



**Leighton Buzzard Canoe Club  
LBCC Winter Series Marathon  
Event**

Risk Assessment Number	26	Date of Assessment		24 Nov 2025	Date of next Review	Annually before event
Establishment	Leighton Buzzard Canoe Club	Activity		Winter Series Event	Assessment Type See Note 1	Specific

Assessed by	Steve Oxtoby	Position		LBCC Safety Officer	
Approved by	Nigel Dixon	Position		Chairman of LBCC Committee	

Hazards	Who is at Risk	Initial Risk Factor (Likelihood x Consequence) See Note 2	Control Measures (Specific existing Control Measures)	Action by (Responsibility, Date)	Additional Controls (Each Control measure is to be specific and managed)	Mitigated Risk Rating (See Note 4)
Vehicles in car park crush injuries to personnel transiting around car park to club house	All spectators and competitors	1 x 2 = 2 (Low)	Parking area is isolated on school land. Parking marshals will be on site to guide vehicles into parking area. Parking marshals will be wearing High Visibility vests.	Race Organiser, Car Park Marshal Race day	Controls adequate but continue to monitor	2
Placing kayaks on water from the landing stage and lifting boats out of the water, removing water from capsized kayak, back injury manual handling	All competitors	2 x 1 = 2 (Low)	Bank Marshals will be available to keep landing stage clear of all persons other than competitors who will be getting on and off the water. All competitors are trained in correct lifting techniques for the kayaks.  All capsized kayaks will be emptied of water prior to them being removed from the water in order to reduce weight and breakage of the kayak. All paddlers are trained in correct lifting emptying of kayaks and canoes after capsize.	Race Organisers, Marshals Race day	Controls adequate but continue to monitor	2
Uneven ground	All competitors and spectators	1 x 2 = 2	All competitor's boats will be kept on the school field adjacent to the	Race Organiser Race Day	Controls adequate but	2

		(Low)	<p>landing stage prior to the race. Tow path users will be warned of kayaks and competitors exiting the field to the landing stage. All competitors will gain access to landing stage by the steps of ramp, landing stage to be kept clear.</p> <p>Note towpath is a right of way and should be kept clear at all times.</p>		continue to monitor	
Capsize (Drowning)	All competitors	1 x 3 = 3 (Med)	<p>Buoyancy aids are to be worn in accordance with Paddle UK guidelines. All paddlers ranked division 7, 8 and 9 or U16 years are to wear buoyancy aids.</p> <p>Buoyancy aids are correctly sized for the individual.</p> <p>All paddlers can be told to wear buoyancy aids by the Club Organiser in exceptional water conditions.</p> <p>The depth of water does not exceed 1.35mtrs mid channel and 0.9mtrs at the edges, many of the paddlers can stand on the bottom and wade to the canal edge.</p> <p>The canal is considered sheltered water with no current or flow that can pose a risk.</p> <p>Qualified first aiders are on site with telephones if required.</p> <p>All immersion into the water is kept to a minimum.</p> <p>All paddlers are strongly advised to wear suitable footwear.</p> <p>Immersion into the water is kept to a minimum.</p>	Race Organiser Marshals Race Day	Controls adequate but continue to monitor	1X 2 = 2

			All paddlers are taught to assist with any paddler in the water. Marshals at high-risk points such as turns to have throwlines All LBCC Helpers have mobile phones and have local knowledge of area to direct emergency services if required. Marshals to have access to What3Words location for marshal points to assist in summoning aid.			
Competitors becoming lost/unaccounted for	All competitors	1 X 1 = 1 (Low)	Turn buoys to be located at extent of course with marshals to ensure correct course taken. Also turn notices to be placed and details given in pre-event briefing. Marshals to check off competitors by race numbers and provide assistance when required and to be provided with first aid kit and to be in contact with race control. Most junior races to have sweep boats	Race Organiser Sweep boat marshals Race day	Controls adequate	1
Towpath collisions (Minor physical Injury)	All spectators and visitors	1X 2= 2 (Low)	Event marshal is to ensure that those following on bikes are reminded that they must give way to all other towpath users at all times and keep their speed to a minimum. Signs will be displayed along the towpath warning towpath users of the event.	Race Organiser Volunteer sign poster 2 weeks before. Marshals Race day	Controls adequate	2
Towpath slips trips and falls	All spectators and visitors	1 X 2 =2 (Low)	Review condition of towpath especially considering wintry conditions and warn visitors appropriately	Race Organiser During week before		2

Prizegiving podium slips trips and falls	Prizewinners	1 X 2 = 2 (Low)	Ensure that podium steps are properly secured to each other and weighted down to avoid movement in use	Race Organiser Race Day	Controls Adequate	2
Portages Manual handling (Muscle injury slips, trips and falls)	Subject to class	2 x 2 = 4 (Med)	All paddlers are to wear appropriate non slip footwear. Paddlers are encouraged to respect other canal towpath users reducing third party liability. Marshalls are to control paddlers and warn them about risks of running at portage and warn public when necessary. All paddlers are to obey instructions from all marshals. Signs will be placed along the towpath indicating an event is taking place. Some junior and para-canoe entrants may be assisted by helpers at portages	Race Organiser, Sign Volunteer 2 weeks before Marshals Race day	Controls adequate but continue to monitor	1 x2= 2
Waterborne Bacteria Leptospirosis(Weils Disease)	All paddlers	1 x 2 = 2 (Low)	All paddlers will be reminded by the event organiser as to the signs and symptoms associated with this disease. All paddlers will be encouraged to shower after paddling. All cuts and grazes are to be covered prior to paddling. Canal water is not to be drunk. Unnecessary immersion is discouraged in the canal	Race Organiser Briefing notes	Controls adequate	2
Collision with other watercraft Narrow Boats (Physical injury)	All paddlers	1 x 2 = 2 (Low)	All paddlers are to adhere to the waterways code. Paddlers will keep clear of narrow boats. Obey instruction from bank marshals.	Race Organiser Marshals Briefing Race day	Controls adequate	2

