



Knottingley Canoe Club

White Water River Risk Assessment

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Review cycle	Six-monthly during setup, then annual or after incident, near miss, major guidance change, or material change in club practice.

Scope

This assessment covers KCC white water river trips and river-running activity from grade 1 through advanced white water. It should be used with the trip plan, location pack or route notes, float plan, emergency action plan, incident reporting process, off-water contact and cut-off time, on-the-day dynamic risk assessment, KCC competency spreadsheet and White Water Lead deployment record.

Stand up paddleboards are not part of this white water framework. If KCC runs SUP activity on grade 1 or grade 2 moving water, it should be covered by a separate SUP-specific moving-water risk assessment and leash policy before use, including leash type, quick-release controls and SUP-specific rescue arrangements.

KCC aims to follow Paddle UK Standards for Deployment principles while also using its own competency spreadsheet to recognise current, observed competence and experience.

Grade, Water-Level and Weather Planning

Grade / condition	Planning controls
Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check flow, strainers, access, egress, group control, weather and water quality • Suitable for beginner or progressive paddlers only where supervision and conditions match the group.
Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm paddlers can manoeuvre, avoid simple hazards, swim defensively and follow river signals • Use clear Lead Paddler, Tail Paddler and regroup points.
Grade 2(3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat as moderate water unless the Safety Officer or competent White Water Lead records why a lower classification is appropriate • Confirm rescue capability, throwline cover, portage options and group competence.
Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require competent white water paddlers, Lead Paddler / Tail Paddler structure, scouting decisions and clear Safety Cover • Brief swimmers, spacing, signals and eddy discipline before committing to the section.
Grade 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use advanced deployment controls • Confirm advanced leader competence, reliable group competence, rescue plan, portage options and go/no-go threshold • Avoid peer pressure and portage or downgrade where the decision is not clear.
Grade 4(5) and Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat as outside routine club activity • Require review by the KCC Safety Officer and an appropriately competent White Water Lead before any club activity is planned • Require high-confidence team selection, conservative cancellation thresholds and committee awareness where the activity sits outside routine club practice.
Low water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check pinning, foot entrapment, exposed rocks, scraping, longer carries and cold exposure • Reduce objective if the section becomes technical in a way that does not match the group.

Grade / condition	Planning controls
High or rising water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess grade, speed, eddy access, swim consequence, bank access, strainers and rescue feasibility • Cancel, change venue or exit if the river is outside the agreed range.
Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check wind, rain, lightning, cold, heat, visibility and forecast trend • Set weather cutoffs before travel and before launch • Exit early if weather reduces visibility, communication, warmth, rescue margin or safe travel.

Deployment and Competency

Area	Controls
General deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paddle UK qualifications and awards are preferred evidence and carry the strongest weight where they match the activity, for example White Water Leader, Advanced White Water Leader, White Water Safety and Advanced White Water Safety • KCC competency spreadsheet records local judgement, current competence, recent experience, roll reliability, rescue capability and limits • No paddler is treated as suitable for every river or every level by default.
Grade 4 operating assumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 4 leadership requires advanced competence, current evidence and conservative group selection • Paddlers who have completed Advanced White Water Safety and Advanced White Water Leader training may be considered for grade 4 White Water Lead duties where KCC has recorded strong competence and a reliable roll • Other paddlers may be considered suitable for the planned grade where the club competency record supports it, including a suitable roll where material to the environment.

Risk Assessment

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Activity exceeds White Water Lead remit or group competence	Whole group may be exposed to water, features, weather or rescue demands beyond capability. White Water Leads may become overloaded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classify the activity before publication • Match White Water Lead remit to grade, level, weather and group • Check KCC competency spreadsheet before confirming participants • Record limits, Assistant Leader roles and supervision arrangements in the trip plan • Apply Paddle UK Standards for Deployment principles alongside club competency records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downgrade, split, portage, add support, change venue or cancel if competence does not match conditions • Record material decisions in the dynamic risk form. 	Trip Organiser / White Water Lead / before publication, before launch and ongoing	Medium / High

