



ARUN YOUTH AQUA CENTRE GUIDELINE

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TITLE	TRANSPORTATION, LAUNCHING AND RECOVERY OF KAYAKS AND CANOES	
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APPROVED BY	R. Elliman	Chairman Management Committee
SIGNATURE		

1. PURPOSE

This guideline responds to the AYAC Risk Assessment Co-ordinating document regarding the transportation of kayaks and canoes and their launching and recovery.

2. SCOPE

The guideline covers the following activities:-

- i. Transportation of Canoes and Kayaks to the launching area from the storage facility within the Centre compound.
- ii. Launching and Recovery of Kayaks and Canoes.

3. DEFINITIONS

Chief Instructor The approved Canoeing Instructor who is responsible for the session Activity.

Canoe For the purposes of this guideline Canoe shall mean both open Canadian canoes and closed cockpit kayaks of all styles.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Management Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Chief Instructor/s who are responsible for the canoeing activities are aware of this guideline.

The Chief Instructor is responsible for ensuring that all members, temporary members, adult helpers are aware of the principles contained within this guideline and where appropriate are shown/instructed on the correct way of carrying out the activity.

GUIDELINE

1. The Canoes are located on a racks and for some small youngsters it will be difficult to remove the canoes, it is advisable that a competent adult is available to assist the obtaining and putting away of all canoes.
2. Canoes are relatively heavy and youngsters should at all times pair up when transporting the canoes, within the compound and to and from the launching area. The Topper dinghy launching trailers can be used if insufficient help is available. The beach duty person or a responsible adult MUST see the youngsters across Sea Road.
3. Most sessions will be held on the sea and it is essential that all youngsters going afloat for the first time are shown the correct way to remove the spray deck(if fitted) in the event of a capsize.



4. As with all coastal locations beach launching and recovery can be particularly difficult under certain combinations of tide and wind. It must be stressed that the Chief Instructor will make a decision based on the current weather forecast and sea conditions prevailing at the time of launching, that decision will at all times be based on his/her experience, and a risk assessment undertaken on the day and the competency of the group present. At all times the safety of those present at the session will be paramount. The option of utilising the facility known as Mewsbrook Lake (Note 1) is generally available at all times especially for novice canoeists.
5. Normally it is a Southerly biased wind F4 or above (from SE clockwise to SW) on a high water spring tide which may pose difficulties. Northerly biased winds East anticlockwise to West and neap tides generally pose no more problems than considerations normally taken.
6. The Chief Instructor should at all times, during the canoeing session, be aware of the conditions developing on the shore. Remembering the priority of safety at all times it may be necessary either to abort the session early or extend the session until the conditions ease.
7. Offshore winds pose a particular hazard for canoeists especially as there is generally not a safety boat in attendance at the sessions.
8. For planned sessions which leave the immediate vicinity of the AYAC beach area a means of communication with the shore should be established. Use of the Centre's VHF radios should be considered.

Note 1. Mewsbrook lake has a significant bird population and there are rats living on the island, it has also been subject over the past few years to an algae bloom which has forced the suspension of the boating concessionaire on the basis of a risk to health. Canoeing on the lake from the Centre **MUST** not take place if the concessionaire has closed due to algae bloom and the Chief Instructor **MUST** determine before a session is planned that the water is safe for the activity planned. See also APPENDIX 1 which should be given to the parents of all youngsters following their first session on Mewsbrook Lake. (Copies are available at the Centre.)

6. REFERENCES

- i. BCU Code of Conduct
- ii. WSSCC Regulations and Notes of Guidance for Off Site activities.



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APPENDIX 1

Weil's Disease

Weil's Disease is a RARE but very serious illness. It is caused by bacteria carried in the urine of rats (and some other animals), which get into the waterways.

PRECAUTIONS

Avoid capsizing or rolling in stagnant or slow moving water

Wash or shower after canoeing

Cover minor scratches on exposed parts of the body with water proof plasters

Use foot wear to avoid cutting feet

The illness is very rare, but can be contracted anywhere. The descending scale of risk is: Stagnant water, canals and slow moving rivers (particularly after flash floods), swifter streams.

Should your child become ill after canoeing (2-19 days flu-like illness (temperature, aching limbs and joints) call your doctor and tell him/her they have been canoeing and give him/her the following information.



WEILS DISEASE

What is it?

Leptospirosis is a zoonosis, that is an infection transmitted to man from animal sources. Leptospirosis in humans can produce a range of clinical manifestations from a mild flu-like illness to meningitis or renal failure. The more severe end of the clinical spectrum is known as Weil's disease, which is rare in Britain but can occasionally result in death.

How do you catch it?

The infection is caused when leptospire, minute bacteria, enter the human host through a skin abrasion or through the lining of the mouth, throat and eyes after contact with an infected animal's urine or contaminated fresh water. There are many different types, or serovars, of this organism. Each tends to be associated with a different animal species. The most commonly found serovar in this country is *Leptospira hardjo*, which is associated with cattle. *Leptospira icterohaemorrhagiae* also occurs here and is associated with rats.

How serious is it?

It can be a serious illness requiring hospital treatment and can lead to kidney or liver failure. Weil's Disease is a notifiable illness.

Do I need to do anything?

Simple precautions can reduce even further the small risk, precautions to be listed as appropriate for the canoeists. These could include a selection of the follow:

Cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters.

Wash your hands or shower after canoeing.

Avoid capsizing drill or rolling in stagnant or slow moving water.

Use foot-wear to avoid cutting feet.

If you have flu-like illness after canoeing go to your GP early — tell him/her you have been canoeing.

What should I do about it?

If your youngster is taken ill after canoeing, particularly from 2 to 19 days following, tell your doctor that he/she has been canoeing and show him/her this information. You must call the doctor early. The most common early symptoms are: temperature, an influenza-like illness and joint and muscle pains. (Pains in the calf muscles are often particularly noticeable). Jaundice and/or conjunctivitis may be present, or develop, although the absence of any of these symptoms does not mean that the illness is not Weil's Disease — nor does a symptom in isolation necessarily indicate that Weil's Disease is present.

(To the doctor: A canoeist's may be exposed to the danger of leptospirosis. Early treatment can be helpful in limiting the course of this infection. Serological testing is available for leptospirosis. However, it is only appropriate for confirming an initial clinical diagnosis and not for the purposes of whether or not to commence treatment. Your local Public Health Laboratory or hospital consultant microbiologist should be able to offer advice on the appropriateness of testing and preferred antibiotics.)