			Paddlers advised to maintain suitable distance to moored vessels.			
Derelict and sunken craft Risk of capsize and injury through collision with unsecured or sunken craft or debris	All Paddlers	1 X 2 = 2 (Low)	Derelict and burnt out craft are becoming more frequent around Leighton Buzzard and can pose a risk. Inspect course in the period prior to the event and if such hazards are found. Notify Canal and Rivers Trust and warn paddlers about it in the event briefing	Safety Officer and briefing	Controls Adequate	2
Collision at locks and lock gates (Physical injury)	All competitors	1 x 2 = 2 (Low)	Paddlers do not use locks or paddle into them Paddlers are taught to portage safely around locks. Portaging is part of the event dynamics	No actions	Controls adequate	2
Swans and ducks (Physical injury)	All competitors	2 x 1 = 2 (Low)	Paddlers are reminded to respect the wildlife and where necessary provide a wide berth or portage around swans and ducks. Event is outside of nesting season.	No Actions	Controls adequate	2
Capsize Sharps in canal bed (cuts)	All competitors	2 x 1 = 2 (Low)	Keep unnecessary immersion into the water to a minimum. All paddlers are encouraged to wear suitable footwear. Qualified first aid personnel will be at points along the race and club house. Marshals have first aid kit	No specific action	Controls adequate	2
Fire	All spectators and visitors	1 x 1 = 1 (Low)	Fire notices posted in club house, evacuation plan in place	No specific action	Controls adequate	1
Anti Social Behaviour	Competitors and spectators	1x 1 = 1 (Low)	Competitors will be instructed to follow the Waterways Code which should minimise potential conflicts with other users. The posting of notices will let fishermen and	No action	Control adequate	1

			others know what to expect. Marshals will be located at all key points and will be tasked with collecting information about incidents			
Weather Conditions Adding additional risk (Risk of injury and equipment damage)	Competitors and spectators	2 X 2 = 4 (Med)	Monitor weather and canal conditions prior to event and prepare to call off event if there is a risk of ice on the canal. Consider modifying course and not running certain most junior elements in the event of severe weather. Consider road conditions forecast and if necessary, advise cancellation ahead of time to avoid visiting competitors travelling in unsafe conditions Delay event if there is a significant risk of lightning strikes.	Race Organiser During week prior  On day	Controls adequate	1 X 2 = 2
Hypothermia	Competitors	1 X 3 = 3 (Med)	Race information and briefing to stress need for proper clothing and buoyancy aids. Sweep boat to follow most junior races. Marshal packs to include foil space blanket.	Race Organiser to check marshal packs Days Prior to race		1 X 2 = 2
Safeguarding measures	Club	1 x 2 = 2 (Low)	Safeguarding policy is in place refer to LBCC policy document 05a safeguarding children and young people	No Specific Action	Controls adequate	1 X 1 = 1

**Notes:**

- 1 If using a 'Generic' risk assessment, Assessors and reviewers are to satisfy themselves that the assessment is valid for the activity and that all significant hazards have been identified and assessed. If additional hazards are identified they are to be recorded and attached to the Generic assessment.
- 2 The Assessor and reviewers are to note that they are responsible for the production of the risk assessment and that they by approving it indicate that the risk assessment is suitable and sufficient and they consider the risks to be acceptable.

High	Common, regular or frequent occurrence.	3	3 Med	6 High	9 High
Medium	Occasional occurrence.	2	2 Low	4 Med	6 High

Low	Rare or improbable occurrence.	1	1 Low	2 Low	3 Med
Risk Matrix Likelihood X Consequence			1	2	3
			Minor injury or illness.	Serious injury or illness.	Fatalities, major injury or illness.
			Low	Medium	High

3 When recording the Risk Rating ensure that both the Likelihood and Consequence scores are included.

High	Improve control measures or consider not undertaking task. Conducting training at this level of risk is to be reported to the club committee.
Medium	Review control measures and improve if reasonably practicable to do so, consider alternative ways of carrying out task.
Low	Maintain control measures and review if there are any changes.

4 Record the residual Risk Rating to demonstrate that the risk has been reduced to an acceptable level.

5 All Risk Assessments are to be reviewed annually additional reviews maybe required as follows:-

- If there is reason to doubt the effectiveness of the assessment.
- Following an accident or near miss.
- Following significant changes to the activity.
- Following changes to personnel.
- If "Generic" and prior to undertaking the activity.

Comments	
1. Boat Licensing. All paddlers are required to have Paddle UK membership as a condition of entry, or be covered by participating club cadet scheme for some juniors. This confers insurance and a licence to paddle on the canal. 2. Public Liability insurance for £10 million via Paddle UK policy has already been submitted. 3. Clean dry and check principles will be applied by requiring all visiting boats and equipment to be cleaned and dried prior to travelling to the start and by providing wash down facilities at the race end. All club boats are required to be washed down after every paddle session	