

Paddlesports Risk Assessment: Silver Wing Lake, Wraysbury

Last updated: Summer 2025

This risk assessment relates to paddlesports coaching sessions on Silver Wing Lake, home to Sliver Wing Sailing Club. The environmental definition for the lake is Sheltered Water, with possibility of meeting the Open Water definition in the event of an Easterly (offshore) wind, blowing above Force 3. All risks are owned, managed and controlled dynamically by the coach on the day. Controls and mitigating actions shown are cumulative to avoid repetition. Version control & ownership at end of document.

Hazard	Who might be harmed?	How might the risk be controlled?	Further mitigating actions	Risk rating, date & comments	Review date & notes
Drowning	All paddlers on the session	Wearing of buoyancy aids Instruction in capsize procedures Relevant supervision of novices	Coaches check BA fitting for each participant. All BAs tested according to recommended standards. Coaches design activities according to competence of the participants on the day. All equipment used is checked for damage before each day's activities. Equipment is regularly maintained.	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access is very safe. • Beaches and pontoons available.
Hypothermia	All paddlers on the session	Participants advised on the correct clothing to wear before the session. Adjustment to clothing as required	Coach to carry group shelter & spare gear as appropriate to weather on the day. Safety briefing for each session. Continuous dynamic risk assessment while paddling.	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key provides access to changing rooms and hot showers.

			Coach must hold a valid first aid certificate.		
Weather and environmental conditions	All paddlers on the session	Coach to operate within remit No paddling when forecast of electric storms / any sound of thunder	Seek alternative dates or venues according to forecast & weather on the day	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weather station on island provides realtime data
Head injuries	All paddlers on the session	Advise participants to wear helmets when practicing rescues Brief SUP users to stay low when in proximity of hard edges	Coach to demonstrate launching, landing and rescue techniques that minimise harm to self, according to current guidance.	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bottom is soft. Avoid rescue practice near concrete slipways.
Slips, trips and falls	All paddlers on the session	Pontoons and general area maintained and kept clean and free of debris	Assess entry points on the day. Shift any bird deterrents away from areas to be used.	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change
Sprains, strains and soft tissue injuries / Injury from manual handling	All paddlers on the session	All participants to work together to un/load boats on cars	Park close to the waterside Coach to supervise	Medium	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change
Pollution and water quality	All paddlers on the session. Any pets.	Venue is unpolluted by sewage discharges or other pollutants Affinity Water will place a sign on the gate if blue green algae has been detected. Brief participants on risks to selves (and pets - avoid drinking from the lake).	If signs are present, check the algae situation with the sailing club safety officer Use pontoons rather than beaches after prolonged hot spells to minimise exposure to algae that may collect in the warmer shallower water	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWSC safety team contacts updated HSE advice & research on blue green algae reviewed May 2025
Other water users	All paddlers on the session	Avoid sailing boats & motorised safety boats	Check race plans and coaching schedule with sailing club before	Low	Reviewed May 25:

		During school holidays, link with sailing instructors to agree procedures for shared spaces that may be used by minors.	each session & agree any areas to be off limits for paddling. Ensure SWSC safeguarding lead is aware of planned sessions (put in club calendar).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWSC has asked us to avoid paddling on race days Personal links made with leaders of children's activities to ensure communication before during and after sessions.
Weirs and man-made features	All paddlers on the session	None known at this venue	Check regularly with sailing club for any known obstructions in the water	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWSC safety team lead is Malcom Weller.
Overhanging trees or strainers	All paddlers on the session	Safety briefing to advise paddlers to negotiate around trees, both overhanging and floating.	There is no flow, but coach to dynamically assess the risk of being blown into trees & adapt session plans accordingly.	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change
Injury from traffic	Course participants Other road users	Venue is behind a closed gate with no public traffic access		Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change
Shallow water	SUP paddlers; paddlers involved in rescue practice	Safety briefing to advise paddlers to maintain a low paddling position on SUP in shallow water (kneeling or prone). Ensure rescue practice is in deep water & offer helmets.	Coach to remain vigilant, especially when wind blows SUPs, rescue scenarios toward a shallow area.	Low	Reviewed May 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change
Paddler(s) separated from group	Any paddler: Risk of physical harm through exposure to the environment ; Risk of drowning and injury due to unsupervised	Careful monitoring on the water. If required the coach will adapt the strategy for managing the group on the water.	If participant behaviour is such that they are not following coach's instructions then the activity may be curtailed at the coach's discretion.	Low	Added Summer 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to PUT SW risk assessment