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
White Water Lead, Assistant Leader and Safety Cover roles unclear	Paddlers may receive conflicting instructions, rescues may be delayed, or no-one may be positioned for key hazards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name the White Water Lead • Identify Lead Paddler, Tail Paddler and any Assistant Leader roles before launch • Agree who carries throwlines, first aid, group shelter, towline or other safety kit • Agree who makes go/no-go, portage and cancellation decisions • The White Water Lead should appoint a named person at the start who is responsible for initiating the emergency plan if the White Water Lead is incapacitated • Brief role changes if the group splits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not launch until White Water Lead, Tail Paddler and Safety Cover roles are clear • Reduce objective or cancel if Safety Cover roles cannot be filled • If the White Water Lead is incapacitated, the trip should not continue downstream unless another approved lead is present and makes that decision • Otherwise emergency instructions should start, including off-water contact and emergency services where required. 	Trip Organiser / White Water Lead / before launch and after any group split	Medium
Pre-launch checks incomplete	Whole group may launch with unsuitable water levels, weather, group competence, equipment, shuttle or emergency arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check water level against agreed range • Check weather and daylight • Check group competence against KCC competency spreadsheet • Check roll/rescue capability where relevant to grade • Check helmets, buoyancy aids, spraydecks, airbags, throwlines, knives, first aid kit, group shelter and emergency kit • Confirm shuttle, off-water contact and cut-off time • Follow club safety guidance issued by the Safety Officer • Confirm all paddlers have suitable footwear for access, egress, portages, banks and rescues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay launch until critical checks are complete • Downgrade, change venue or cancel if any critical check fails • Rebrief if safety guidance changes the plan. 	White Water Lead / Assistant Leaders / before launch	Low / Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Pre-activity safety briefing incomplete	Paddlers may not understand signals, roles, rescue expectations, equipment checks, emergency actions, junior arrangements or the plan for the section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a pre-launch safety briefing on every trip before committing to the water • Cover river signals, regroup points, Lead Paddler and Tail Paddler arrangements, rescue expectations, defensive swimming, foot-entrapment avoidance, PPE checks, emergency actions, off-water contact and cut-off time • Cover route-specific hazards, portage options, water-level decisions, weather thresholds and communication limits • Include safeguarding, junior supervision or welfare arrangements where relevant • Reinforce key safety points during the trip after swims, confusion, group splits, feature changes, weather changes or fatigue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not launch until essential briefing points are covered • Stop and rebrief if participants are unclear, late arrivals miss the briefing, signals are misunderstood or conditions change materially. 	White Water Lead / whole group / before launch and ongoing	Medium
Buoyancy aid, helmet, PPE or footwear missing or unsuitable	Paddlers, leaders, bank safety and rescuers may be injured by impact, immersion, slips, foot injuries, poor fit or unsuitable protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone wears a suitable buoyancy aid and helmet at all times when on or near moving water, including on banks, rocks, cliffs, paddle banks, during scouting, bank safety and rescues • Helmets are suitable/rated for the grade and consequence of the river • Footwear is suitable for wet banks, access, egress, portages and rescue situations • Fit and condition are checked before launch and monitored during the trip • Clothing and PPE are matched to grade, water level, weather and swim consequence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not launch or continue if essential buoyancy aid, helmet, footwear or PPE is missing or unsuitable • Replace, adjust, downgrade, portage, exit or cancel where PPE cannot be made suitable. 	White Water Lead / Paddlers / before launch and ongoing	Low / Medium
Navigation, route knowledge or map access fails	Whole group may miss access/egress points, commit to the wrong section, lose time, or be delayed in an emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install an offline map of the area before travel • Print an OS map for the route • Use an annotated map where one exists in the location pack • Confirm launch, egress, emergency access points, portages and escape options before launch • Keep route notes accessible if phone signal or battery fails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay launch if the group has no usable offline/printed route information • Change objective if navigation or route confidence is insufficient. 	White Water Lead / Assistant Leader / before travel and launch	Low / Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Emergency contact and off-water information unavailable	Emergency escalation may be delayed if phones fail, signal is poor, or contact information is only held digitally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominate an off-water contact Share float plan, route, group summary, cut-off time, action plan and emergency plan with the off-water contact White Water Leads carry a laminated first aid reference card with emergency contact details and key instructions Carry printed emergency contacts or a printed emergency summary where appropriate Keep private phone numbers and emergency details out of public documents Confirm who contacts the off-water contact if delayed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not launch without off-water contact arrangements for trips requiring a float plan Notify off-water contact if route, timing or group changes Activate off-water action plan if cut-off time is missed. 	Trip Organiser / White Water Lead / before launch and during trip	Low / Medium
Participant medical disclosure incomplete	Participants may have medical conditions, medication needs, injuries, confidence limits or other relevant factors that affect safe participation, rescue, cold exposure or emergency response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage participants to share relevant medical conditions, medication needs, injuries, limits or confidence concerns confidentially before activity For juniors, parent/guardian information and emergency contact details are used to support confidential disclosure where needed Manage medical information in line with the KCC privacy policy Keep medical information private and only share it with those who need it for safe delivery or emergency response Check whether any disclosed limits affect route choice, grade, water level, weather threshold, kit choice, supervision or emergency plan Record only the minimum necessary information in controlled private planning channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pause confirmation or launch where essential medical or emergency information is missing for safe participation Adapt activity, kit, supervision, route or emergency plan where disclosed information changes the risk. 	Trip Organiser / White Water Lead / planning and before launch	Low / Medium
Grade-specific participation controls not applied	Beginners may be overexposed, intermediate paddlers may be placed on advanced water, or advanced paddlers may paddle without appropriate rescue margin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 2 activity uses developing-paddler controls, support and clear regroup points Grade 3 requires Competent Paddlers and reliable rescue support Grade 4 requires advanced paddlers, strong group selection, suitable roll/rescue evidence and explicit go/no-go culture Grade 5 is outside normal club activity unless separately approved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move paddlers to a lower-grade option if they do not meet the grade-specific controls Split groups or change venue where mixed ability creates pressure. 	White Water Lead / Safety Officer where required / planning and pre-launch	Medium / High

