



Rugby Canoe Club

Members Booklet

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Introduction

Rugby Canoe Club is based in Rugby and exists to promote the sport of canoeing mainly from around the Rugby and Coventry area.

The club has a web site at <https://www.rugbycanoeclub.org.uk>

You will have been invited to attend an Introductory session, when you first expressed an interest in RCC. Now you have become a full member of the club, we have found that new members soon require more information. This booklet therefore, has been produced for your benefit, please take time to read it and keep it for reference.

Structure

The club is legally an unincorporated body. It is run under the rules of 'The Constitution'. This creates a management committee with the power to run the club and act on behalf of the members. The Management Committee is re-elected each year at the AGM. The AGM is held towards the end of February. A copy of the current constitution may be requested by members. It may also be accessed via the club's web site. It is not included here because it would become out of date with time.

The constitution gives the management committee the power to decide on anything that is not specifically covered by the constitution.

The club is completely voluntary and has no paid employees.

It is an open club with membership available to anyone who has paid the relevant fees.

The club is affiliated to British Canoeing (BC) which is the governing body of the sport in the UK and is a member of the International Canoe Federation.

The club has been awarded Quality Club status by British Canoeing in recognition of meeting the required standards for a well-managed canoe club.

Equal Opportunities

Rugby Canoe Club operates an equal opportunities policy that endorses the British Canoeing Paddle for All policy.

Therefore, individuals are not discriminated against in anyway because of age, gender, disability, creed, colour, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic origin or social status.

The club will do all that is reasonable to enable members to participate in club activities.

Regular Activities

Draycote – Summer Months

We have regular sessions at Draycote Water Reservoir from around Easter to mid-September. Monday evening is the main club night but there is also a separate session on a Saturday morning, subject to there being a suitably qualified member available to run it. If it is not able to be run, then an email message will be sent out to members on the Friday evening.

Draycote map: -

<http://draycotewater.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Site-Plan-REVISED.jpg>

Draycote Monday Night Sessions

Monday evening sessions officially start on the water at 6:30pm. The session ends between 7:00pm and 8:30pm as the sunset times change during the summer. The sessions end as directed by the duty person.

The sessions cater for all age ranges although the younger members may be coached in a separate group because these are specifically arranged to cater for all needs.

To be ready for the 6:30 start we recommend you arrive by about 6:00pm to off load boats and get changed. Whenever possible fees should be paid prior to attendance by contacting the bookings email bookings@rugbycanoeclub.org.uk. You will then receive a payment link via a Zettle (by PayPal) mobile phone app, which you should pay before attending.

The Draycote sessions cover training for the British Canoeing (BC) paddling awards (Start, Discover & Explore), general paddling around the reservoir, games and other activities depending on weather conditions, numbers of

paddlers and coaches. The club has a variety of craft, including kayaks, touring boats, Open Canadians and Stand-up Paddle Boards (SUPs), which may be hired or you may use your own boats.

There are changing rooms with showers and a bar which members are encouraged to socialise in after paddling.

At Draycote there is large car park on the right-hand side, below the dam, as you drive up to the sailing club. This has a section marked for use by Sailing Club members, which is the one that you should use. A parking sticker for this car park may be obtained from the reception desk. If you need to drive up to the clubhouse to drop off boats or kit, then you will need to enter your changing room code at the keypad, located on a post below the barrier to open the access barrier.

(Please note that there is normally no meeting on Spring Bank Holiday Monday or Easter Monday. In these cases, we meet on a Tuesday instead, subject to there being sufficient coach cover).

Pool – Winter Months

During the winter (typically from the end of the Draycote sessions in September to just before Easter) we meet at Rugby School Pool on Friday nights. The pool is booked from 7:00pm to 8:00pm. We split the time into two 25 minute sessions. (Actual paddling times are reduced slightly due to the need to change over and to get the equipment ready and put away after the sessions).

The pool is a good place for practice of rolling, capsizе drills, recovery strokes and rescue techniques in a nice warm environment. There is limited space available so coaching techniques must be adapted to match the space available.

Due to demand it is normally necessary to book boats in advance. (See section on booking boats for more information.)

Fitness Training

We hold regular training sessions for fitness training on the canal at the Brownsover Picnic site. These are held every Wednesday starting at 6:30pm.

These sessions run throughout the year, using light available from the local street lighting during the winter months. They are only cancelled when the ice is too thick to break or we have no coach available.

