



## Risk Assessment

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| <p><b>Grade Three Whitewater Trips:</b> River Dart (Loop section), Walkham, Usk and Upper and Lower Tryweryn, and other Grade Three Rivers.</p> <p><b>Persons Undertaking Event:</b> River Leader and trip participants.</p> <p><b>Required Competence:</b> SVCC Nominated River Leader/s will be experienced Grade Three paddlers who have completed a Whitewater Safety and Rescue Course. Participants will have at least some experience of paddling on moving water- Hammoon and Blandford Weirs, CIWWC- and will have previously demonstrated the ability to break in and out of moving water and to confidently and competently undertake a 'Wet Exit'. It will be up to the discretion of the 'Leader' to determine who is competent enough to undertake such descents. Under 18's will either be accompanied by a parent or will have arranged to paddle with a 'Responsible Adult'- and necessary paperwork undertaken.</p> <p><b>Access Points:</b> Put ins and take outs will be agreed in advance</p> <p><b>Accident and Emergency Departments:</b><br/> Dartmoor Rivers- Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital.<br/> South Brecon Beacons- Prince Charles Hospital<br/> North Brecon Beacons- Breconshire War Memorial Hospital<br/> North Wales/Bala- Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital</p> <p><b>Ratio:</b> In line with PUK Deployment standards</p> <p><b>Assessment completed by:</b> Neil Haggard (Club Safety Officer) of the management committee of the Stour Valley Canoe Club</p> <p><b>Date Assessment Created / Completed:</b> 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025</p> <p><b>Date of Next Review:</b> see below</p> | <p><b>River Leader:</b> Nominated by the SVCC Management Committee</p> <p><b>Emergency contacts:</b></p> <p>Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital (Devon)</p> <p>Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil (South Wales)</p> <p>Breconshire War Memorial Hospital (South Wales)</p> <p>Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital (North Wales)</p> <p>All under 18's are to have a "Tyvek" Band with Parent/carers contact details. This is to be attached to the outside of their Buoyancy Aid.</p> | <p>01392 411611</p> <p>01685 721721</p> <p>01874 622443</p> <p>01766 831281</p> |
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| HAZARD                         | RISK BEFORE CONTROL MEASURES                                                                                                         | PERSONS AT RISK                    | CONTROL MEASURES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | COMMENTS ACTIONS                                                                                                                      | RESIDUAL RISK RATING |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Accidental capsizing of Kayak. | Drowning, Cold Water Shock, Hypothermia, Exhaustion and Physical Injury- head injury, broken bones, lacerations, sprains and strains | River Leader and trip participants | <p>River Leaders and participants to wear Buoyancy Aids and Helmets.</p> <p>All participants will have demonstrated the ability to competently undertake a wet exit.</p> <p>The River Leader will provide a safety briefing prior to the river descent. The briefing will include a brief description to the main characteristics of the river, approximate time it will take to complete the descent, identification of hazards- stoppers, overhanging trees, tight bends, etc.</p> <p>During the safety briefing the River Leader will also determine how the descent will be undertaken- buddying-</p> | The River Leader will check that all novice paddlers have appropriately secured Buoyancy Aids and Helmets prior to the river descent. | Low                  |

