

# Hastings and District Canoe Club

## Health and Safety Policy 2022

### Policy Statement:

Hastings and District Canoe Club aims to provide safe and fun opportunities for anyone to participate and enjoy canoe sport. During these activities we will operate according to current British Canoe Union guidelines. We will also endeavour to provide the best equipment that we can for our club members and potential club members.

Everyone involved in canoeing activities with Hastings and District Canoe Club must adhere to the following guidelines.

### General Requirements:

- A risk assessment must be completed by the instructor/s in charge at each new event.
- Operational procedures must be followed by group leaders and members
- All paddlers must have completed a successful capsized drill in their first session. If this is in the swimming pool they must also complete a successful capsized drill either in the sea, a river or a lake.
- If paddlers then wish to use a spray deck they must repeat the same procedure.
- All paddlers must be wearing suitable footwear, a buoyancy aid and helmet when on the water with exception to paddling in the pool, where the paddlers have the choice.
- No club trip on the water shall take place with less than three people.
- Every paddler must show in their first session that they can swim 50m, if this is in the swimming pool they must also swim, in the sea, river or lake, a distance of the instructor's discretion in appropriate paddling kit.
- It is each paddler's responsibility to inform the club of any medical conditions they may have e.g. asthma, diabetes or hearing disabilities.
- The instructor has the right to not allow individuals to paddle for any justified reason, if there is a second instructor this decision must also be supported by them. This would include individuals being under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs, having inappropriate kit or the conditions being above the ability of the individual.

### Pool Sessions:

- If a paddler/paddlers who are unknown to the club attend, claiming to have some experience of paddling, they must also complete a successful capsized drill.
- A parent/guardian must be present at all times for under 16.
- All paddlers aged under 18 must provide a letter stating consent from their parent/guardian for an adult at the club to sign for them at a hospital if the parent/guardian is not present. This can only happen if a member has consented to act as guardian.
- All paddlers need to be aware of their immediate surroundings so they do not endanger swimmers/paddlers. It is recommended that freestyle practice only takes place in the deep end of the pool and that swimming only takes place in the shallow end due to the risk of being struck by boats and paddles. Those who choose to swim should appreciate the risks posed by the people paddling.
- If unable to swim 50m, paddler must wear a buoyancy aid.

#### Equipment:

- All personal and club helmets and buoyancy aids must be CE approved for kayaking and canoeing.
- Club boats, helmets, buoyancy aids, paddles and all other equipment must be checked regularly to ensure no damage that may impede safety goes unnoticed.
- Buoyancy aids and helmets must fit properly and be unable to fall off of the paddler if they enter the water.
- Suitable footwear must be worn when paddling; this would include wetsuit shoes or neoprene socks. Other footwear must be approved by the instructor before being worn. Sandals, flip flops or anything else with straps must not be worn as they can get caught inside the boat.
- Helmets and buoyancy aids must be worn at all times when on the water, except in the swimming pool where the paddler has the choice.
- Correct equipment should be carried at all times by the instructor/s depending upon location.

#### Sea Sessions:

- If a paddler/paddlers who are unknown to the club attend, claiming to have some experience of paddling, they must also complete a successful capsize drill.
- A parent/guardian must be present at all times for under 16.
- All paddlers aged under 18 must provide a letter stating consent from their parent/guardian for an adult at the club to sign for them at a hospital if the parent/guardian is not present. This can only happen if a member has consented to act as guardian.
- The instructor/s responsible must be selected from a list of competent paddlers who've volunteered for the responsibility.
- The instructor/s is in charge. All paddlers are obliged to comply with all reasonable requests that they make. Failure to follow the requests of the instructor/s may place everyone on the trip in an unsafe situation. In the first instance of failure to follow requests of the instructor a verbal warning will be issued. In the second instance a written warning will be issued. In the third the individuals club membership will be put to the committee.
- If at any point an individual feels unhappy with the situation they are in it is their responsibility to inform the instructor/s.
- If an individual decides to go swimming during the clubs sea session they must still wear appropriate safety equipment- buoyancy aid, helmet and suitable footwear.
- The instructor/s must carry a first aid kit with them, a suitable towing device, and a knife with them at all times.

### General Club Trips:

- A parent/guardian must be present at all times for under 18's unless a letter has been signed by the parent/guardian allowing the group leader to take responsibility for the under 18. This can only happen if a member has consented to act as guardian.
- All members on a club trip must have attended a sea session so that the club is aware of their ability and that they have successfully completed a capsize drill.
- All participants must be members of the club in order to attend trips.
- The instructor/s must make all paddlers aware of risks specific to each trip.
- The instructor/s is in charge. All paddlers are obliged to comply with all reasonable requests that they make. Failure to follow the requests of the instructor/s may place everyone on the trip in an unsafe situation. In the first instance of failure to follow requests of the instructor a verbal warning will be issued. In the second instance a written warning will be issued. In the third the individuals' club membership will be put to the committee.
- If at any point an individual feels unhappy with the situation they are in it is their responsibility to inform the instructor/s.

### River Trips:

- Individuals attendance on white water trips is at the discretion of the trip instructor/s.
- The instructor/s responsible must be selected from a list of competent paddlers who've volunteered for the responsibility. This list will be separated into paddlers who can be chosen to be instructors depending on the grade of river.
- The instructor/s must carry a first aid kit, sling and karabiner, knife, emergency shelter, throw line. Plus at least one more throw line in the group.

### Sea Trips:

- The instructor/s responsible must be selected from a list of competent paddlers who've volunteered for the responsibility. These instructors may be chosen from the list of competent paddlers for sea sessions.
- The instructor/s must carry correct equipment at all times this includes the equipment outlined in sea sessions.

The ratio for instructors is maximum 8 to 1, but the final decision is for the instructor to decide on how many he is comfortable with without exceeding the ratio.

### DISCLAIMER

Canoeing and kayaking are assumed risk sports. When taking part, you are assumed to be aware and accepting of the risks associated with these sports. The person mainly responsible for your safety is you. If you do not adhere to the clubs' safety policy, you may be putting yourself and others at risk.