

Watersports - Risk information

Ropes	
Land	
Water	
Self Led	

S x L = RF				
S / L	RF	Colour code	Response	RF what to do next
1-2	1-5		Low	Manage through routine procedures
3	6-10		Moderate	Specific monitoring or procedures required, action must be specified
4-5	11-18		High	Action plan required, senior management attention needed
	19-25		Extreme	Immediate action required

Clarification	
Instructor	The ones running the session
Leaders	The additional adult to help with the group management
Participants	The person or persons that are using the activity e.g. climber or belayer on the climbing wall
All users	All users that are involved in the session use e.g. Instructor, Leaders, Participants not Spectators
Everybody	Anyone that could be using the activity or may walk through or pass the activity such as Spectators

Foxlease Park Risk Assessments
On the water Covers: Kayaking, Canoeing, Raft Building and Rafted Canoe Sessions


Location:	Foxlease Park	Assessor:	Alison Dixon
Date of Assessment:	12/05/2026	Date of review:	12/05/2027
Description of area or activity:	All water activities on Foxlease Park Lake		Technical Advisor: Alison Dixon
Equipment used:	Kayaks (closed cockpit), Canadian canoes, Barrels, ropes, poles, paddles, and personal floatation devices.		

Activity	Hazard	Description of potential accident/injury/loss	Who is affected	Precautions/controls already in place	Risk S	Risk L	Risk F	Further control measures applied	Action by	Net S	Net L	Net F
All	Paddle hitting head	Head injury	All users	A safety brief takes place at the start of the session. The group is told to be aware of others around them. Safety rules are added to tasks/challenges/games where the likelihood of a paddle hitting the head is higher. Participants are to be warned about the dangers of striking another paddler with their paddle if it is swung around carelessly. Sessions are checked by safety by an appropriate experienced/qualified person—qualification and equipment checking.	3	2	6	Kayaking/raft building: Helmets are to be worn by participants/instructors at all times. See the activity policy for information on staff training. Canoeing/rafted canoes: Helmets are to be worn by participants/instructors at the discretion of the instructor/lead instructor.	Instructor	3	1	3
All	Falling into the water from the bank	Possible injuries.	All participants	Beginners are to be assisted when entering or exiting the craft. Participants were instructed to sit down in the craft as soon as possible	1	3	3		Instructor	1	2	2
All	Weak or non Swimmers	Possible drowning	Weak or non swimmers	Group leaders to inform Foxlease Park of weak/non-swimmers. Instructor to check in safety brief if everyone can swim. If the instructor finds more than 3 non-swimmers in the session, they should inform the duty manager. All weak/non-swimmers will wear a 100 newton lifejacket.	3	3	9	Weak or non-swimmers can take part in paddlesports activities. Group leaders are sent the definition of a non-swimmer or swimmer in the joining instructions.	Group Leaders/Instructors/Foxlease Park	2	2	4
All	Falling into the water from the boat (capsizing)	Possible swallowing of water and injuries.	All participants	The safety brief at the start will include 'What to do in the event of a capsize'	1	2	2	Instructors should be alert, maintain a clear view of the participants at all times, and set boundaries/goal points.	Instructor	1	2	2

Activity	Hazard	Description of potential accident/injury/loss	Who is affected	Precautions/controls already in place	Risk S	Risk L	Risk F	Further control measures applied	Action by	Net S	Net L	Net F
All	Entrapment under water	Drowning	All users	Participants to be briefed on rescue before going afloat. Groups will receive a demonstration of what to do if they capsize before going on the water. Spray decks are not used except by instructors or participants with specific training. All participants must wear personal floatation devices. Instructors ensure the appropriate-sized kayak is matched to the participant to reduce the risk of entrapment and capsize.	5	2	10	The activity policy outlines the qualifications required to operate water sports activities on the lake. Minimum qualification for Paddlesports is Paddle UK Paddlesports Instructor: Raft Building and Rafted Canoes in-house training and a safety and rescue test. Instructors will receive in-house training covering the range of craft available for use on the lake. Instructors also have suitable rope-cutting knives kept in their personal floatation devices.	Foxlease Park Senior Staff Instructor	3	2	6
All	Failure of equipment	Major injury, possible death from drowning	All users	All staff are trained in procedures and methods of checking equipment. Equipment is checked before use and inspected at least every 6 months by qualified instructors.	5	2	10	All equipment is issued in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.	Foxlease Park Senior Staff Instructor	4	2	8
All	Low level branches	Lake users are becoming entangled in the branches, causing injuries or capsize.	Participants / instructors	Checks of the lake edges and removal of protruding branches that may cause injury.	4	2	8		Foxlease Park Maintenance team	3	2	6
All	Falling branches	Injuries from falling trees/branches	Everyone	Trees are inspected annually. Any dangerous branches will be removed.	5	2	10	Instructors should notify the activity manager if they deem any branches dangerous or have the potential to cause injury.	Foxlease Park	3	1	3
All	Adverse weather (lightning)	Hit by lightning, possible death	All users	The activity will not go ahead if there are thunderstorms and lightning conditions. Instructors will issue a clear briefing/instructions on what to do if thunder and lightning are seen or heard. The weather forecast will be checked by a senior member of staff on the day.	4	1	4	The 3030 rule is followed. If the flash to bang is 30 seconds in length, you should seek shelter in the boat house. Staying inside the shelter is advised until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.	Instructor	3	1	3