	activity				
Paddler separated from craft	All paddlers on the session: Risk of physical harm through exposure to the environment	Coach will ensure that participants are not separated from their craft for an extended period of time and will intervene in the activity or utilise other craft to assist with the situation if required. No more than 4 people in the water at any one time.	Participants undertaking rescues will be closely monitored by the coach who can intervene if a swimmer is immersed for an extended period of time (this will differ depending on water temp and PPE of immersed paddler).	Low	Added Summer 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to PUT SW risk assessment
Not being able to land or get to egress point	All paddlers on the session: Risk of harm due to extended participation in activity	Remain in bay area of lake, or brief on alternative get outs in case moving to an alternative location, eg. due to wind.	Cancel sessions if conditions prevent paddling in areas of the lake with easy egress.	Low	Added Summer 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to PUT SW risk assessment
Leash and sling entrapment	All paddlers on the session: Risk of physical harm; Risk of drowning	Participants will be briefed on choosing the right SUP leash for the environment. Brief on entrapment hazard when using slings in rescues. Coach carries a knife.	Vigilance will be used when practicing rescues using slings. Coach to remain vigilant & carry a safety knife.	Medium	Added Summer 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to PUT SW risk assessment
Collision with a swimmer during a rescue scenario	All paddlers on the session: Risk of physical injuries	Max 4 participants in the water at any time. Participants work in pairs & the rescuer is aware of the casualty's position throughout the rescue scenario.	Coach to remain vigilant at all times people are in the water. Ensure all paddlers on sessions are aware the W3W location is written on the board in case need to call emergency services.	Low	Added Summer 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to PUT SW risk assessment
Use of towing techniques	All paddlers on the session: Physical or psychological injuries	Towing techniques are quick release. Coach will ensure that any equipment used for the purposes of towing is suitable to minimise jarring and entrapment.	Brief on risks associated with lines Brief on risks associated with waist mounted towing lines	Low	Added Summer 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to PUT SW risk assessment

Cross Craft Rescues (eg. rescue canoe from kayak)	All paddlers on the session: Physical or psychological injuries	<p>Coach will ensure that the participants take extra care when lifting/pulling/moving larger craft such as a canoe from a smaller craft</p> <p>In most situations it will be appropriate to gain assistance from another paddler to manage the additional load and to reduce the chance of injury</p>	The coach member will be vigilant for situations where a paddler could become trapped under a canoe/kayak when rescuing it and will intervene if required	Low	
Entrapped / unconscious Paddler Rescue	All paddlers on the session: Physical or psychological injuries	<p>Coach will closely monitor any entrapped paddler rescue practice</p> <p>Care will be taken to ensure a safe and appropriate location is used, close to pontoons and standing depth.</p>	<p>Only one scenario will be performed at a time to ensure that the coach can effectively supervise the rescues</p> <p>Coach to check the volunteer 'victim' is suitable and ok to participate in each scenario.</p>	Low	<p>Added Summer 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to PUT SW risk assessment
Lone working	Provider; All paddlers on the session.	Coach will review participant details in advance of course and decide if an assistant is required or group size should be reduced.	<p>If an assistant is indicated by the group profile, a coach or paddler holding the qualification being delivered will be invited to assist.</p> <p>All SWSC (venue) policies will be followed.</p>	Low	Added Spring 2026

Version control: Current version: v5.

- Version 0: First draft: Andrew Cockayne, May 2023 (BC Risk Assessment training last refreshed April 2023)
- Version 1: Updated: Andrew Cockayne, July 2023
- Version 2: Updated by Andrew Cockayne, November 2023
- Version 3: Updated by Andrew Cockayne, May 2025
- Version 4: Updated by Andrew Cockayne, August 2025
- Version 5: Updated by Andrew Cockayne, May 2026