m wide. This is within the remit of Paddlesport Leader

However, conditions on this river can change rapidly: wind and current together with poor bank side access can create **Moderate Water** MW conditions outside the remit of Paddlesport Instructors and Paddlesport Leaders.

Exceptions: A coach/leader may have the experience that takes them beyond their qualified remit. If this is the case, the Committee (minimum three members) would need to sign off any proposed activity for the coach/leader.

Very Sheltered Water

Definition

Quiet canals with easy bankside access and egress; small lakes, which are not large enough and do not have difficult landing, where problems could occur if there is a sudden change in conditions; gentle, slow moving rivers. The definition implies weather conditions that are not in themselves likely to cause problems. At any point, the paddler should not be more than 50 metres from the bank.

Enclosed swimming pools are also defined as very sheltered water environments.

Note The definition implies normal conditions and care is advised when water and air temperatures are low.



Suggested Coach/Leader to Participant ratio



Solo Craft 1:8



Crew Craft 1:12

Factors to take into consideration



Experience of the Instructor/Coach/Leader



The individual group members' age/competence/experience



The ever-changing environment

Suggested Minimum Qualifications (Full list on page 7)

British Canoeing Paddlesport Instructor / British Canoeing Paddlesport Leader

Sheltered Water

Definition

Ungraded sections of slow moving rivers where the group could paddle upstream against the flow (not involving the shooting of, or playing on, weirs or running rapids). Areas of open water (e.g. lakes and lochs) where the paddlers are no more than 200 metres offshore and the wind strength does not exceed Beaufort force 3, avoiding the group being swept/blown out of the safe working area. Slow moving estuaries (less than 0.5 Knots)

Examples: Small enclosed bays, enclosed harbours where there is minimal possibility of being blown offshore, defined beaches with easy places to land throughout, no tide races, overfalls or surf.

Note The definition implies normal conditions and care is advised when water and air temperatures are low.



Suggested Coach/Leader to Participant ratio



Solo Craft 1:8



Crew Craft 1:12

Factors to take into consideration



Experience of the Instructor/Coach/Leader



The individual group members' age/competence/experience



The ever-changing environment

Suggested Minimum Qualifications (Full list on page 7)

British Canoeing Paddlesport Instructor / British Canoeing Paddlesport Leader

Moderate Water

Definition

Inland: Large areas of open water that exceed the sheltered water definition, where the paddlers are no more than 500 metres off shore and in wind strengths that do not exceed Beaufort force 4.

White Water: Grade 2(3) white water or equivalent weirs.

Sea: A stretch of coastline with some areas where it is not easy to land but there will always be straight forward land points a maximum of two nautical miles apart. Crossings not exceeding two nautical miles. Up to 2 Knots of tide (but not involving tide race or overfalls). Wind strengths do not exceed Beaufort force 4. Launching and landing through surf (up to 1 metre, trough to crest height).

Surf: Sections of sandy beaches free from significant hazard (e.g. rocks and strong rips) and easy access. Gentle, sloping and spilling waves, preferably peeling. Not pitching or dumping. Wave height should be no more than double overhead when seated in a kayak in the trough of the wave (head high for a stand up surfer).

Suggested Coach/Leader to Participant ratio



Solo Craft 1:6



Crew Craft 1:10

Factors to take into consideration



Experience of the Instructor/Coach/Leader



The individual group members' age/competence/experience



The ever-changing environment

Suggested Minimum Qualifications (Full list on page 7)

British Canoeing Coach Award (specific to moderate environments) / British Canoeing Moderate Water Leader

SUMMARY OF CVCC GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE SEA

Site Conditions
Very Sheltered Water and sea: a warm calm day at Cuckmere Haven (no off-shore wind)
Sheltered Water and sea: Cuckmere Haven with onshore wind Beaufort scale 3 or less. Surf height no greater than 0.5m trough to crest.
Moderate water and sea: breezy day at Cuckmere Haven. Surf up to 1.5 m trough to crest. Preferably 2 hours either side of low tide.

Great caution must be exercised whenever the lightest of offshore breezes is blowing, or river flood conditions create a rip.