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Supervision level does not match the group or conditions	Paddlers, especially juniors or less experienced paddlers, may be exposed to hazards without suitable support, rescue cover or welfare oversight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group size and support are set by the White Water Lead based on grade, water level, weather, group competence, juniors/adults at risk, rescue cover and escape options Junior participation requires explicit supervision planning, parent/guardian consent and suitable kit/competence checks Under-16 paddlers require a parent or guardian to attend the location, though they do not have to be on the water A parent or guardian on the water may support the plan only where their own competence and role are suitable for the environment Supervision arrangements are recorded in the trip plan or dynamic risk assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce group size, add support, change venue, downgrade, portage or cancel if supervision is not suitable Do not include juniors where consent, parent/guardian attendance or supervision arrangements are incomplete. 	Trip Organiser / White Water Lead / planning, before launch and ongoing	Medium
Changing water level, release or river grade	Paddlers and rescuers may face faster water, stronger stoppers, fewer eddies, increased swim consequence or exposed low-water hazards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check gauges, release notices, rainfall and local updates before travel Recheck visually before launch Treat grade as dynamic Check location pack and recent reports Set acceptable water-level range before travel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change venue, portage, shorten, delay or cancel where level is outside agreed range Notify off-water contact if route/timing changes. 	White Water Lead / before travel, before launch and during trip	Medium / High
Roll reliability, swims, repeated capsizes and swimming consequence	Paddlers may be injured, become cold, lose equipment, panic or need rescue. Rescuers may be placed at risk. Repeated swims can make a route unsuitable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not every river requires every paddler to have a roll On grade 3/4, roll reliability and self-rescue ability become more important planning factors Require suitable clothing, buoyancy aid, helmet and activity-appropriate kit Brief capsize, swim, throwline and regroup procedures Carry group safety equipment suitable for the section Use Lead Paddler, Tail Paddler and rescue positioning appropriate to grade Recheck swimmer condition, warmth, confidence and fatigue after any swim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm, evacuate, shorten or end the activity where repeated swims, cold stress, anxiety or fatigue reduce safety margin Downgrade/exit where swim consequence exceeds group rescue capability. 	White Water Lead / Safety Cover / ongoing	Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Head injury or suspected concussion	A paddler may have a head injury after impact with rocks, boat, paddle, bank, another paddler or during a capsize/swim. Continuing may worsen injury or delay urgent care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helmets are worn on or near moving water • Treat head impacts seriously even where symptoms are not immediate • Stop and assess the paddler after any significant head impact • Remove the paddler from further paddling where concussion or significant head injury is suspected • Monitor symptoms and use the emergency action plan where symptoms are serious, worsening or uncertain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not allow return to paddling that day if concussion is suspected • Evacuate or call emergency services if symptoms indicate serious injury • Report the incident and follow up through the incident reporting process. 	White Water Lead / First aid responder / immediately and post-activity	Medium
Entrapment, foot entrapment, pinning, strainers, undercuts, weirs and stoppers	Paddlers may be pinned, held, trapped or injured. Rescuers may face high-consequence rescue situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify known hazards from the location pack and pre-trip briefing • Scout or portage complex features • Use bank safety and throwline cover where appropriate • Maintain spacing and eddy discipline • Brief defensive swimming • Brief foot entrapment and the risk of standing in moving water • Avoid strainers, undercuts and known pinning hazards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not run features where line, Safety Cover, group competence or portage option is unclear • Portage or abandon if hazards cannot be managed • Treat pinned person, pinned boat or near entrapment as reportable near miss/incident. 	White Water Lead / Competent Paddlers / before feature and ongoing	Medium / High
Portage culture undermined by peer pressure	Paddlers may run features beyond competence because they feel social pressure or believe portage is failure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portage is always acceptable • White Water Leads brief portage options before committing to harder features where possible • Default to portage where line, rescue, competence or consequence is unclear • No paddler should pressure another paddler to run a rapid or feature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop and rebrief if peer pressure appears • Portage, downgrade or change route where group culture becomes unsafe. 	White Water Lead / whole group / before features and ongoing	Medium
Throwline, bank safety or rescue positioning poorly managed	Rescuers may create a second casualty, throwlines may be misused, or Safety Cover may be ineffective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throwlines are used by competent people • Bank safety is positioned before harder features where needed • Rescuers choose positions that protect themselves first • Rescue plans avoid ropes in places where they increase entrapment risk • Lead Paddler and Tail Paddler agree rescue sequencing before committing to complex sections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not run harder features until rescue positions are ready • Remove or reposition ineffective/unsafe Safety Cover • Stop if rescue capability is below feature consequence. 	White Water Lead / Safety Cover / before harder features	Medium / High

