

Ulverston Canoe Club

Operating Procedures

Paddlesports are adventurous, "assumed risk" activities and expose participants to hazards and risks which may result in injury and even death. These Operating Procedures (OPs) are provided to assist club members, prospective members and guests taking part in club activities ("participants") make informed decisions and to provide advice and information which will help mitigate these risks. Participants should read these OPs and seek further advice or clarification from any committee member or Activity Leader before taking part in club activities.

Due to nature of paddlesport and the aim of our Health & Safety policy to "deliver all club activities in as safe a manner as reasonably practicable", participants in club activities are required to comply with these OPs and with any instruction given by an Activity Leader during club activities for their own safety and that of others.

Responsibility for club activities lies with the trustees of the charity who delegate day-to-day operational responsibility for such activities to the club committee via the club Safety Officer. However, it must be noted that, despite these OPs and the best efforts of the club committee and Activity Leaders, participants are responsible for seeking information and advice, and for understanding the risks associated with any activity in which they choose to partake - participants are ultimately responsible for their own safety and that of others.

Participants must also understand that the club cannot remove all risk and that participating in club activities may result in their suffering injury or death.

1 Club Committee

The Club shall be conducted by an Executive Committee which shall consist of the Chair and Treasurer of Trustees plus a Secretary and Welfare Officer who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Members elected to the Committee will serve a term of 1 year and be eligible for re-election, subject to terms of service limitation set out in the Club Constitution (and as imposed by the Charity Commission).

Other members may be co-opted to support the Executive Committee. Co-opted members plus the Executive Committee will collectively form the General Committee.

All Committee members must be members of The Club.

The Executive Committee may elect a Vice Chair from among its number.

If the post of any Officer should fall vacant after such an election, the Executive Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy pro-tem until the next Annual General Meeting.

The Executive Committee will be responsible for adopting new policy, codes of practice and rules that affect the organisation and operation of The Club.

The Executive Committee will have powers to appoint advisers to the Committee as necessary to fulfil its business.

The General Committee will be responsible for disciplinary hearings of members who infringe The Club rules/regulations/constitution and for taking any action of suspension or discipline following such hearings.

Committee meetings will be convened by the Secretary of the Club and be held no less than six times per year.

Only those posts held by elected Officers will have voting rights at committee meetings.

The quorum required for business to be agreed at Committee meetings will be half of the elected Officers in post plus one other: decisions arrived at by the General Committee will be passed to the Executive Committee for consideration.

2 Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings

General Meetings are the means whereby the members of The Club exercise their democratic rights in conducting The Club's affairs.

The Club shall hold the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the month of January or as soon as possible thereafter to:

- Approve the minutes of the previous AGM;
- Receive reports from the Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Welfare Officer;
- Approve the Annual Accounts;
- Approve the Trustees Annual Report;
- Elect Trustees, who shall elect a Chair and Treasurer if these roles are vacant;
- Elect officers to the Executive Committee;
- Agree the membership fees for the following year;
- Consider any proposed changes to the Constitution;
- Deal with any other relevant business.

Notice of General Meetings will be given by The Club secretary with at least fourteen days notice to be given to all members.

Nominations for officers of the committee and trustees will be received by the Secretary at least seven days prior to a General Meeting.

Proposed changes to the Constitution shall be received by the secretary at least fourteen days prior to a General Meeting and the Secretary shall circulate these to all members at least seven days before a General Meeting.

All Club members have the right to vote at General Meetings.

Subject to conditions detailed in section 5 of the Club Constitution, the quorum for General Meetings shall be the greater of 5% of the total membership or three members. Each adult included in a Family membership counts an individual member.

The Chair of the Club shall hold a deliberative as well as a casting vote at General and Committee meetings.

An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called by an application in writing to the Secretary supported by at least 15% of the members of The Club. The Executive Committee shall also have the power to call an EGM by decision of a simple majority of the Executive Committee members.

3 Amendments to the Constitution

Changes to the constitution are governed by Clause 28 of the UCC constitution which is provided by clauses 224-227 of the Charities Act 2011

4 Club Finances

The Club Treasurer will be responsible for the finances of The Club and adhere to the Club Financial Policy.

The financial year of The Club will run from 1st of November to 31st October each year.