Suggested Coaching Qualifications and Environment

Qualification	Very Sheltered Water	Sheltered Water	Moderate Water	Advanced Water
BCU Level 1 Coach	✓			
BC (UKCC) Level 1 Coach BC Paddlesport Instructor	✓	✓		
BCU Level 2 Coach	✓	✓		
BC (UKCC) Level 2 Coach	✓	✓		
BC Moderate Water Endorsement	✓	✓	✓	
BC Advanced Water Endorsement	✓	✓	✓	✓
BC Coach Award (Sheltered water)	✓	✓		
BC Coach Award (Moderate water)	✓	✓	✓	
BC Coach Award (Advanced water)	✓	✓	✓	✓
BCU Level 3 Coach	✓	✓	✓	
BC (UKCC) Level 3 Coach BC Performance Coach	✓	✓	✓	
BCU Level 4 Coach	✓	✓	✓	✓
BCU Level 5 Coach	✓	✓	✓	✓

- BCU refers to the qualifications taken prior to the UKCC qualifications.
- BC (UKCC) and the endorsement refers to UKCC qualifications.
- BC refers to the qualifications taken from 2018.

Suggested Leadership Awards and Environment

Award	Very Sheltered Water	Sheltered Water	Moderate Water	Advanced Water
BC Bell Boat Helm	✓	✓		
BC Paddlesport Leader	✓	✓		
BC 4 Star Leader BC Moderate Water Leader	✓	✓	✓	
BC 5 Star Leader BC Advanced Water Leader	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Apart from the Paddlesport Leader, the certificate awarded states both craft and environment that the coach/leader can operate in.

ORGANISATION ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

The coach on duty should:

- Meet briefly with other coaches to agree a format for the day
- Present the format for the day on the sign-up sheet
- Ensure they are carrying a suitable First Aid kit and preferably a mobile phone as means to contact emergency services

If there is a shortage of coaches:

- **The ratio of learners to coaches must still not exceed 8:1**
- Some paddlers will be asked to stay on land and await their turn to paddle

On the River Cuckmere:

- Competent paddlers should be at the front and back of the group to prevent the group getting too spread out.
- The group must be stopped when they reach the beach and told to get out of the water for a briefing and risk assessment by the coach before a decision to go to sea is made.

Before going to the sea:

- The group must be stopped when they reach the beach and told to get out of the water for a briefing and risk assessment by the coach before a decision to go to sea is made.
- The whole group should be involved in the decision making

ORGANISATION ON CLUB TRIPS

Club trips are classified as those that are advertised on the club website in the events programme or identified as club trips on the club notice board, and must indicate clearly the MINIMUM skill level (BC Paddlesport / Paddlepower skill level) for interested paddlers, AND must identify any other pre-requisites e.g. White water safety and rescue training, previous trip experience etc.

The coach/river leader organising the trip should:

- Select a trip location that does not exceed the conditions of their BC coaching level remit (see Terms of Reference above and/or discuss with the Coaching coordinator, Events coordinator and Welfare Officer)
- Be sure that the choice of location is suitable for the paddlers it has been advertised to, is likely to be safe for the trip duration, has no access restrictions in place, and that suitable emergency and contingency plans are in place and understood by all taking part
- Ensure that those taking part in the trip have the necessary canoe safety skills and water confidence to participate in all aspects of the trip
- Meet briefly with all others going on the trip and brief them on safe journeying to the access point, river access, equipment requirements, emergency contacts and other appropriate information to bring club members to a river
- Collect and maintain suitable contacts of all paddlers prior to the trip so that changes can be communicated effectively
- Register the trip plan and contacts details with a home-based member of the club and with the Events coordinator.

The coach/river leader on the day of the trip should:

- Arrive in plenty of time to allow suitable and timely preparation for the paddling team
- Meet briefly with other coaches and suitably experienced paddlers to agree a format for the trip and assign roles if not already carried out in the planning stage, and ensure all coaches are carrying first aid kits and means to

make contact with emergency services and each other.

- Present the format for the trip to all members taking part and include a briefing on river safety, team working, communications, emergency exits and river character/duration/ etc.
- Ensure that a clearly advertised deputy is available to take control of the trip if the coach/river leader is incapacitated (e.g. sudden illness).
- Maintain all safe coaching and journeying principles throughout the duration of the trip on the water and to/from the location, and abide by Club Rules and BC Rules as applicable at all times