Locations

Draycote Water is located on the A426 between Rugby and Southam. It is about 1.5 miles from the centre of Dunchurch. (Grid ref 464693). Head south from Rugby, through Dunchurch turn right off the main road into Draycote Water Country Park. (This is clearly marked from the main road). Continue up the driveway which bends to the right as you drive up a hill. There is a large car park located on the right of this road, just after entering the site. Cars should be left here in the section marked Sailing Club. If you wish to off load equipment you may drive up to the clubhouse to unload but must return your car to the car park. (You are not allowed to park on the slipways or outside the club house.) Also, to gain car access to the clubhouse you will be given a code number to open the access barrier and to gain access to the changing rooms.

Rugby School Pool is located off Horton Crescent in Rugby. From the town centre take the A428 towards Hillmorton. Horton Crescent is on the right-hand side just before you get to the main Rugby Sports Centre. The Rugby School Sports Centre is at the far side of the 'circle' of Horton Crescent.

The Brownsover Picnic site is the location of the fitness training sessions and is on the Boughton road, heading from the Leicester Road (A426) towards the railway station. It is located between the Leicester Road roundabout and the mini roundabout which leads onto the Brownsover housing estate.

Facilities

Both the Pool and Draycote Water have changing rooms and showers.

There is a bar at Draycote. Although all members can go in the bar, we do expect younger members to be supervised.

The club has about 24 general purpose kayaks and associated equipment available for hire, plus some Stand-up Paddle Boards. Whilst they are normally used for the Monday night sessions, they are also available for hire for river trips and weekends away by arrangement with the committee. Some boats are only suitable for flat or placid water so will only be allowed to be used on suitable water. Other boats are full White-water specification so can be used for river trips.

When you hire a boat for use at Draycote you will be offered a helmet, buoyancy aid, spray deck and paddle for use during the session. We aim to have enough of these to kit out anyone hiring a boat but, due to everyone being different

sizes we may occasionally run short of suitable sized buoyancy aids or helmets. We do have a limited number of cagoules but we do not guarantee there will be enough of these so you should try to bring your own.

The club also has a few specialist boats that can be hired by members to try. These include a marathon racing boat, a slalom racing boat, three Open Canadians, two touring kayaks, a double kayak and a sit-upon kayak.

The club has a number of qualified coaches and very experienced paddlers who are normally available to help coach paddlers. We generally run training up to the BC Explore test level (see later notes for information on the paddling awards) on an informal basis on the Monday nights. Other more formal courses are sometimes organised (e.g. White-Water Safety and Rescue Course etc.). Please remember that all coaches are voluntary and sometimes we do not have enough to provide all the tuition that we would like.

Booking Boats

If you would like to book a boat for use at Draycote or the Pool session, please contact bookings@rugbycanoecub.org.uk

We prefer that you book boats in advance for both Draycote and the pool sessions. This means that the Zettle payment link can be sent and payment made, which reduces the workload at the registration desk. It is also advisable to book in advance if you are using club equipment to avoid disappointment.

Once you book a boat you are committed to paying the hire charge. However, if you cancel the booking and we can re-let the boat to another person you will not be charged. Thus, if you cannot make a session for a boat that you have booked, please let us know as early as possible so we have as much chance as possible to re-let it. This policy was introduced since we were turning away many people wishing to book boats when they later became unused due to people not turning up.

At Draycote, after getting changed, you should go to the duty person (near the boat store) and you will be given the appropriate equipment. When you have finished, please empty any water out of the boat then return the boat and equipment to the duty person.

Costs

There is an annual membership fee plus charges for paddling at Draycote and for using the pool. If you wish to hire a club boat at Draycote there is an extra charge. It is also possible to hire boats for use on trips etc.

Actual charges have not been printed here since they do change from time to time. For the latest charges please see the club newsletter or the website.

Children

The club accepts members from the age of 8. Where members have children younger than this, they may bring them to club events but they must be supervised by their guardian at all times.

Children are legally defined as being under the age of 18.

Welfare

We operate in accordance with the **BC Welfare Policy**. Please contact the BC or committee members for further information.

The Club supports this policy by having a Welfare officer. (See useful numbers in the newsletter or on the web site)

All club officials and coaches are Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked on a three-year rotation basis.

Unaccompanied Children on Regular Club Activities

This applies to Draycote, fitness training and pool sessions and for children aged 8 to 18 years.

Unless the parents/guardian of a child will be accompanying the child on the water at all times, we will ask all parents/guardians to sign a loco-parentis form.

The club (as a body) cannot take responsibility for children. It is legally an unincorporated body and as such is simply a collection of members and not a separate legal entity.