Club monies will be banked in an account held in the name of The Club and the treasurer may retain a cash float for incidental use.

An audited statement of annual accounts will be presented by the Treasurer at the Annual General Meeting and any other General Meeting.

Any cheques drawn against club funds should be signed by the Treasurer plus one other Executive Officer.

5 Club Activities

A club activity is an activity organized by a club member, led by a club Activity Leader and advertised either on the club website calendar or by email from a committee member using the ulverstoncc@gmail.com email account. Officers of the club and participants in club activities enjoy liability insurance cover as provided under the terms of our club affiliation to British Canoeing. All club activities are run with due consideration of "Environmental Definitions and Deployment Guidance for Leaders and Coaches" and further guidance provided by British Canoeing.

Any activity not organized and advertised as above will not be deemed to be a club activity and will not benefit from any kind of insurance associated with the club's affiliation.

Any club member may organize a club activity but the Activity Leader delivering the activity should hold qualifications appropriate to the nature of the activity or be deemed sufficiently experienced to lead the activity and "signed off" by the club committee to act as an Activity Leader for that activity. Activity organisers should have "their" activity added to the club website or emailed to members by a committee member.

The names and details of Activity Leaders will be held on file by the club secretary and made available via committee members.

6 Delivering Club Activities

Activity Leaders are responsible for delivering club activities within the spirit of these Operating Procedures and are responsible for risk assessing any activity which they deliver. The club Safety Officer is available to offer support, advice and guidance on matters of safety, as are members of the committee.

It is recognized that environmental conditions and other factors are dynamic and it may occasionally be reasonable to deviate from these OPs provided that such deviation is justifiable within any risk assessment relating to the activity taking place.

Activity Leaders choosing to deviate from these OPs should outline their rationale and proposed actions with participants before continuing with the activity and accompany participants to a place of safety if they choose not to continue with the activity.

Individuals may participate in club activities as determined by the Activity Leader who should give due consideration to the nature of the activity and competence / experience of those wishing to participate. Activity Leaders are expected to make inclusive decisions wherever possible and will be supported by the club Safety Officer where decisions are made which err on the side of "playing it safe".

Guests (i.e. non-club members) may participate in club paddling activities on up to four occasions (i.e. 4 days) and benefit from liability insurance cover. If they wish to participate further then they must first join the Club.

7 General Guidance relating to club activities

Activity Leaders shall ensure that appropriate kit and resources, appropriate to the planned activity, and risk assessment(s) are available to the group throughout the activity. This includes First Aid and Safety kit and communications equipment. If you are unsure what this entails please ask the Safety Officer, a committee member or Activity Leader for further information.

- Activity Leaders should give participants an adequate briefing prior to taking to the water or initiating club activities.
- Decisions made / instructions given by Activity Leaders should be adhered to by participants.
- Helmets should be worn during moving water activity or where there is a significant risk of head injury (e.g. when rock hopping in sea kayaks, assisting from river banks) or as requested by Activity Leaders.
- Buoyancy Aids ("PFDs") should be worn whenever on or near the water.
- Appropriate footwear should be worn during wet activities, on or near the water.
- Participants should be appropriately dressed and carry adequate food, drink and personal equipment for the planned activity as well as for any unexpected delay or incident which may occur.
- Participants should carry any requisite personal medication and are strongly encouraged to carry their own First Aid, Safety and Rescue kit and to know how to use them.
- Participants taking part in club activities who wish to use their own personal or borrowed equipment are responsible for ensuring that it is appropriate for the planned activity. Activity Leaders should check that such equipment is appropriate for the planned activity and offer appropriate advice if there are any concerns. If the Activity Leader considers that equipment is not suitable for the planned activity then it should not be used.

8 Minimum age

The Club does not have minimum age limits but when young people (under 18 years of age) participate in club activities they should be accompanied by a named adult who will be responsible for the young person / people, effectively acting in loco parentis.

9 Accidents and Incidents

While every effort will be made to promote and deliver safe activities, we operate in a dynamic environment where risk cannot be completely removed. In the event of any accident or incident occurring during a club activity those involved are asked to complete an Incident Observation and Report Form (available on the club website) and forward it to a committee member as soon as reasonably possible.