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Rope, knife, rescue harness, towline or pin-kit controls not suitable	Rescuers may be unable to release from rope systems, may misuse rescue equipment, may become entangled, or may be under-equipped for grade 3+ incidents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone carrying or using rope rescue equipment carries a knife • Rescue harness use is acceptable where the paddler is trained and competent, with White Water Safety training preferred • Pin kit is carried for grade 3+ activity where pinning or extraction consequence justifies it • Rope systems are only used by competent people • Rescue plans avoid creating a second casualty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use rope/harness/tow systems beyond competence • Downgrade or change venue if grade/consequence requires rescue equipment the group does not have • Stop rope/tow use immediately if entanglement risk is not controlled. 	White Water Lead / Competent Paddlers / before launch and before harder features	Medium / High
Entanglement in ropes, towlines, loose kit or rescue systems	Paddlers, swimmers or rescuers may become caught in rope, towlines, loose straps, deck lines or rescue systems, creating a high-consequence rescue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply a clean principle: keep ropes, towlines, loose kit, clipping points and rescue lines tidy, intentional and out of the water unless actively being used • Brief entanglement risk before rope, towline or rescue-system use • Avoid unmanaged ropes or towlines in moving water • Secure loose straps, painters and kit before launch and after portages • Keep knives accessible to those carrying or using rope rescue equipment • Stop rope work where the system or user competence is not clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop and tidy/remove loose or unmanaged rope/kit before continuing • Abandon rope/tow use if entanglement risk cannot be controlled • Treat significant entanglement or near entanglement as a reportable incident or near miss. 	White Water Lead / Competent Paddlers / before launch, before rescues and ongoing	Medium / High
Group separation or communication failure	Paddlers may become isolated, delayed, miss hazards or be unavailable for rescues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Lead Paddler / Tail Paddler or agreed peer-group structure • Agree signals, regroup points and lost-contact procedure • Leaders carry whistles • Other paddlers should carry whistles where practical • Consider walkie-talkies for longer, more complex, poor-visibility or poor-signal trips where they would improve group control • Keep float plan with route, group summary, off-water contact and cut-off time • Keep group size and spacing appropriate to grade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop and regroup if visual contact or agreed spacing breaks down • Notify off-water contact if delay affects cut-off time. 	White Water Lead / whole group / ongoing	Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Fatigue, dehydration, muscle strain or physical overexertion	Paddlers, leaders and rescuers may become tired, dehydrated, cold, less coordinated, injured or unable to complete the section safely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match trip length, grade, portages and rescue demands to group fitness and experience • Encourage paddlers to bring suitable food, fluids, warm drinks and personal medication where needed • Use rest, food and hydration breaks on longer or more demanding sections • Monitor signs of fatigue, cold, cramp, shoulder/back strain, reduced decision-making and repeated poor performance • Avoid repeated high-effort rescue practice or repeated carries where participants are becoming tired or cold • Pace the group around the least resilient paddlers, especially juniors or paddlers recovering from illness/injury. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest, hydrate, warm, shorten, downgrade, exit or end the activity if fatigue, dehydration, muscle strain or overexertion reduces safety margin • Do not continue into more committing sections where the group is already tired or cold. 	White Water Lead / whole group / before launch and ongoing	Medium
Weather, exposure or poor visibility	Whole group may be affected by cold, heat, wind, lightning, poor communication, reduced rescue margin, difficult travel or reduced visibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check forecast before travel and before launch • Require suitable clothing, food, fluids, warm drinks and warm kit • Set temperature cut-offs for adults and juniors • Match kit to temperature and conditions, including wetsuit, drysuit, pogies or mittens where required • Monitor exposure, visibility, wind, rainfall, lightning risk and forecast trend • Use breaks and route adjustments where weather reduces the safety margin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel, shorten, exit, shelter or change venue if weather, exposure, visibility or temperature exceeds threshold • Do not continue exposed/committed sections in lightning risk • Apply stricter cut-offs for juniors where appropriate. 	