As a result, if you leave children you have to leave them in the responsibility of an individual member. It is up to you as a parent/guardian to make sure someone has agreed to accept responsibility for your child.

As a rule please don't expect to be able to leave children at club activities. However, in most cases when the coaches/members are familiar with the child they are happy to take on this responsibility. Please arrange this with other members before planning to leave your child.

Unaccompanied Children at Other Events

If you allow your child to go on a trip unaccompanied, responsibility for the child will rest with whoever you leave your child with or with whoever collects the child – unless you have made an alternative agreement.

We would expect the person taking on this responsibility to ask you to sign a loco-parentis form to avoid any possible misunderstandings.

Policy on the Collection of Unaccompanied Children

If you arrange to leave your child unaccompanied, please make sure that you make arrangements to collect the child. Please ensure you leave a contact telephone number and if possible, an alternative in case the first number is not obtainable. Note. There is a section on the membership application form for Emergency Contact details.

Please be aware that in the event of something unplanned happening we may wish you to collect the child at short notice. Thus, please make sure this will be possible.

Consent form

The standard form is intended to cover all regular meetings at both the Pool and Draycote Water. The Consent form does not actually modify the duty of care that we owe to the child but confirms to the club and/or people taking responsibility for the child that the parents/guardian are aware of the risks involved and that they are happy for the members of the club to care for the child.

When a child goes on trips or attends events that are not part of the regular club activities then we would expect that another more specific Consent form is completed. However, in these cases the responsibility for the care of the child must be taken by the person taking the child from their parents/guardian.

The club (which is legally an unincorporated body) itself does not have the power to say it will be responsible for a child. It is the individual members themselves that undertake this responsibility. We insist on a form being signed for the regular club activities so that coaches/other members do not have to get individual forms signed each week.

Before signing the Consent form, please make sure you understand the risks involved in the sport (a section has been included on this) and the club policy on picking up unattended children. You should also note that the form should also cover the travelling involved to and from the trip or site or the event.

Duty of care

There is a general legal principle that you owe 'your neighbours' a 'duty of care'. If you are careless and this results in injury or loss, then you could be sued to compensate them for the financial loss.

Neighbours can be thought of as anyone who could be affected by your actions.

You thus have a duty to others to behave responsibly and consider the consequences of your acts or omissions. The standard of care expected will vary depending on your knowledge and experience.

Since the club itself is an unincorporated body, it cannot be sued as an entity. Thus, if anyone ever wishes to sue the club for damages, they will have to sue specific individuals. Presumably, they would sue the individuals connected with the event or those responsible for the specific activity although theoretically they could sue every member of the club. The club has third party insurance which should cover members in the case of any successful claim against them which is related to club activities.

Incident Reporting

Since a change in the law in April 1999 the Civil Justice System was changed to give defendants very limited time to defend themselves. As a result of this the insurance company has created a system of incident reporting so that they can defend the claim effectively. Thus, to make sure you are covered by the insurance, if you are involved in any incident that may result in a claim while partaking in canoeing activities, please make sure you fill in an incident reporting form. A copy of the form should be available directly from the BC if required. It should be returned to the BC coaching office.

Please also make sure the committee is aware of the incident.

Medical Conditions

If you have any medical conditions that may affect your ability to paddle or may increase the risk to other paddlers, please make sure that anyone coaching you or taking you on a river trip etc. is aware of the condition. Typical examples could be asthma, epilepsy, heart conditions, sight or hearing problems, learning disabilities and lack of mobility.

On the club membership form we ask you to list all such conditions. We appreciate that some conditions are sensitive and will handle this information in the most confidential way we can taking into consideration the safety of yourself and other members. Although you have entered this information on the membership form, please also make sure your coaches are aware of this. Please be prepared to discuss with your coach how the condition may affect paddling.

General Data Protection Regulations

PRIVACY STATEMENT AND THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

Rugby Canoe Club has a management Committee made up of members and/or parents from the Club and takes its responsibility for the Protection of your personal data seriously. This privacy statement tells you what to expect when we collect personal information about you.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) comes into force on 25 May 2018 and is designed to unify data privacy requirements across the European Union and replaces the Data Protection Act 1998. There are several data protection principles, which detail how data on individuals are obtained, stored and processed as below: -

- a) data must be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to individuals.
- b) must be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes.
- c) must be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.
- d) must be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date; every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay.
- e) must be kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed.
- f) must be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

What data will we hold of you, the purpose and for what duration

We will only collect such personal data from you as indicated below: -

Names, addresses, contact details to enrol you as a member, be able to contact you by telephone, digital communication, and by post.