Observation reports will primarily be used as an opportunity to learn from experience but may be crucial in the event of any liability claim being brought against the club, a leader or member, etc. and completed reports may be passed to British Canoeing and other organisations.

10 Policies & Procedures

Ulverston Canoe Club has adopted several Policies as outlined below. Our policy documents are available to view on the club website or from committee members. Members are encouraged to read the full policies and to comply with them. Please see any committee member if you have any questions or would like clarification on matters of club policy.

Disciplinary Policy

The essence of our Disciplinary Policy is that we operate in a safe, supportive manner where "everybody plays nicely".

Any member with concerns in this area should contact the Activity Leader or a committee member for advice or to seek further action.

Equipment Policy

The club owns a small amount of equipment (kit) which is available for use on club activities. The club Safety Bag contains a substantial first aid kit and group shelter and should be taken on all club activities (unless an Activity Leader provides alternate, equivalent kit).

Boats and other kit are available to participants to use during club activities. Users are responsible for club kit, for returning it in good order and in a timely manner. Users of club kit are asked to make a small donation help fund the upkeep or acquisition of club kit.

Equity Policy

Our equity policy is a central tenet of our club; we are fully committed to making paddlesport available to all, without any form of discrimination and in a safe, supportive environment.

Financial Policy

We are small club run by volunteers as well as a registered charity subject to regulation by the Charity Commission; we accept our responsibility to ensure that our club conducts its finances lawfully and responsibly.

The trustees of the charity are responsible for management of our finances and delegate the day-to-day management through the club committee to the treasurer. Our treasurer updates the committee on the bank balance at each committee meeting and presents a full set of audited accounts at General Meetings. Any club member may request, through the club chair, sight of the club accounts.

Health & Safety Policy

The health, safety and welfare of our members, friends and guests is of paramount concern to the club committee and trustees.

We aim to deliver all club activities in as safe a manner as reasonably practicable, adopting numerous policies and procedures to support this aim but also expect participants to accept responsibility for their own health and safety.

If at any time participants are concerned or unsure about any aspect of an activity they must ask for clarification from the activity leader and satisfy themselves that their safety is being given due consideration. Activity leaders have a responsibility to all participants and must make decisions with the interest of the wider group foremost while offering support and consideration to individuals within the group. Any concerns over the delivery of an activity should be discussed with the club Safety Officer or committee member.

Manual Handling Policy

Canoes and sea kayaks in particular can be both heavy and awkward loads. Even short river kayaks can be awkward loads especially in high winds, when moving over rough or slippery ground and when people are not sufficiently warmed up or are cold. Due care must be taken when lifting and moving such loads in order to avoid strains or more serious injury.

Typically at least two adults should work together when moving heavy boats and it may be prudent for more people to work together where circumstances dictate.

Membership Policy

Our membership policy is that we welcome all to our club and levy annual membership fees. Where any individual finds this fee prohibitive we have a procedure in place to help facilitate membership; details on this in the full policy document or from any committee member.

Paddler Development Policy

We are committed to supporting paddler development in order to further our charitable objective of increasing access to paddlesport.

All members who complete a recognized level 2 first aid course will be eligible for a refund of their annual membership fee. In addition, members may apply for financial support towards an appropriate course or assessment.

Applications will be considered by the committee on a case-by-case basis who will consider the contribution made to the club by the applicant prior to the application being submitted. Contributions towards assessments will only be made on successful completion of the assessment by the applicant.

Recruitment Policy

As a small club we do not have a burning need to recruit for committee or trustee positions. Where we do identify a need to recruit we will take appropriate measures commensurate with our Safeguarding Policy, possibly requesting DBS or similar checks be carried out before filling a post.

Safeguarding & Protection Policy

We recognise the need to safeguard the well-being of all our members and have adopted a robust safeguarding and protection policy which all members are required to abide by.

Members are expected to show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of others and to conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the ethos of the Club.

We have trained Welfare and Deputy Welfare Officers who may be approached for advice or to share concerns regarding safeguarding and welfare matters and provide information and contact details for British Canoeing and Cumbria County Council Safeguarding and Protection teams.

Review and Updating

These Operating Procedures are available on the club website and subject to review on a regular basis.