White Water Lead / before travel, before launch and ongoing	Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Access, egress, slips, banks, portages, parking and roadside loading	Paddlers, volunteers, spectators and road users may slip, fall, strain themselves, cut hands/feet, be unable to exit safely, or be exposed to roadside/parking hazards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check launch, landing, parking and portage points • Support carrying on steep or muddy banks • Use safe lifting, two-person lifts, straps or trolleys where practical, especially for long carries or difficult terrain • Avoid rushed loading/unloading in poor weather, darkness, traffic or steep ground • Wear suitable footwear and consider gloves where carrying, rescues or rough ground make cuts/abrasions more likely • Keep kit tidy and away from public paths/roads • Identify emergency egress points • Manage roadside changing/loading with visibility and privacy in mind • Prefer more cars at the finish so tired/cold paddlers can change, warm up and leave efficiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use alternative access or abandon if egress is unsafe • Move loading/changing away from traffic where needed • Stop and reorganise carrying/loading if people are rushing, lifting unsafely or terrain becomes unsuitable • Record issues in trip report/location notes. 	White Water Lead / Assistant Leaders / Drivers / before launch, at egress and shuttle points	Low / Medium
Lone working or isolated scouting/rescue activity	A paddler, White Water Lead or rescuer may become separated, injured or unable to call for help while scouting, setting safety, recovering kit or dealing with an emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Water Leads are trained and assessed to choose appropriate white water group-management strategies in real time • The White Water Lead remains responsible for maintaining suitable communication and line of sight with the group as far as reasonably practicable • Avoid deliberate lone scouting, lone bank safety or isolated rescue work where practical • Keep visual, voice or whistle contact with the group or another competent paddler where practical • Agree a return point, return time and what to do if contact is lost • Take suitable communication, throwline or emergency equipment where leaving the immediate group is necessary • Use pair or small-team arrangements for scouting, portages, kit recovery and bank safety where the terrain, visibility, remoteness or water consequence justifies it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop and regroup if a person becomes isolated without agreed contact • Do not commit to a feature if scouting or Safety Cover would require unsupported lone working beyond the White Water Lead's judgement and training • Start lost-contact or emergency procedure if an isolated person does not return as agreed. 	White Water Lead / Competent Paddlers / before features and ongoing	Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Collision with other paddlers, craft, debris or river users	Paddlers, bank safety, swimmers, anglers, members of the public or other craft users may be injured by collision, impact or poor group control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief spacing, signals, eddy discipline and passing arrangements Keep lookout for debris, anglers, swimmers, commercial/private craft and other river users Use Lead Paddler / Tail Paddler control where needed Give other river users space Avoid blind commitment where collision or obstruction risk is unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop, hold, portage, reroute or rebrief if collision risk increases Report near misses involving other craft, river users or serious impact. 	White Water Lead / whole group / ongoing	Low / Medium
Water quality, pollution, Weil's disease or invasive species transfer	Participants may become ill or contaminated. Club may contribute to environmental harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check pollution alerts where available Avoid visible pollution Cover cuts Avoid ingestion Use hand hygiene after paddling and before eating Shower/wash after paddling where appropriate Apply clean-check-dry where invasive species transfer is relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not paddle or exit early if pollution risk is unacceptable Clean/quarantine kit if contaminated Report illness concerns through appropriate route. 	White Water Lead / Paddlers / before and after activity	Low / Medium