Emergency contact details, including names and phone numbers. This will be used when a coach or organiser of a club event or trip needs to contact family members in the case of an emergency occurring with a member.

Date of Birth, male or female. The above details are shared with British Canoeing (BC) as conditions for our association with BC and in-order to pay BC affiliation and insurance fees.

Minimal information on medical conditions that may affect safety of activities.

Confirmation that you can swim, for compliance with club rules and for safety reasons.

Optional information on your canoeing related qualifications to keep track of the skills levels within the membership to aid training.

Process financial transactions, for example records of income and payment of expenses.

For coaches and volunteers only – record coaching and other qualifications relevant to the club's activities, perform DBS checks and the results of this.

Records of attendance on club activities, trip attendance and boat bookings. This is required to prove attendance in the event of an insurance claim against us and to provide statistical information on usage of Draycote Water which is used to establish the fees we pay to DWSC.

If you obtain any British Canoeing personal performance awards assessed by the club coaches your information will

be passed to BC who will keep their own records of this information and the award obtained.

Membership information will be kept for the duration of membership plus a period of 3 years. Information on attendance at club events will be kept for 3 years from the date of the event or activity. This is to potentially provide evidence that you were covered by the club liability insurance in the event of a claim against you or the club. This covers the normal time limit to make a personal injury claim after an incident. This information will only be passed on if required to process a claim against us.

Coach qualification and DBS records will also be kept for the duration of membership or volunteering activities and for 3 years after this again to provide evidence for insurance if this is necessary.

Financial information will be kept for 6 years in line with tax and record guidance from the inland revenue.

How will we keep your data?

Your data will be held electronically (including on a database, spreadsheets and other forms), and on the paper. Electronic records are kept on personal computers and shared via Dropbox to a small number of the club volunteers and held as paper records in the volunteers' private homes.

Volunteers who have access to the personal information electronically will be required to use encrypted file systems and access control on any device on which the information is downloaded. Two factor authentication is required to be active on their Dropbox account.

Paper records contain personal information will be shredded to be destroyed.

Our Promise to you

Your data will only be kept on our records for the purposes of Club related activities. They will never be sold or given to other parties unless we are obliged to do so for legal reasons, or as listed in the section above.

If we change how we use your data, this will be published on the club website and all current members will be informed individually either by email or written communication. This may take the form of an announcement in the club newsletter.

How will we keep your details up to date?

We will as far as reasonably practical, endeavour to keep up to date with your data. We do however rely on you to advise us if your details change. You will have the opportunity to update your details at the annual membership renewal date or at any other time by informing the club secretary.

Your rights

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 and The General Data Protection Regulation 2018, you have rights as an individual which you can exercise in relation to the information that we hold about you. You have a right to Complain to the Information Commissioners Office if you consider that we have breached our data obligations.

Social media or email

The Club has accounts with Facebook and other Social Media platforms, and these 3rd parties will have their own filters and security controls. As a club member you will be invited to join the club Facebook group. This is optional. Any information that you give or publish via Facebook or other social media will be subject to the data control of the provider and is not under the control of Rugby Canoe Club.

Complaints or queries

The Club tries to meet the highest standards when collecting and using your personal information. For this reason, we take any complaints we receive about this very seriously. We encourage members to bring it to our attention if they think that our collection or use of information is unfair, misleading or inappropriate. We would also welcome any suggestions for improving our procedures. If you want to make a complaint about the way we have processed your personal information, you can contact us at secretary@rugbycanoeclub.org.uk

Access to personal information

You have a legal right to know what data we hold of you. We will address this if you make a 'subject access request' under the GDPR. If we do hold information about you, we will:

- give you a description of it,
- tell you why we are holding it,
- tell you who it could be disclosed to,
- let you have a copy of the information in an intelligible form.

To make a request to the Club for any personal information we may hold, you need to put the request in writing addressing it to the Secretary. If we do hold information about you, you can ask us to correct any mistakes.

Links to other websites

This privacy statement does not cover any links within the club's website linking to other websites. We encourage you to read the privacy statements on the other websites you visit.

Changes to this privacy statement

We keep our privacy statement under regular review and will be updated if any future legislation requires it or a problem is found with our systems. Responsibility for keeping the statement under review rests with the current Club Secretary who also has the role of Data Protection Officer.

