

# OCKC: Covid-19 Action Plan for the Return to Paddling Safely in 2021



## 1. Introduction

This document is intended to provide guidance and actions for a safe return to paddling following changes to Government regulations and guidance for the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides information for individual paddlers, leaders, coaches for paddling activities.

Government advice for physical activity differentiates between 'organised and structured' and 'informal or self-organised' sport. In a paddling context, the government definition for organised sport is activity that is being delivered by a 'provider' (OCKC) where they are following British Canoeing guidance and have the appropriate measures in place to offer paddling activities safely.

Covid restrictions, government and British Canoeing guidance can be very dynamic. Therefore OCKC will review this document together with any risk assessments and code of conduct document whenever there is a change in Covid level restriction levels or tiers.

## 2. Transmission of COVID-19 Risks in Paddling.

According to current government evidence, COVID-19 is primarily transmitted through respiratory droplets and contact with contaminated surfaces - usually those that are frequently touched. Airborne transmission is possible in specific settings where certain procedures or sports treatments are performed in close proximity. When assessing the risk of COVID-19, an assessment of the transmission risk based on three key variables should be considered:

- **Droplet transmission:** The risk associated with each action in an activity based on duration and proximity of participants. Providers can determine the risk of actions in the paddling activity - anything, for example, from accessing and egressing the water, on-the-water activities, etc - which will then determine the overall risk of paddling.
- **Fomite transmission:** The risk associated with the handling and transfer of equipment in paddling, e.g. shared equipment.
- **Population:** The number of participants likely to take part in the proposed activity, plus the known risk factors of participants with underlying health conditions or high risk groups who wish to participate.

## 3. General Guidance

Paddling activities are permitted despite wider restrictions because of the benefits of sport and physical activity for people's physical and mental wellbeing.

Anyone involved with paddling should however be aware that as with all other areas of life, there are some increased risks associated with taking part in some paddling activities.

In order to protect themselves and others they may come into contact with whilst paddling, individuals are strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high risk behaviour in their everyday lives.

Whilst for many a return to paddling will be welcome, it is important to note that some individuals, groups and communities are still deemed more vulnerable in respect of Covid-19. We remind you to follow the Government's guidance in these situations only returning when it is right for you to do so.

There is no pressure to return, other individuals may also feel they are not ready to return. In these cases we ask you to respect the individual's decision. Everyone's health, wellbeing and safety are the priorities.

### **Social Distancing**

Social distancing will be in place as people will be 2 metres apart or, as a minimum, 1 metre apart with the mitigation of an outdoor environment. This means that there are limited modifications required to the activity itself.

### **Gatherings**

Organised outdoor sport is exempt from legal gathering limits across all the tiers of local restrictions. This is however only the case during the activity and gathering sizes must be followed before and after activity and by any parents or spectators on site during the activity.

Participants should still adhere to social distancing when not actively participating.

Structured and organised indoor sport (e.g pool sessions) are not exempt from legal gathering limits.

- **Tier 1 Medium Alert -**
  - Indoor activities permitted either, on your own, with the people you live with, your support bubble and up to a maximum of six people from different households. Multiple groups can happen simultaneously provided that participants are in separate groups of up to 6 people which do not mix with other groups. This means that a pool session could take place for 12 paddlers, as long as they are split into 2 distinct groups.
  - Outdoor sports facilities are allowed to open.
  - Outdoor recreational and structured sporting activities (OCKC activities) permitted

-Recreational paddling is only permitted, on your own, with the people you live with, your support bubble and up to a maximum of six people from different households.

- **Tier 2 High Alert -**
  - Activities cannot take place indoors if there is any interaction between people from different households.
  - Outdoor sports facilities are allowed to open.
  - Outdoor structured sporting activities (OCKC activities) permitted
  - Recreational paddling is only permitted, on your own, with the people you live with, your support bubble and up to a maximum of six people from different households.
- **Tier 3 Very High Alert -**

As Tier 2 with the addition that modifications to high-risk contact activities should be made ( eg. Where the 2m distance cannot be achieved. Rescues, Sharing craft etc)
- **Tier 4 Stay at Home -**
  - Outdoor sports facilities are allowed to open.
  - Outdoor structured sporting activities (OCKC activities) permitted, on your own, with the people you live with, your support bubble or two people from different households.
  - Recreational paddling is permitted, on your own, with the people you live with, your support bubble or two people from different households.