Manual handling and shared equipment	Participants and volunteers may be injured by poor lifting or harmed by damaged, poor-fitting or unsuitable kit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check boat, paddle, buoyancy aid, helmet, spraydeck, airbags, throwline, towline, knife where appropriate and warm kit Helmets are suitable/rated for the grade and consequence of the river Boats have airbags Confirm fit and suitability for grade, water level, weather and participant Use safe lifting and two-person lifts where needed Use straps, trolleys or staged carries where practical for long carries, difficult ground or heavy boats Log equipment issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove damaged, poor-fitting, contaminated or unsuitable equipment from use Downgrade or cancel where suitable kit is unavailable Stop and reorganise carrying/loading if manual handling is becoming unsafe Do not launch a boat without suitable flotation/airbags. 	White Water Lead / Equipment Lead / before launch and after trip	Low / Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
First aid provision or emergency kit inadequate	Emergency response may be delayed or ineffective if first aid competence, first aid kit, group shelter or emergency kit does not match the trip.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry first aid kit • Identify first aid provision before launch and match it to the grade, remoteness, weather, group size, junior involvement and likely emergency service response time • Where possible, include at least one currently first-aid-trained person in the group, especially for committing, higher-grade, remote or junior trips • Carry group shelter capacity to cover every person in the group • Carry at least one set of splits per 8 paddlers • Carry warm drinks where suitable • Carry spare clothes in boats where suitable • Keep spare warmth in vehicles • Split emergency kit between White Water Leads, Assistant Leaders and Competent Paddlers so responsibility is distributed • Recheck kit if the group splits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay launch until critical first aid and emergency kit is available and distributed • Reduce group size, add first aid provision, add kit, change route or cancel if first aid, group shelter or split-paddle cover is inadequate for the planned trip. 	White Water Lead / Assistant Leaders / before launch and after any split	Medium
Transport, shuttle and lift sharing	Drivers, passengers, volunteers, juniors, adults at risk and other road users may be affected by fatigue, unsafe loading, vehicle issues or safeguarding concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers remain responsible for licence, insurance, roadworthiness, fatigue, legal loading, seatbelts and secure boat transport • Keep lift-sharing details, phone numbers, addresses and emergency contacts out of public documents • Apply safeguarding transport guidance where juniors/adults at risk are involved • Recheck boat straps/trailer loads before departure and after an early stop • Prefer sufficient vehicles at the finish • Leave a van/car at the finish with warm kit where practical • For long rivers or large groups, consider placing a car at a convenient mid-point escape or regroup location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay, change driver, change shuttle, re-secure load or cancel travel if driver fatigue, road weather, safeguarding or loading is unsafe • Replan shuttle if warm-kit or escape arrangements are inadequate for the conditions. 	Driver / Trip Organiser / before and after paddling	Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Safeguarding and welfare	Juniors, adults at risk, volunteers and participants may be affected by unsuitable supervision, communication, privacy, physical contact, photography or welfare arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow safeguarding, coaches code of conduct, junior code of conduct, parents code of conduct, general member code of conduct, communications, changing-room and photography policies • Confirm parental consent and supervision arrangements for juniors • Adults working directly with juniors or adults at risk must meet club safeguarding and DBS requirements for their role • Avoid inappropriate one-to-one situations and ensure more than one adult is present where juniors are involved • Keep medical, welfare, emergency contact and safeguarding information in controlled private channels • Physical contact during rescues, equipment fitting, spraydeck help, helmet/buoyancy aid checks or assisted carries is limited to what is necessary, explained where practicable, and handled with extra care for juniors and adults at risk • No unauthorised photography or video is permitted • Parent/guardian consent is required for junior photography, and image capture/sharing follows the club photography and communications policies • Digital communication involving minors follows club policy and avoids private messaging outside approved routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pause/adapt activity and escalate concerns through the current club safeguarding and welfare reporting route published in club policies and on the website • Do not place an adult into a child-facing role if DBS or safeguarding suitability is not confirmed • Stop or change support method if physical contact, communication or photography arrangements are not appropriate. 	White Water Lead / safeguarding and welfare reporting route / before and during activity	Low / Medium

