



Crouch Kayak Club Risk Assessment - Canal paddling

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Review/comment/date
All hazards	All paddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Comprehensive safety briefing which is regularly reviewed and updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss at each committee meeting	Committee members led by safety officer	Ongoing	1/7/06

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Falling in when embarking disembarking	Paddlers, leaders and coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek suitable boarding exiting point, with low banks and non slippery access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include details of where to enter the water in the paddle briefing. Check condition of the access surfaces before launching and when returning. Ensure that paddlers have the correct permissions to paddle, either through Paddle UK membership or local licences 	Paddle leader	In briefing prior to paddle	1/7/2026

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Collision with other boats and water users. Particular danger of canal boats in narrow canals.	Paddlers, leaders, coaches and/or public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructing paddlers to be aware of other vessels on the water, including stationary boats. Paddlers advised to take appropriate/avoiding action. Paddlers should understand the rules of the canal and behave accordingly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise in briefing on the best actions to take in different situations Paddle on the right unless advised to move to the left to avoid oncoming vessels (e.g. in the spaces between moored vessels) Assume that many canal boat operators have very limited experience in operating their craft 	<p>Paddle leader</p> <p>All paddlers</p> <p>Paddle leader to include</p>	<p>Advise in briefing</p> <p>At appropriate times in the paddle</p> <p>in briefing</p>	1/7/2026
Paddling weirs and chutes	Paddlers, leaders and coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helmets should be worn if paddling on white water or in dangerous locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous dynamic risk assessment. 	Paddle leader to implement		1/7/2026



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Risk of entanglement in mooring ropes and vegetation	Any paddler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddle leader to carry knife and vegetation cutting equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage other paddlers in the group to be similarly equipped 	Paddle leader	In advance of each paddle	1/7/2026
Transport and parking	Paddlers, leaders, coaches and/or public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the club's equipment is in roadworthy condition. Servicing trailers regularly. Ensuring paddlers are aware how to securely load equipment to vehicles. Advising not to park in dangerous places that might put other road users at risk. 	<p>Visual check of tyres and lights on trailer.</p> <p>Trailer to be serviced annually, and before long trips</p>	<p>Drivers are responsible for checking loads on trailers and roof racks.</p> <p>Equipment officer to organise</p>	<p>Before each trip</p> <p>Annually on or before anniversary of previous</p>	1/7/2026



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Slips, trips and falls	Paddlers, leaders, coaches and/or public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying trip hazards. Making all paddlers aware of potential hazards. Advising paddlers not to leave boats lying around where people could trip. Leaders/coaches monitoring locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove trip hazards where possible. 	Identified paddle leader	Prior to each paddle	1/7/2026
<p>Sprains, strains and injuries.</p> <p>Overexertion, dehydration, and fatigue management</p>	Paddlers, leaders and coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring paddlers are aware of correct manual handling techniques. Investing in trolleys to assist with moving the boats. Showing paddlers the correct posture and technique for paddling. Importance of water for rehydration is included in briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing training in paddling techniques. Ongoing advice on manual handling techniques. Extra trolleys ordered. Ensure spare water bottles are available in boat store 	<p>Paddle leaders, coaches and aspiring leaders/instructors/coaches</p> <p>Equipment officer</p>	<p>Before, during and after paddle</p> <p>After each paddle</p>	1/7/2026

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Weather and environmental conditions	Paddlers, leaders and coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing weather conditions prior to paddle. Consulting weather maps, forecasts, Having a pre-planned procedure in place. Having adequate qualified coaches and leaders. . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for all weather-related conditions. Ensure procedures and guidance are understood by all. Continuous dynamic risk assessment. 	Committee members and paddle leaders in consultation with committee	Prior to advertising paddle and again in the hour before starting the paddle	1/7/2026

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Injury and drowning	Paddlers, leaders and coaches (person capsizing and person rescuing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All paddlers must wear buoyancy aids. Beginners should learn rescue skills in the swimming pool (where possible) before paddling on the canal and should be competent swimmers. Paddlers are taught how to exit the boat if they capsize and how to rescue others. Ensuring trained paddlers/coaches are on the paddle to assist a rescue. Lead paddlers/coaches to carry first aid kit, radio/phone and flares. Undertake complete pre-paddle briefing session. Minimum of 1 qualified first aider on every paddle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders/coaches to ensure buoyancy aids are fitted correctly. Regular checks on equipment before and during sessions and trips. Ongoing rescue skills training. 	<p>Paddle leader can ask paddlers to check their neighbours buoyancy aid</p> <p>Paddle leader to oversee</p>	Each paddle briefing	1/7/2026

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Hypothermia	Paddlers, leaders and coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddlers advised to wear suitable clothing for the weather conditions. Adjustment to clothing as required by conditions. Aware of the signs of hypothermia. Carry hot drinks in thermos. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group leader to carry emergency foil blanket and/or change of clothing. Point out that even when air temperatures are high, the water can be really cold Wear neoprene layer when for these situations 	Paddle leader to coordinate and advise.	During briefing	1/7/2026

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Emergency assistance	Paddlers, leaders and coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants to carry medical information card. Lead coach to carry contact details of coastguard and emergency services on all paddles. Appropriate radios or mobile phones to be used. Know the correct procedure for emergencies. Correctly qualified coaches/leaders in attendance. Throwlines, first aid and appropriate kit to be carried. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an emergency plan in place for the venue. Keep paddlers emergency contact details/health conditions to hand on trips via Membership mojo access. Medical conditions asked for in briefing 	Paddle leaders	Each paddle session	1/7/2026



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Environmental health issues, such as waterborne diseases	Paddlers, leaders and coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddlers should be aware that there can be discharges into the river especially after a lot of rain. Paddlers should not enter the water if they have cuts and wounds and should avoid swallowing any water. Paddlers should wash as soon as possible and seek medical attention if they develop symptoms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather as much appropriate information prior to paddling and share with participants. Wet exits need to be done on river just before coming ashore, then hose off straight away Check water quality using app 	Paddle leader to mention in the briefing (see separate sheet under briefing)	Each paddle	1/7/2026
Faulty equipment	Any paddler	<p>Equipment officers supervise cleaning and checking equipment at the beginning of the season</p> <p>Equipment washed and checked after each paddle</p> <p>Reporting system for faults in book</p>	<p>Number kayaks (hire kayaks), making it easier to identify and report defects.</p> <p>List which kayak is used by whom each week.</p> <p>Laminated 'DO NOT USE' labels to clip onto equipment needing repair</p>	<p>Equipment officer</p> <p>Paddle leader</p> <p>Andy to laminate</p>	<p>End of July 2026</p> <p>On each club paddle</p>	1/7/2026


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Lone working	Lone worker	No club paddles solo. No getting kayaks down from top rack without assistance. Another responsible adult present when supervising vulnerable paddlers	Ensure that kayaks that may be accessed by an individual are not on the top racks.	Equipment officers	As additional kayaks are put into storage	1/7/2026
Personal physical contact	Any paddler	Explain to the paddler who needs to be rescued/have first aid, what needs to be done, and ask if they are okay with this		Anyone giving physical assistance	Ongoing	1/7/2026
Inappropriate behaviour	Any member	Code of conduct available on website The club prohibits paddlers under the age of 18 Paddlers asked if they are happy to have photo taken	Draw attention of new members to the code of conduct in the welcome letter All paddle leaders should have completed the safeguarding e learning	Chairman Information included in the list of paddle leaders.	End of July 2026	1/7/2026

Reviewed by:	Roger Smith (Safety officer)
Signed:	

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Date:	1 st July 2026
Next review date	July 2026 committee meeting

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