How to contact us

Details on how to contact us can be found on the website, in the monthly newsletters or by speaking directly to the Secretary at the weekly Club nights.

Regular Annual Events

The club normally organises several special events and weekends away during the year.

All members are welcome at these events and so are family members. It may be possible to bring along friends but please check with the organiser to make sure there is enough space etc.

These are generally very good social events even if you do not wish to participate in the canoeing part. The club also tries to organise at least one club trip per month.

Wye Trip

This is a weekend away. It normally occurs towards the end of June or early July. This is normally a two-day trip with an overnight camping stop, but members can arrange to paddle either or both day as they wish.

There is usually a BBQ Saturday night weather permitting and canoeing on the River Wye on Sunday.

Barbecue Evening

This is usually held in July after the normal paddling session has ended.

Communication

There is a monthly newsletter. To save costs we try to send this by e-mail, but if you don't have e-mail, we print a copy and either give this to you if you attend club events or post it to you. You should keep an eye on this for club announcements and reports etc. The most popular section is probably the 'Beercans' where stories of member's 'silly' experiences are re-told. At the end of the year a 'Beercan' trophy is given to the member who did the silliest thing.

There is also a club web site at <https://www.rugbycanoeclub.org.uk>

For those interested in trips we have a Facebook page setup for Rugby Canoe Club. New members with online access are invited to join this, which is used as a forum for advertising trips, general messages and discussions between members. Any member can post a message on the group, which is then e-mailed to all those who have accepted the

invitation to join the group.

Other information will be published on the club notice board or spread through word of mouth, as necessary.

Rules

General

- Members must be able to swim 50m in canoeing kit.
- Members must wear buoyancy aids on all club canoeing activities.
- Members must wear helmets on all club canoeing activities on white water.
- Members must take proper care of club equipment and property. Any accidental damage or loss should be reported to the committee as soon as possible.
- Members must act in an orderly fashion during club activities.
- Members must not do anything that will bring the club or its reputation or image into disrepute.
- Members must behave in a civilized manner.
- Equipment may be loaned to members for the payment of a fee to cover normal wear and tear of the equipment. If the equipment is lost or excessively damaged during this hire period the hirer is responsible for the repair or replacement of the equipment at the Management Committees discretion. Hire of equipment is at the discretion of the Management Committee.

Pool

- No outdoor shoes are to be worn in or around the pool.
- T-shirts are only to be worn whilst canoeing.
- No Person to jump into the swimmer's lane.
- No person to 'bomb' or 'duck' other swimmers in the swimming lane.
- No deliberate swimming outside the swimming lane. If you capsize while paddling you should get out of the pool as quickly as possible.
- No running around the pool,
- No unnecessary noise or boisterous behaviour.
- No chewing gum.
- Jewellery should not be worn.
- Instructions given by the duty person or lifeguards must be obeyed.
- The duty person/lifeguards have the authority to ask people to leave if they ignore the rules or behave in an unsuitable manner.

Draycote

- Paddling is only on Draycote during periods agreed with Draycote Water Sailing Club. Contact the committee if you want more information on current agreements.
- You may only paddle at Draycote if there is at least one qualified coach on the water.
- You must not paddle alone. A minimum of 2 competent paddlers are required in a group. The level of competency required is to be able to rescue the other paddler in a timely manner in the conditions prevailing at the time.
- Each group should carry a VHS radio for emergencies. These may be obtained from the Sailing Club duty officer.
- Cars must not be parked on the slipways.
- Cars must not be left on the access road. Parking is allowed for loading/unloading only. (One car may be left as a safety car).
- Cars must be parked in the official car park.

- The duty person oversees the session and you must obey any instructions that he/she gives you.
- The duty person will also obtain a VHS radio for communicating with the groups.

Volunteers

The club operates on an entirely voluntary basis. Thus, we welcome any offers of help.

We especially welcome nominations for the committee posts since these are normally hard to fill.

If every member does just a little for the club it will operate smoothly without taking too much of anybody's time.

There are many things that need doing from time to time, stock checks of equipment, repair of storage facilities, repair of equipment, organising trips and many more.

We also have to deal with lots of legal and technical issues so if you can help with this, please let us know.

Please also note that when something has not been done the person responsible is probably busy doing a fulltime job as well as bringing up a family. Please remember this before criticising. Are you prepared to do the job instead?

General Canoeing Advice

What to Wear

This depends on the weather, time of year and how easy it is to get back into a warm environment.

