

SAFETY PLAN

CHELMSFORD WINTER SERIES MARATHON-SUNDAY 11TH JANUARY 2026

Authors: Chelmsford Canoe Club Racing Section Committee

Date: 28th November 2025

1. AUTHORISATION

The event is being run by CHELMSFORD CANOE CLUB (CLM) as a local inter-club marathon competition in collaboration with the Flatwater Racing Association clubs.

2. RACE ORGANISING TEAM – KEY PERSONNEL

Chelmsford Canoe Club Racing Section Committee will appoint

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| 1. Race Organiser | Owen Shephard-Wyatt |
| 2. Safety Coordinator | Owen Shephard-Wyatt |
| 3. First Aid Coordinator | Owen Shephard-Wyatt |
| 4. Welfare Officer | Zowie Shephard-Wyatt |

The Safety Coordinator will have final approval of the safety arrangements assisted by the Race Organiser.

The Race Organiser will appoint:

- Marshals at key points on the bank at the start finish points, turns.
- A safety boat to follow the youngest group of competitors to sweep the course., and other safety boats to be present at the start, turn and in the Channel.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment has been prepared which covers activities on land and water and the impact on other river users and members of the public.

4. WELFARE

The club has a Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy overseen by the Club Welfare Officer. If the Club Welfare Officer is not available to be the Welfare representative on the day, another club member will act as Welfare Officer for the event. Their contact details will be published as part of the race details. Children and vulnerable adults to be monitored by their own parent/carer, or the visiting club to appoint someone to accompany their juniors with the appropriate parental consent.

Marshals and other staff involved in the event will not be DBS cleared. However, the nature of the race means that no individuals should need to be alone with children or vulnerable adults.

5. INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

PARTICIPANTS

Risk Assessment and Safety Plan to be submitted to Chelmsford Canoe Club Safety Officer and published on the events page of the Flatwater Racing Association website before the day

Copy of the Risk Assessment & Safety Plan to be available for inspection by all on the day

Specific written instructions will be prepared for the marshals and safety boats including special attention to the Accident and Emergency Action Plan

A race briefing will be held on the day to highlight the key points for competitors including any last minute issues

A marshals' briefing will be held on the day to highlight the key points for marshals and safety officials including any last minute issues.

PUBLIC

Signs giving notice of the race will be displayed at the landing stages and key points on river.

6. RACE ENTRIES

Race details are published on the Flatwater Water Racing Association website. Entries are permitted on the day. Participants are registered onto a computer spreadsheet.

The majority of participants attending are part of a club team and must be endorsed by their club's appointed Team Leader. Those attending as independents must show evidence of personal on-water membership of Paddle UK and if under 18 must also be endorsed by an adult responsible for them.

Data will be held in line with CLM/FRA Privacy Policies.

7. VEHICLE AND TRAILER ACCESS ROUTES

There are substantial public car parks adjacent to the river. Visiting Clubs are advised to park their trailers in the public car park at Baddow Road. No special precautions are considered necessary.

8. BOAT STORAGE ARRANGEMENTS

There is restricted space along the side of the waterways to store boats and some space at Chelmsford Canoe Club. Boats are the responsibility of their owners.

9. BOAT CHECKING

Boats must have sufficient buoyancy to remain afloat and support the crew in the event of a capsize, and this must be provided by fixed flotation material or sealed bulkheads. Paddlers and Team Leaders will be reminded of this in the pre-race instructions and any boat noticed to be non-compliant will be disqualified. Random spot checks of boats will be undertaken as the paddlers get onto the water and any unsafe craft discovered will be disqualified.

10. LAUNCHING AND LANDING PROVISION

There are two landing stages at Chelmsford Canoe Club for launching craft. There is also a signed portage point near Baddow Road car park. this involves crossing a busy cycle/foot path and competitors must take care not to obstruct the path at any time when launching or disembarking.

11. CIRCULATION PATTERNS TO BE FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES DURING THE PERIOD OF RACING AND WARM-UP, WARM-DOWN

The race course will be confirmed on the day and a map will be available for viewing. This will be mentioned at the competitors briefing. All turns will be anticlockwise. All competitors must endeavour to stay river right and follow normal river etiquette.