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing controls / mitigations	Further action / dynamic trigger	Owner / timing	Residual risk
Incident response, near-miss learning or delayed emergency access	Whole group may be affected if emergency response, access, communication, reporting or learning route is unclear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use emergency action plan for serious incidents • Carry first aid and rescue equipment appropriate to section • Identify access, egress, nearest road, emergency meeting point and nearest suitable medical option • Use incident reporting process after incidents and near misses • Follow club safety guidance issued by the Safety Officer • Treat reportable examples as including swim requiring rescue, lost paddler/group separation, pinned boat, pinned person, near miss at weir/strainer, missed cut-off time and equipment failure • Review relevant risk assessment, location pack, trip planning controls, competency assumptions and follow-up actions after significant incidents or near misses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify off-water contact if delayed, route changes or cut-off time is at risk • Evacuate early where injury, cold, water level or location reduces margin • Report and review near misses and incidents after the trip • Update documents, location notes or future controls where the review identifies a learning point. 	White Water Lead / Off-Water Contact / Safety Officer / ongoing and post-activity	Medium / High
Group briefing, river signals or defensive swimming not understood	Paddlers may miss instructions, swim poorly, stand up in moving water, fail to regroup, or be slow to respond to hazards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reiterate river signals before launch • Confirm the group understands stop, go, eddy, help, swimmer and regroup signals • Reiterate defensive swimming and foot-entrapment avoidance • Brief what to do after a swim, capsize, lost paddle, lost boat or missed eddy • Check new or visiting paddlers understand KCC signals and expectations • Reinforce safety information during the trip using periodic reminders or spot checks on spacing, signals, PPE, warmth, fatigue and group condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not launch until the group understands essential signals and swim procedure • Rebrief after any confusion, swim, near miss, group split, change in conditions or repeated loss of spacing. 	White Water Lead / whole group / before launch and ongoing	Medium