For Draycote on a good day in summer you may be OK in a T-Shirt, shorts and cagoule, however, at the start of the year you will require much more. The main problem is keeping yourself warm when you are wet. When you are wet you cool much quicker than when you are dry – hence you will get cold very quickly. If you get too cold you begin to suffer from hypothermia.

Juniors must wear a wetsuit or dry suit up to the end of May each year.

Whatever you wear remember you may end up swimming in it so do not select anything that gets extremely heavy when wet. Thus, NO jeans or boots etc.

Also make sure you have a set of dry cloths (and a towel) to get changed into after paddling.

Top part of the body

For hot weather, a T-Shirt may be sufficient. When colder, thermal underwear is often very good, however, try to avoid cotton since this is not very warm when wet. Sweatshirts, woolly jumpers, fleece tops, wetsuits or dry suits are all suitable.

One of the most important things is a wind proof top. Wind chill will result in serious cooling of your body quickly so this is the most important thing to wear. Specialist canoeing tops are available but if you don't have these any cagoule will work.

A buoyancy aid is essential to help you float if you end up in the water and it also helps to keep you warm.

It is often colder on the water than on the bank. You will also get wet even if this is only water splashes. Thus, do not underestimate how much clothing you may need to keep warm.

Lower part of body

In warm summer weather shorts or swimming trunks may be enough. For cooler weather, track suit bottoms, waterproof trousers, wetsuits or dry suits are suitable. Do not wear trousers that get very heavy when wet. i.e. Avoid Jeans or the thick cotton tracksuits.

Feet

Wet suit boots are the most suitable but pumps, soft trainers or sandals are acceptable. A thick pair of woollen socks will help keep your feet warm.

You should wear something on your feet to protect them from sharp stones/broken glass etc. while walking to the get in point or wading in the water.

Do not wear boots of any sort since they are difficult to swim in and may get stuck in the boat – with your feet still in

them. This is a serious problem if you are upside down.

Be careful with trainers that have stiff soles or lots of rubber grip on the sides since these can also sometimes be difficult to get out of a boat.

Head

We recommend that you always wear a helmet. While these are primarily there to protect your head from injury, they also help to keep it warm. We recommend that you wear a helmet while doing any paddling. However, the risks of injury if you don't vary significantly depending on what type of canoeing you are doing.

River Grading System

There is a system for classifying how difficult rivers are to paddle. This ranges from grade 1 which carries a relatively low risk, to grade 6 which is the limit of navigation and possesses a severe risk to life and is usually left well alone.

You should remember that the grading of a river is very subjective so 2 different rivers with the same grade can be completely different. Before paddling a river that you are unsure of, ask around to see what advice you can get on it and if it is suitable for your skill level. It is also possible to buy specialist river guidebooks which give more information on specific rivers.

A guide to the different grades is below.

- Grade 1** Moving water, unobstructed and without technical difficulties. There may be small waves and ripples to challenge the paddler.
- Grade 2** Waves, small stoppers and other minor obstructions to avoid. Eddies and cushion waves may be strong.
- Grade 3** Waves, stoppers and technical difficulties are more severe. There may be drops and powerful constrictions. The main distinguishing factor of Grade 3 water is that the paddler will have to follow a recognisable route to avoid obstacles and hazards.
- Grade 4** Severe waves, drops, stoppers and other obstructions. The route is not easily recognisable and will usually require careful inspection from the boat or bank.
- Grade 4 encompasses a wide range of rivers, from those with pool-drop rapids to those with extended continuous rapids; so there is a huge variation in difficulty. It is common to distinguish easier grade 4 rapids by grading them as 4- and harder rapids as 4+ (or in some cases, 3/4 or 4/5).
- Grade 5** Extremely difficult rapids with precise and technically demanding routes to be followed. Stoppers, currents and waves will be powerful and inspection is essential. Serious risk of injury or death.
- Grade 6** All of the above carried to extremes. Grade 6 usually means un-runnable rapids, which may just be possible in certain conditions.

BC Awards

Do you like to know how your performance is measuring up and improving?

The BC offers a range of tests of personal performance which we offer coaching towards at Rugby Canoe Club.

At Draycote Water during the summer we coach the BC Paddling awards Start, Discover & Explore. There are many other awards for sheltered water, white-water and sea in a variety of craft (Kayak, Open Canadian or SUP).

- Start** An introductory award that covers the basic paddling techniques using various craft on sheltered water.
- Discover** An improvement award in which an extended set of skills must be performed in various craft.
- Explore** An award that recognises a paddlers ability to paddle a craft of their choice in a sheltered water environment.