**NOTE:- In tier 1, 2 and 3 areas, structured sporting activities (OCKC activities) are exempt from legal gathering limits and can take place in any number, but modifications to high-risk activities should be made in tier 3 areas. In tier 4 areas, you can only take part in individual exercise outdoors - alone, with 1 other person, or within your household or bubble.**

## **Lockdowns**

Additional lockdown measures may also be put in place locally, regionally or nationally. These will include greater restrictions over and above those in the above tiers

### **3rd lockdown measures (Jan/Feb 2021)**

Organised and structured outdoor sporting activity must not take place (No OCKC activities). All indoor and outdoor sports clubs, centres, venues and facilities will need to close. Recreational paddling for exercise is permitted within the government measures, so long as you are:

- by yourself
- with the people you live with
- with your support bubble (if you're legally permitted to form one)
- in a childcare bubble where providing childcare

- when on your own, with one person from another household while following social distancing.

### **Travel**

Individuals must follow the guidance on travel when they wish to do so to participate in paddling activity. The guidance affects those living in those areas as well as those who wish to travel into the areas to take part in paddling activities. Individuals are advised where possible to avoid the use of public transport and car sharing

- If you live in a tier 1 or 2 area, do not travel into a tier 3 area\*, including for paddling.
- If you live in, or are travelling to, a tier 2 area, reduce the number of journeys you make, where possible.
- If you live in a tier 3 area, do not travel out of your area\*, including for paddling. This includes travelling between neighbouring tier 3 areas.
- When travelling to Wales, Scotland, or Northern Ireland ensure that you comply with the latest devolved government travel guidance.

\* Travel is permitted where it is necessary to enable individual exercise (or exercise for people from the same household or support bubble), for work or to enable sport for disabled people, sport for educational purposes, or supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s, to take place, but should still be minimised and kept to short distances only

### **Symptom checking**

All paddlers, officials, volunteers and spectators must undergo a self-assessment for any COVID-19 symptoms before leaving the house to take part in any activity. No-one should leave home for paddling purposes if they, or someone they live with, have symptoms of COVID-19 currently recognised as any of the following:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste.

## **4. Practical Advice for Paddlers**

### **Prior to Activity**

- Ensure that you complete a self-assessment for symptoms prior to leaving home. Ensure you comply with the latest travel advice and restrictions for your area.
- Personal hygiene measures should be carried out at home before and after activity. Participants should bring their own hand sanitiser and maintain strict and frequent hand hygiene measures whenever possible.
- Arrival times should be planned to avoid spending unnecessary time at a venue and to avoid any potential opportunities for gatherings to form outside of the guidance.
- Where possible, paddlers should arrive changed, and shower at home, in order to minimise use of changing rooms and shower facilities. Changing rooms and shower facilities can be used if they are open, but participants must adhere to social distancing wherever possible.

- All participants (paddlers, coaches and officials) should share their contact details with OCKC in order to allow NHS Test and Trace to contact all participants if required.

#### **During Paddling Activity**

- Participants should enter the site and prepare their personal equipment whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Where possible paddlers should limit sharing of equipment. If they do share equipment, they must practise strict hand hygiene before and after use.
- All participants should sanitise their hands prior to the start of the activity. Hand sanitiser should be used at all breaks in activity and prior to consuming any food or drinks.
- Paddlers should refrain from spitting, rinsing out their mouths or shouting/conversing loudly, particularly in close proximity situations and when face-to-face.
- Individuals should bring their own food and drink. Water bottles or other refreshment containers should in no circumstances be shared.
- Paddlers and coaches should refrain from shouting instructions to others.
- Whilst social distancing does not have to be maintained during organised activity, it should still be practiced where possible and so unnecessary contact such as handshakes and physical celebrations should be avoided.
- Face coverings have not been considered as a standard mitigation as there may be situations where there is an abundance of water over the deck and where face masks may be ineffective and restrictive.