12. WHEN AND WHERE PADDLERS / TEAMS CAN PRACTICE, WARM UP AND COOL DOWN ON THE WATER

Competitors will be able to warm up and cool down on the River Chelmer (outside the Canoe Club) . Cool down should be carried out upstream of the finish line, and paddlers should not re-cross the finish line.

Marshals will call paddlers to the pre-start line 5-min before the race start, where they will be lined up in class order.

13. BUOYS

Turn buoys which are chained and weighted will be put into place before the Race Start and collected in immediately after the Race. The turn buoys to be used have been approved by Chelmsford Canoe Club Insurers.

14. ANY SPECIAL POINTS OF DANGER ON OR NEAR THE COURSE

The race will be run above the Automatic Weir – Confluence through the town to the black pedestrian bridge in Admirals Park & back, depending upon race distance will finish outside the club or before the confluence. There will be no portages. The Start area will be above the automatic weir which has a buoyed floating safety line. A reasonable distance will be maintained between the weir and the start line. The sides of the river in some places (The Channel) are high walls and there are safety ropes at the edges and ladders. There are some low bridges which are marked. The first part of the race would be against the flow.

The course is subject to change depending of safety factors.

Landing Stages for launching/landing can be slippery.

15. MARSHALLING INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTROL

The pre-start marshal may use a loud hailer to control the waiting competitors. The start marshal and pre-start marshal will be within hearing distance of each-other. Marshals will be stationed on the banks at start/finish, turns, and in safety boats, will use their mobile phones to keep in contact – list of phone numbers collated at Marshalls briefing.

16. SAFETY BOAT TYPE, NUMBERS AND LOCATIONS

At least one safety boat will follow the youngest paddlers around the short course. Other safety boats will be positioned at the start, turn and each end of the Channel. Additional safety cover will be provided if conditions require.

It is part of standard race rules that all competitors must stop to help another competitor who is in the water and not already being helped or any paddler in distress.

17. SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR THE COMPETITION

The on-water safety marshals will use equipment (including buoyancy aids) provided by themselves and/or their clubs. CLM will supply throw lines to the bank marshals (who haven't got their own) where it would be practical to deploy them.

18. FIRST AID POSITIONS

A First Aid kit will be stationed at the Clubhouse and turn. The main first aid point will be at CLM Reception where a nominated first aider will be available. The main marshals will also be equipped with small first aid kits. Casualties requiring further attention should attend Broomfield Accident & Emergency Hospital. CM1 7ET.

19. MEDICAL SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

If additional medical support is required we shall call 999.

20. SUMMONING HELP

Minor injuries will be dealt with by the designated first aider based at CLM. For more serious injuries, casualties will be advised to attend Broomfield Accident & Emergency Hospital CM1 7ET. Marshalls will have mobile phones which can be used to dial 999 if emergency medical assistance is required. Marshalls should also inform Race Organiser at the earliest possible opportunity. Any competitor withdrawing from the race must notify Marshalls & Race Organiser immediately.

21. CANCELLING OR SUSPENSION OF THE COMPETITION

If the course is suspected to be in an unsafe condition due to prevailing or recent weather, the Race Organiser will need to view the conditions at key points along the course on the previous day and consider whether the race should be cancelled or modified.

If the competition is cancelled or suspended, this information will be distributed as soon as possible to all Team Leaders and published on the Flatwater Racing Association website where the original race details appeared, as well as the CLM website www.chelmsfordcanoecub.co.uk

If the competition needs to be cancelled whilst in progress, the Safety Officer & Race Organisers will make a decision to cancel and inform the Marshalls who in turn will stop the race. All competitors are expected to follow the instructions delivered by the Race Marshalls, this will be in the race briefing.

22. EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN WITH DETAILS OF IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

See CLM Accident and Emergency Action Plan.

23. INCIDENT REPORTING

Competitors and Team Leaders will be reminded at the briefing of their responsibility to report incidents to the Race Organiser. The Race Organiser will in turn report major incidents to waterways authorities (Chelmsford City Council) and to Paddle UK and their insurers.

24. POST-EVENT REVIEW

After the event, all those involved especially organisers and marshals will be invited to contribute their thoughts about problems encountered and suggested improvements. These will be recorded in a document which will be circulated to the organising committee at the time and again to the organising committee of the next race before the next event. The Risk Assessment, Safety Plan and any other procedures will be revised in the light of this learning.