Activity	Hazard	Description of potential accident/injury/loss	Who is affected	Precautions/controls already in place	Risk S	Risk L	Risk F	Further control measures applied	Action by	Net S	Net L	Net F
All	Adverse weather (high winds)	Customers get tangled in the elements, possible cuts and bruises	All users	The activity cannot take place in strong winds(25mph or more). The activity will be cancelled if the winds are forecast to exceed 25 mph. If, during the day, wind speeds exceed 25 mph, the activity will be postponed until the wind subsides or rescheduled.	4	1	4	Instructor to check the forecast on the day of the activity. On large activity days, a staff briefing will include a weather forecast.	Instructor	3	1	3
All	Effect of cold water	Hypothermia, cold water shock, panic	All users	Instructor to check that participants are adequately dressed. Participant instructed to wear flat soft soled shoes: trainers. wet boots or shoes. A correctly sized and fitted personal floatation device must be worn at all times. No planned capsizes will take place. Any participants who capsize in cold weather are rescued quickly and monitored for signs/symptoms of cold water shock. The instructor should recommend that they leave the session to change/warm up if needed.	4	1	4	Demonstration and checks to be made by instructor prior to going afloat.	Instructor	3	1	3
All	Multiple participants in the water.	Many people in the water adding to time in potentially cold water	All users	Instructor-to-participant ratios are to be maintained in accordance with the standard operating procedures. Instructors are to keep the group in the same area and to be within easy reach of all participants. In circumstances where there are many participants in the water, all remaining participants should be instructed to go to the bank or raft up while the situation is corrected. Group control should be maintained at all times by the instructor.	3	3	9	All instructors will have completed Paddlesport Rescue Safety Training or equivalent as part of their instructor qualification. Increasing ratios from 1 to 10 for kayaking, assistance can be provided to ensure participant safety and help the instructor get participants onto the water.	Instructor	3	2	6

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All	Lifting, emptying, carrying and storing boats / rafts	Back injury, foot / leg injury, entrapment	Everybody	Everyone moving craft must be instructed in good lifting practices before the activity starts. The safety/rescue toggles can be used for lifting. Instructors will demonstrate how to empty craft on the bank and how to move craft on land safely. At least 2 people should carry large equipment. Ensure the surrounding area is kept clear, and the participant is briefed on the rescue before going afloat.	2	2	4	Instructors require suitable training and qualifications before being allowed to run a session, such as PSRT and PSI from British Canoeing.	Instructor	2	2	4
All	Lone working	Unable to get help	Staff	All staff to carry radios on water sessions in waterproof bags.	3	1	3		Instructor	2	1	2
All	Water borne infections	Nausea / vomiting / upset stomach	All participants	Provision for participant to wash hands in clean water before consuming food. Anyone who suffers from an open wound (Bleeding) must have it washed and dressed immediately. Only if the wound can be covered by a waterproof dressing may the participant continue the activity. Group leaders are to be aware of any illnesses after the activity and seek a doctor's advice immediately.	5	1	5	Prevention measures against water-borne infection groups leaders are advised: • to cover all cuts and abrasions with waterproof plasters. • that participants need to wear footwear to avoid cutting the feet. • that participants shower soon after the activity, especially if they have capsized. • that participants, always wash your hands after paddling and before eating or drinking.	Group leader Foxlease Park	3	1	3
All	Contact with / ingestion of blue / green algae	Skin rashes, nausea, vomiting, stomach pains fever and headaches. Occasionally it can cause more serious illness such as liver and brain damage	All users	Low levels of algae: Warn participants of the hazard, run sessions away from bloom(s), don't play wet games, provide fresh water to rinse off with after the session. Mid levels of algae: Run all sessions as rafted canoe sessions, run sessions away from the bloom(s), don't play wet games, provide fresh water to rinse off with and showers back on site after the session. High levels of algae: Cancel all water sessions.	4	2	8	All participants are warned to wash their hands and, if they have been in the water, to shower after participating in watersports on the lake.	Foxlease Park Senior Staff Instructor	3	2	6