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|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                    |                                    | up Novices with more experienced paddlers or descending as a group with experienced paddlers taking it in turns to lead and a 'Tail End Charlie' identified. Additionally, the 'Leader' will determine the 'Signs' used to communicate during the descent- stop, eddy out, come one, etc. Prior to the river descent being undertaken the River Leader will ensure that the Novices' Kayaks have adequate inherent buoyancy to prevent sinking and to provide a floating object for the participants to hold on to in the event of a wet exit. |  |        |
| Overhanging trees and branches hidden under the surface of the water causing capsize and/or entrapment. | Drowning, Cold Water Shock, Hypothermia, Exhaustion and Physical Injury- head injury, broken bones, lacerations, sprains and strains               | River Leader and trip participants | During the safety briefing the River Leader will make Novices aware of the nature of the river being paddled and the dangers that trees present.<br>River Leader will also ensure that participants eddy out above rapids and before blind bends and then inspect or ask another experienced paddler to do so before the paddle continues. Where necessary inspections from the river bank will be undertaken.                                                                                                                                 |  | Low    |
| Collision with other participants boats and/or paddlers causing capsize                                 | Drowning, Cold Water Shock, Hypothermia, Exhaustion and Physical Injury- head injury, broken bones, lacerations, sprains and strains               | River Leader and trip participants | During the safety briefing participants will be reminded of their responsibilities to look out for the welfare of both themselves and other participants- calling out 'Capsize' when necessary and eddying out at nearest convenient point along the bank whilst rescues are being undertaken. Additionally, the River Leader will ensure appropriate spacing is maintained between craft as the river is being descended.                                                                                                                     |  | Low    |
| Slips and trips when portaging                                                                          | Drowning, Cold Water Shock, Hypothermia, and Physical Injury- head injury, broken bones, lacerations, sprains and strains                          | River Leader and trip participants | River Leader to prompt Novices to lift correctly and when necessary to ask for help carrying craft to and from the river bank.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  | Low    |
| Being caught in a 'stopper'                                                                             | Drowning, Cold Water Shock, Hypothermia, Exhaustion and Physical Injury- head injury, broken bones, dislocations, lacerations, sprains and strains | River Leader and trip participants | River Leader will ensure that participants eddy above rapids and before blind bends and then inspect for stoppers or ask another experienced paddler to do so before the paddle continues. Where necessary inspections from the river bank will be undertaken.<br>The River Leader will direct the setting up of safety where they deem necessary- both river based and bankside.                                                                                                                                                              |  | Low    |
| High water levels- increasing risk of capsize in fast flowing water and entrapment                      | Drowning, Cold Water Shock, Hypothermia, Exhaustion and                                                                                            | River Leader and trip participants | The River Leader will determine in advance who possesses the requisite stamina and paddling ability to undertake descents.<br>The River Leader will ensure that all rapids and blind                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  | Medium |

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| in stoppers and under bridges.                                                                         | Physical Injury- head injury, broken bones, lacerations, sprains and strains |                                    | bends are rigorously inspected before participants descend and where they deem appropriate direct Novice paddlers to walk around rapids, drops and stoppers.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                     |     |
| Exacerbation or triggering of pre-existing Medical Conditions- Diabetes, Angina, Epilepsy, asthma, etc | Allergic reaction, Seizure, Asthma attack, Hypoglycaemia                     | River Leader and trip participants | During the safety briefing the River Leader will ask Novice paddlers to make known any pre-existing medical conditions. Participants will be instructed to carry in their Kayaks any necessary medications- Inhalers, Epi-pens, etc.                                                                                                                                      |                                     | Low |
| Over-exertion and difficulty controlling body temperature                                              | Hypo/Hyperthermia, Dehydration, Heat exhaustion, Sprains and Strains         | Participants                       | During the safety briefing the River leader will remind participants of their responsibilities to look out for their own welfare- ensuring they are dressed appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions and the tasks they are to undertake, and carry sufficient food and fluid to sustain them for the duration of the paddle.                                  |                                     | Low |
| Infection from water born diseases                                                                     | Weil's disease, stomach upsets                                               | Participants and Marshalls         | During the safety briefing the River Leader will remind participants of the dangers of water born diseases and recommend that they avoid swallowing river water and use common sense when consuming food and drink.                                                                                                                                                       |                                     | Low |
| Abuse of minors or vulnerable persons.                                                                 | Abuse of minors or vulnerable persons.                                       | Minors and vulnerable persons.     | Any concerns about any club member should be mentioned discretely to the Welfare Officer and raised by the Welfare Officer with the committee or with a suitable sub-group of the committee or with some other suitable forum or external group (e.g. Police) if the committee is not thought a suitable forum, e.g. if a committee member is the subject of the concern. | Session Leader to ensure compliance | Low |

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| <b>Date Reviewed:</b> 03/10/2025<br><b>Next Review Date:</b> 31/10/2026   | <b>Person Reviewing:</b> Neil Haggar             |
| <b>Position in Stour Valley Canoe Club Committee:</b> Club Safety Officer | <b>Signature of Reviewer:</b> <i>Neil Haggar</i> |