


Hautbois Activity Centre Risk Assessment			
KAYAKING			
Assessment Code: RA-KAY25	SOP Code: SOP-KAY25	Lesson Plan Code: LP-KAY25	
Review Date: March 2026	Assessor: Rory Howard	Tech Advisor: Phil Hadley	

**Description:** Kayaking takes place on Hautbois' private Cut and River Bure. Operating area from Hautbois cut to Horstead Jetty. Ratio of 1:8


SR= Severity Rating; 5 (Catastrophic) 4 (Major) 3 (Moderate) 2 (Minor) 1 (None)

LH=Likelihood Rating 5 (Almost certain) 4 (Likely) 3 (Possible) 2 (Unlikely) 1 (Insignificant)

RR= Risk Rating; A (Acceptable Risk) RR (Residual Risk remains despite controls- 'occupational hazard') U (Unacceptable Risk, action to be taken immediately)

Significant Hazard	Persons at Risk	How	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Drowning & Drowning as a result of injury.	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Entrapment from capsized kayaks, non-swimmers, incorrectly fitted buoyancy aids, being hit by a paddle, unconscious casualty in the water, panicking in cold water.	Minimum Instructor qualification British Canoeing Level 1 or Paddlesport Instructor Award. All to wear CE EN393 approved Buoyancy Aids. Follow SOP, all equipment fitted and checked by qualified Instructor Groups with additional needs- canoes rafted together for stability Instructors to carry safety knives in BAs in case of participant entrapment. Leaders to make instructors aware of non-swimmers and nervous participants.	5	2	RR
Hypo/hyperthermia	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Entering cold water not being appropriately dressed, or for an extended period of time.	Clients to be dressed appropriately for weather conditions. Safety kit with warm clothing and hat, and sun cream (if appropriate) to be carried at all times. Temperature and conditions assessed by Manager before session to go ahead. Additional clothing to be included in the safety kit including fleeces, windproof/waterproof layers. Changes in conditions and group to be monitored 'as you go' and appropriate changes to be made. Instructors to ensure they have spare clothing and are suitably dressed.	4	1	A
Equipment Failure	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Splinters from spars, minor personal injury, buoyancy aid failure, potential drowning.	monthly inspections recorded in the form of activity checks. All equipment to be correctly stored and checked on a session and periodical basis. BA PPE checks annually Instructors trained in proper storage of equipment during induction.	2	2	A
Operating Area	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Group paddling too far and becoming fatigued. Accident occurring away from Estate boundary.	All instructors to carry a 2-way radio and emergency mobile to communicate with Hautbois when travelling further than Horstead Jetty. All Instructors to have been certified competent and know of egress points. Full rescue barrel carried by instructor for longer journeys. Participants should be assessed and participants moved between boats if necessary. Regular rest breaks should be taken with the group rafted together and drink breaks taken, if necessary, agreed in advance with group.	3	2	A
Infection from water/ riverbank	Participants, leaders & Instructors	leptospirosis and similar from contaminated water	Participant and clients briefed on washing hands with warm soapy water and showering after activity, and washing clothing worn. Hazard information available to all participants on website and sent out in pre booking information as requested.	5	2	RR

This Risk Assessment should work in conjunction with the generic risk assessment (RA-GEN) and relevant activity's Safe Operating Procedure (SOP-).

<b>Hautbois Activity Centre Safe Operating Procedure</b>			
Kayaking SOP-KAY25			
Location: 3D Map ref. - H	RA-KAY25	LP-KAY25	
Review Date: March 2026			
<b>Must be used in conjunction with Generic Safe Operating Procedure (SOP-GEN)</b>			

**Qualifications Required: (Instructors must be at least 18 years of age)**

- A current British Canoeing Level One Coach Award/ British Canoeing Paddlesport Instructor Award
  - British Canoeing Foundation Safety and Rescue Training
  - Valid First Aid Certificate - minimum 1 day
  - In house training provided by Activities Manager
- Or
- Valid First Aid Certificate - minimum 1 day
  - British Canoeing Coach Award Level 2/ British Canoeing Paddlesport Coach Award

**Activity Area:**

- Make sure there are no obstacles in the water that could pose a danger to any persons in the water.
- A review of the river should be made before any groups are taken out, considering the weather for the day. The Activities manager or Lead instructors' word is final on whether the activity will take place.
- Check that the floating boom is in position.
- Make sure all pontoons and beach are not slippery and clear of debris, especially bird faeces.
- Check trees around session area for loose branches.

**Equipment: Visual checks of all equipment must be done before each session.**

- Instructors must always have the following equipment: buoyancy aid, radio, waterproof radio bag, safety whistle, throw line, safety knife, floating tow rope and waterproof first aid kit.
- Safety knives must only be removed from buoyancy aids if they need to be used
- All instructor equipment must be returned to the instructor shed after each session and the shed must be locked
- All kayaks need to be checked before session - bungs in place and no splits in hull

**Session Management:**

- Buoyancy aids and Kayak paddles should be explained and fitted/sized correctly.
- Safe manual handling of all equipment and kayaks must be demonstrated and explained.
- Emphasis on walking when near the water and taking extra care on the wooden pontoon or beach.
- Explanation of safe areas to be when not wearing a buoyancy aid must be demonstrated and explained.
- Explanation of risk to personal belongings such as glasses and cameras if taken onto the water. Glasses wearers should be offered a secure strap found in the Canoe Shed.
- Dry land paddle drill - correct use of paddle and how to steer a kayak
- The following Safety Rules must be highlighted to all participants (confirming their understanding)
  - No participant should go near the water without a buoyancy aid on.
  - A Capsize drill must be explained before any participant goes on the water. This should include what to do if you capsize and what to do if you see someone capsize.
  - Explain that participants will need to lean forward when going under to foot bridge to access the river.
  - Explain that participants can use their paddles to push away from the bank to avoid the vegetation growing there.
  - Safe entry into the water should be explained and demonstrated. (No Jumping)
  - A respect for the environment must be observed.
  - Walking when near water's edge and on pontoons at all times.
- No one is to enter the water without an instructor being on the water - Instructors will assist to ensure safe launch of kayaks
- The instructor on the water will contain the group in the main part of the cut until all participants and second instructor are on the water.
- Once all participants are on the water the Instructors will radio to the office to inform them that 'All kayakers are on the water'. The same should be done when getting off the water.
- Instructors will conduct the session in line with the Hautbois Kayaking lesson plan LP-KAY20.
- All of the session will operate on the Hautbois side of the cut outlined in the attached map or on the river. This is to the right of the boom when heading out.
- No games will be played between the last island and the bridge, this area is for access to and from the river only.
- Once all participants are on the water the importance of staying together and always in eyesight of an instructor must be explained and enforced.
- Once the session has finished the instructor will demonstrate safe exit from their boat to the bank.
- On completion of the session participants assist in returning all the equipment safely and appropriately. Instructors must check all equipment is returned to the correct place.
- Once clients have finished the instructor must request, they clean their hands and face with warm soapy water.
- Following the final session of the day all equipment must be returned to store and any faults/defects reported and recorded
- If any repairs are required to Kayaks, Buoyancy aids or paddles, then instructors are asked to make the repairs where possible or place them in the decommissioning bin.
- Any incidents/near misses with the participants must be reported to the Centre Manager and an Incident form completed as appropriate.
- In the event of an emergency: follow the Staff accident and incident emergency procedure.

This Risk Assessment should work in conjunction with the generic risk assessment (RA-GEN) and relevant activity's Safe Operating Procedure (SOP-).