Discipline Specific awards

e.g. White-Water Kayak, Sheltered Water SUP, Touring Canoe.

The award develops your personal paddling and decision-making skills in the craft and environment of your choice.

Once you have an understanding of some of the strokes contained within the basic awards you can develop these on some of the many club river trips that are organised.

Risks

As part of the club's Duty of Care we feel that we need to make sure you are aware of some of the risks that the sport entails. This is not a full list of all possible dangers since the sport is very varied. Please do not be put off by the list below since the actual accident rate in canoeing is generally quite low. Especially at beginner level, paddling only flat or slow-moving water, the frequency of injury and seriousness of injuries tends to be low. However, you need to be aware that injury or even death is possible – even if it is unlikely.

- **Risk of Drowning.** This is common to all water sports. To reduce this risk, make sure you can swim competently and have practised the capsize drill. On fast moving water there is a risk of being trapped underwater in the canoe or under trees or rocks in the river. There is also a chance that you can be held under by fast currents in the water. Once you progress to paddling on rivers you should make sure you learn about these risks. Please talk to a coach or experience paddler or read specialist books or magazines etc.
- **Hypothermia.** Since canoeing involves getting wet there is a significant risk of getting cold. To reduce this risk, you should wear suitable clothing. If in doubt, please ask any coach or an experienced paddler.
- **Sunburn.** Water reflects sunlight so on a sunny day there is an even higher exposure to sunlight than when you are on land. Thus you should take care to avoid getting sunburnt. Use a strong waterproof sun cream.
- **Cuts and bruises.** These can occur at any point due to impact with rocks, other people canoes or equipment etc. Some rescue techniques may lead to bruising if not done correctly. If you try rolling in a boat that does not fit you properly you can get bruised legs. Cuts can occur if you capsize in shallow water, especially in water that is moving.
- **Broken bones.** This is not likely while paddling flat water but becomes a more significant risk on fast moving water. It is a significant risk if you end up swimming down a fast-moving river that is quite shallow. However, we do not expect this to occur to beginners.
- **Pulled muscles.** These can occur anywhere however the risk is higher on fast moving water and often occur during support strokes or when the boat is unexpectedly and suddenly unbalanced. This risk can be reduced by performing warm up exercises.
- **Slipping.** Riverbanks and other areas near water are often steep and slippery. Thus, there is a significant risk of injury due to slipping. Take care while near the edge of the water or any ground that is often wet.
- **Blue-green algae.** This often occurs at Draycote during the summer months. It has received a significant amount of press coverage. At certain points in its life cycle the algae is poisonous. Thus, if there is any of the algae around you should make sure you do not ingest any water.
- **Lifting.** Canoes are quite heavy and are awkward shapes to carry. They are especially difficult to carry for younger children. Please ask for advice on carrying or ask for help if you cannot lift them on your own safely.
- **Illness caused by bacteria or viruses.** There are many bacteria and viruses present in water, especially lowland rivers which can be polluted. Most of these are harmless to humans – but several are not. Several can kill if you become infected and do not get medical attention. Thus, try not to ingest any water when paddling (do not eat food with wet hands!) and if you feel ill seek medical advice. Typical examples are diarrhoea or sickness. Weils disease is a rare infection carried in rat's urine. The symptoms are similar to flu and sometimes cause aching joints. It can take several days before symptoms become apparent. This illness is often fatal if not treated properly and quickly so if you get these symptoms, it is especially important to seek medical advice fast.
- **Remote areas.** A lot of canoeing trips take place in areas where there is no easy access to emergency medical attention. Although this does not make the risk of injury or medical problem any higher it may be a lot more serious than if you had the same problem in a built-up area.

Transport of boats

At some point you will probably need to carry a boat on your car. Do not take this as an exhaustive guide to the possible problems you may encounter with this but just a bit of general advice.

As the driver of the car, you are responsible for the load it is carrying.

You should use a good roof rack with the correct fittings for the car. A lot of the cheaper roof racks are inadequate for the load of canoes. Make sure you read the instructions and car handbook to make sure you are aware of the maximum load the roof rack and car can carry. Modern plastic canoes tend to weigh about 17->20 kg each. We are aware of

some cars and roof racks have maximum loads of 35 kg so 2 canoes could breach this limit. There may be cars/racks with lower limits than this.

We would recommend using either ropes or special luggage straps to tie the boat on. Elasticated 'bungees' are not suitable since they tend to stretch when under load and allow the boat to fall off.