Dynamic Stop Triggers

Trigger	Action
Water level is outside the planned range	Reassess grade and consequence; downgrade, change venue, portage, delay or cancel.
Offline/printed map or route information is not available for a committing trip	Delay launch, source suitable route information, reduce objective or cancel.
Off-water contact, cut-off time or emergency contact information is incomplete	Complete the float plan/emergency information before launching.
Relevant medical disclosure or emergency information is incomplete where needed for safe participation	Pause, seek the minimum information needed through the appropriate private route, adapt the activity or keep the participant off the water.
Pre-launch safety briefing is incomplete or late arrivals missed it	Brief or rebrief before launching or before committing to the next section.
Weather exceeds agreed threshold	Exit, shelter, shorten, change venue or cancel.

Trigger	Action
Temperature cut-off or kit threshold is not met	Upgrade kit, shorten, change venue or cancel, with stricter thresholds for juniors.
Group competence does not match the section	Split, reduce objective, add support, portage or cancel.
Grade-specific controls are not met	Move paddlers to a lower-grade option, split groups, change venue or cancel.
White Water Lead, Assistant Leader or Safety Cover role is unavailable	Reassign within competence, reduce objective or cancel.
White Water Lead is incapacitated and no other approved lead is present	Do not continue downstream except as required for immediate safety; start emergency instructions, contact off-water contact and emergency services where required.
Junior supervision, consent or under-16 parent/guardian attendance is incomplete	Do not include the junior until controls are complete, or change the activity.
Buoyancy aid, helmet, footwear or essential PPE is missing or unsuitable	Replace, adjust, downgrade, exit or cancel; do not continue on or near moving water without suitable PPE.
Repeated swims, cold stress, anxiety or fatigue reduce safety margin	Shorten, warm, evacuate or end the activity.
Suspected concussion or significant head injury occurs	Remove the paddler from activity, monitor, evacuate or call emergency services if required, and do not allow return to paddling that day if concussion is suspected.
Known hazard cannot be identified or safely managed	Scout, portage, reroute or abandon.
Rescue cover is not ready for a harder feature	Hold the group, reposition cover, portage or abandon the feature.
Rope rescue equipment is present without a knife	Do not use/carry rope rescue equipment until a suitable knife is available to the rope user.
Loose ropes, towlines, straps or rescue systems create entanglement risk	Stop and tidy/remove the hazard, abandon the rope/tow system or change the plan before continuing.
Grade 3+ trip lacks suitable pin kit where pinning consequence is material	Add pin kit, change objective, portage key features or cancel.
First aid provision, group shelter, first aid kit, split paddles or emergency kit distribution is inadequate	Add first aid provision, add/distribute kit, reduce group size, change route or cancel.
Fatigue, dehydration or physical strain reduces safety margin	Rest, hydrate, shorten, downgrade, exit or end the activity.
Muscle strain, cuts, abrasions or overexertion affect safe participation	Stop, assess, provide first aid within competence, reduce carrying/rescue load, evacuate or end the activity.
Scouting, bank safety, kit recovery or rescue work would require unsupported lone working beyond the White Water Lead's judgement and training	Regroup, use a pair/small-team system, change the feature plan, portage or abandon the feature.
Collision risk with other craft, river users, debris or paddlers increases	Hold, rebrief, reroute, portage or stop until the risk is controlled.
Peer pressure to run a feature appears	Stop, rebrief that portage is acceptable and remove pressure before continuing.
Transport, shuttle or lift-sharing arrangements become unsafe	Delay, change driver, change vehicle, re-secure load or cancel travel.
Warm-kit, finish vehicle or mid-route escape plan is inadequate for conditions/group size	Replan shuttle, place additional vehicle support, shorten route or cancel.
Group does not understand river signals or defensive swimming briefing	Rebrief before launch or stop and rebrief during the trip.
Safeguarding or welfare concern arises	Pause or adapt activity and use safeguarding/welfare reporting route.