#### **After Paddling Activity**

- Participants should sanitise their hands after the completion of activity.
- Participants should exit the water whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Participants should take their own equipment home and wash it themselves. Participants should adhere to information provided about cleaning any shared equipment they have used.
- Participants should comply with any Test and Trace requests following activity, particularly if resulting from a subsequent positive test result.

OCKC makes you aware that you are choosing to take part in paddling activities that may require COVID-19 mitigations to be put in place. Willingness to comply with these measures is a condition of participation.

### **5. OCKC Coach and leader guidance**

OCKC has a responsibility to put measures in place to limit the transmission of COVID-19. Official guidance provides a number of key principles for OCKC to consider. These are summarised below:

#### **Required Documentation**

- OCKC has undertaken a risk assessment. Risk assessments are completed in line with guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- OCKC are required to write their own action plan which should be made publicly available. This is shared on the website, and available on request.

- OCKC has completed the code of behaviour This states we are fulfilling the British Canoeing guidance requirements.

### **NHS Test and Trace**

Any person entering the Riverside Centre including entering the fence compound is required to record on the NHS Test and Trace system. Full detail are on all access points to the site

### **Symptoms checking and decisions to participate**

OCKC will ensure that participants are aware of the requirement to carry out a self-assessment before leaving the house to paddle. Paddlers should also be made aware of any increased risks associated with participating in the activity, based on your risk assessment and strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high risk behaviour in everyday life to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when they do attend.

### **Changing rooms, showers and toilets**

Paddlers should be encouraged to where possible, arrive changed and shower at home. However changing and shower facilities may be offered, for welfare or emergency circumstances (eg. safety and safeguarding measures, such as supporting participants with a disability, allowing children to change clothes, or providing a shower following a rescue). Participants must adhere to gathering limits while indoors, and maintain social distancing wherever possible. Participants must in all events minimise the time they spend in the changing area. Toilet facilities are provided for participants. All users must follow Riverside Centre guidance.

### **Injury Treatment**

Injuries will still be treated, as participant safety is of the utmost importance. First aiders, physios and other medical personnel will take care to protect themselves and others through rigorous cleaning and personal hygiene, including increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting equipment and surfaces. Wearing face coverings is recommended for both medics and patients, where this is possible and practical. After contact with an injured participant, medical personnel should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. First aiders should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with, for Test and Trace purposes. Records should be kept for 21 days and then destroyed. Those involved should familiarise themselves with the guidance for first responders, in case of emergency situations.

## **6. Practical Advice for Lead coaches**

### **Prior to Activity**

- Ensure key documentation is in place, including a risk assessment, action plan and code of behaviour.
- Planning activity and any modifications which may be needed to minimise the risk of transmission.

- Confirm capacity for any indoor spaces and develop protocols to ensure ventilation.
- Ensure Test and trace processes are in place
- Ensure participants are aware of all of the guidance relating to them. This may also include issuing a code of conduct to be followed
- Establish arrival/departure times to limit the time people spend congregating before or after activity
- Establish one-way systems if required to support social distancing
- Establish protocols for changing room and shower usage.
- Establish protocols for first aid and medical provision.
- Establish protocols for the cleaning of any kit and equipment, particularly if it may be shared.
- Establish policies and procedures to manage any spectators on site.

### **During Activity**

- Ensure that participants observe social distancing wherever possible. This must be observed before and after activity and wherever possible during the activity
- Ensuring that people follow legal gathering limits
- Avoid the sharing of equipment where possible
- Discourage shouting and conversing loudly

### **After Activity**

- Regular cleaning of equipment should take place, particularly between one group finishing, and the next group starting.

## **7. Raising Concerns**

British Canoeing has a responsibility to ensure compliance with this guidance. If anyone wishes to raise a concern about how OCKC is operating within this guidance, complete the incident report form on the British Canoeing website so that it can be investigated accordingly.