Two canoes can normally be carried on their hull or deck, side by side on a roof rack. If you want to carry more than 2 canoes you will need to load the boats on their sides. To do this easily and safely we would recommend you buy a specialist uprights or 'J' bars to locate the boats on the roof rack.

British Canoeing (BC)

In 2000 the BC federalised to become the umbrella organisation for the Home Nation Associations in Scotland (SCA), Wales (WCA) and Northern Ireland (CANI).

The BC is responsible for leading and setting the overall framework for England and the National Associations, representing canoeing interests such as coaching and competition at UK and international level.

Glossary of terms

There are many unfamiliar terms that you will hear. Listed below are some of these. Please ask if you hear others that you are not sure the meaning of.

Beer can	A trophy awarded annually for the most embarrassing / silly / careless action by a Club Member during the year. Nominations are published monthly in the newsletter.
Blades	An alternative term for paddles.
Break-in	Moving from slack water into the current on a river.
Break-out	Leaving the fast-moving water and moving into slack water.
Buoyancy Aid	A means of flotation. It will not keep the head clear of the water if unconscious, as a Life Jacket would do, but provides better body protection against impact and greater insulation against the cold.
Cag	Common abbreviation for cagoule.
Div. P, 1, 2, 3 & 4	The abbreviations for BC slalom divisions in descending order of rank.
Eddy	Water moving upstream having flowed past an obstruction. e.g. A rock or perhaps a bend of the river.
Eddy Line	The boundary line between the slack water and the current.
Eskimo Rescue	Means of righting oneself with the aid of another paddler.
Eskimo Roll	Means of righting oneself using either paddle or hand and 'Hip Flick'.
Ferry	A term used to describe the organisation of transport such that all the boats are at the start and all the cars are at the end of a river trip.
Ferry Glide	Crossing the current by paddling upstream (Forwards or backwards) with the boat set at an angle to the current.
Grade 1 to 6	Denotes the relative difficulty of moving water, 1 being flat water and 6 being extremely difficult and dangerous water.
Hip Flick	Movement of the hips and knees to roll the boat in relation to the canoeist's trunk. A vital element in successful Eskimo rolls.
Holme Pierrepont	A man-made artificial white-water course at Nottingham on the river Trent. The flow is controlled by a variable height entrance gate. It is used for holding BC national slaloms.
Loop	A manoeuvre performed whilst surfing a wave where the bow is pushed down into the water causing the canoe to pitch end over end. Usually requiring an Eskimo roll afterwards.
Marathon	A type of sprint canoe racing on flat water.
Pop-out	A similar action to a loop, but where the canoe is stood on end but does not go completely over.
Premier (Prem.)	The top BC slalom division, from which our national team is selected.
Rapid	Increase in water speed caused by increasing gradient.
River Right / Left	The side of the river (Right or Left) when viewed looking downstream.
Rodeo	A competition where paddles test their skills on White Water , including river running, playing in stoppers/holes doing loops, cartwheels, flat spins etc. and surfing waves.

Slalom	A competition, normally on moving water, where the paddlers aim to negotiate a course, marked out by a series of numbered gates, in the shortest possible time without hitting any of the gates or failing to go through any.
Spray Deck	An article that is worn around the waist that when fitted around the cockpit rim keeps out the water.
Stand-up Paddle Board (SUP)	A board with fins similar to a sail board that is propelled with a long-handled paddle whilst standing.
Stopper	Hydraulic feature created by water pouring over a rock or weir causing water to rise upward and then flow upstream again back towards the drop. These can be very dangerous!
Straps	Item used to secure the boats to a trailer or roof rack.
Strokes	A variety of actions performed with the paddle to control the movement of the boat. (e.g. Sweep, Bow Rudder, Stern Rudder, Low and High Braces, Forward and Backward, Draw, Sculling etc.).
Surfing	Riding the leading face of a wave on a river or on the sea in a canoe or on Surf ski using the paddle and boat position to control direction of travel.
Throw Line	A rope used for performing rescues, stored in a 'throw bag'.
Toggle/ Grab Loops	Found at the front and back of the boat, these are hand holds used during rescues to keep hold of the boat, or for carrying the boat.
Tryweryn	A river which has a dam-controlled release of water and is the base of the National White-Water Centre. It's near Bala in north Wales.
White Water	A section of river given a rating of grade 3 or higher.

Useful Contact Numbers

A list of the current contact names and numbers can be found in the latest Newsletter or on the web site.

Club Constitution

The current version of the club's constitution may be accessed via the club's web site. A printed copy may be requested from the secretary. See contact details.