Activity	Hazard	Description of potential accident/injury/loss	Who is affected	Precautions/controls already in place	Risk S	Risk L	Risk F	Further control measures applied	Action by	Net S	Net L	Net F
All	Launching from the jetty	Jetties can become slippery when wet or when participants have wet shoes. Participants slipping into the water whilst climbing in and out of boats. Slips, cuts and potential bone injuries on hard surfaces.	Everybody	All participants are to wear a personal flotation device when on or around the water. Instructors to help participants into and out of crafts or provide instructions for participants / supervise adults. Brief participants on the hazards of the launch areas.	2	2	4	All participants are to wear a personal flotation device when on or around the water. Instructors will brief participants on the hazards of the launch areas. Jetty to be cleared and cleaned at the start of the session/day. If the jetty has flooded then algae and debris should be removed. Monitor throughout the season	Instructor	2	1	2
All	Entanglement within reeds/plants	Lots of aquatic plants with deep roots potential entrapment issues	All users	Boundary and hazard areas are explained before getting on the water. The lake is assessed regularly, and "gardening" is performed when necessary.	3	3	9	If required, a weed cutter will be brought on-site to cut back or uproot the plants.	Instructor Maintenance team	2	2	4
All	Hair / jewellery / clothing or other items caught in equipment	Entanglement in equipment causing entrapment, finger injuries, participant trapped on zip wire	Participants	All participants advised to remove or tuck out the way all jewellery before the start of session. Hair should be tied up or out of the way of any equipment. If jewellery cannot be removed, tape can be offered to cover it and prevent snagging. The helmet strap is instructed to be tucked away if possible.	3	4	12	All instructors are trained & assessed in the emergency action plan as set out in the Safe Operating Procedures.	Instructor	3	3	9
All	Group control	Problems with group control. Instructor needing to stop sessions to intervene. Safeguarding risks are higher due to only one adult present.	All users	Each group will be accompanied by a responsible adult who will oversee the group's behaviour and pastoral care. However, if the responsible adult needs to step away from the activity, the instructor should call for assistance. Instructors must be up to date on safeguarding training and be aware of their position within the group.	3	3	9	Instructors are aware that, if needed, they can pause or end the session to help the participants. Instructions: contact the office for another member of staff as backup if required. All staff members will receive safeguarding training.	Instructor	3	2	6
All	Participants using the area unsupervised	Improper use of craft causing serious injury or death. Equipment damage.	Everybody	Activity areas have clear signage/warnings of dangers. Locks restrict access to the boathouse and raft building stores.	5	1	5		Instructor	5	1	5

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All	First aid	All participants not receiving the correct 1st Aid treatment Minor and major injuries getting worse	Everybody	Foxlease Park instructor led sessions will have a first aid kit on the session. Self-led sessions the group leader should provide a suitable first aider and first aid kit.	1	3	3	The reception will have a first aid kit. All instructors are to hold a 1 day first aid certificate as a minimum requirement. Where groups do not have a suitable first aider or first aid kit Foxlease Park can provide.	Foxlease Park Senior Staff Instructor Group Leader	1	2	2
Raft Building	Launching from the bank	Slips, trips and fall injuries whilst launching the rafts. Muddy banks and roots are causing participants to injure themselves or fall into the water.	All users	Launching places are inspected at the start of the session for hazards. Participants and instructors will wear personal flotation devices before launching the raft. Clear instructions on launching techniques will be explained to the participants before going afloat.	4	2	8	Banks are to be monitored during the season for hazards and repaired as soon as possible.	Instructor & Foxlease Park staff	3	2	6
Raft Building	Raft fails and comes apart	Entrapment issues causing injuries, multiple people in the water.	Participants	Ratios of 1 instructor to 10 participants will be followed. Any weak or non-swimmers will wear a 100-newton lifejacket and will be visible to the instructor. Instructors are to keep the group in the same area and to be within easy reach of all participants. If multiple participants are in the water, the instructor will ask that they make their way to the nearest bank. Instructor to complete a head count.	4	3	12	In-house training will be provided to ensure the rafts are built safely for participants. Instructors will intervene and help the participants if extra knots need tightening.	Instructor	3	3	9
Kayaks & Canoes	Incorrect qualifications for craft.	Instructors not qualified to teach the discipline	Instructors	All Paddle UK Paddlesports instructors will be assessed in their personal and rescue techniques in the other discipline they are qualified to teach, before any session takes place. See activity policy for details.	3	2	6	All instructors will receive in-house training and be authorised to teach the other disciplines. Non-regular freelance staff will be authorised only for the discipline in which they are qualified.	Instructor	3	1	3

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Raft building	Finger/limb entrapment whilst building the raft and whilst afloat.	Injuries to fingers/limbs	Everyone	Participants are briefed at each stage of raft construction. The instructor will ensure each stage has been completed and the knots are secure before moving to the next stage. Warnings will be given to participants on where not to place their fingers. If the raft begins to fall apart on the water, the instructor must decide whether to remove it to retighten the ropes.	4	3	12	Instructors will take part in in-house training. Instructors will retie any loose ropes and barrels before going afloat if participants are struggling.	Instructor	3	2	6
Kayaks	Kayak Swamping	Participants are unable to paddle the boat correctly. Participant capsizing too often. Instructor struggling to empty kayak.	All users	If the raft begins to fall apart on the water, the instructor must make the decision to remove the raft from the water to retighten the ropes.	4	3	12	There is one sit-on-top kayak and one open-cockpit kayak for use by extra-large participants. If necessary, the instructor can use a canoe,	Instructor	2	3	6