

Risk Assessment – Worcester Ring 2021

Event: Worcester Ring Challenge

Event Date: Saturday 3 July 2021

Organiser: Julian Harris, Worcester Canoe Club

Venue: 21 Mile anti-clockwise circuit from Worcester Canoe Club – see route map in Appendix.

The organisers will ensure that all participants are licensed to paddle on the waterways en route, either through membership of British Canoeing or by purchase of a license from the Canal and River Trust.

This year we are planning extensive risk mitigations against Covid-19, following the guidance in British Canoeing Action Plan

(<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/Covid19-Action-Plan-for-the-return-of-paddling-in-England-March-2021.pdf><https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/Covid19-Action-Plan-for-the-return-of-paddling-in-England-March-2021.pdf>)

These elements are **highlighted in yellow**. Should the government guidance be relaxed we may, with the prior agreement of the CRT, vary these, for example offering more indoor facilities at our clubhouse.

Hazards Identified	Persons at Risk	Risk Factor	Measures Required To Control The Risk	Action To Be Taken By (Name)
Collision or accident in tunnels	Participants, marshals	Medium	<p>There are 3 tunnels on the course.</p> <p>Dunhamstead Tunnel: 230 metre long, wide enough for 2 boats. Qualified rescue crew on standby in canoe. Marshals at North and South of Tunnel equipped with radios, whistles and backup mobile phones. Marshals will have face masks standing by in case they need to rescue anybody, and will have a ladder ready to place in the water to reduce the chances they will have to pull people out of the water.</p> <p>Participants asked to carry a whistle and be wearing lights attached to buoyancy aid or hat. They should keep to the centre of the tunnel and to enter tunnel when marshals confirm route is clear.</p>	Marshalling Coordinator

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			<p>M5 tunnel, Droitwich: 60m long, very shallow, dark and narrow – only wide enough for one boat. It is not possible to see through the tunnel all the way, as it is in two parts at a slight angle. Marshals at either end shall clear boats to enter, communicating with whistles/voice. The main danger here is meeting another boat in the tunnel. Alternatively two marshals in small and manoeuvrable kayaks can provide a similar marshalling service.</p> <p>A449 tunnel - about 50 metres long, wide enough for 2 boats and oncoming boats can be clearly seen. No special precautions needed.</p>	
Collision with fellow Participants	Participants	Low	<p>Staggered starts. Majority of entrants will be non-competitive. Courtesy and consideration is part of safety brief.</p> <p>Paddlers will be set off in small groups at about 5 minute intervals to avoid congestion at Diglis basin.</p> <p>Long course should spread participants out quite quickly.</p>	Timing and Starts Coordinator
Collision with public	Participant, Member of the public	Medium	<p>Participants to be informed of potential risks of collision during portages during the briefing and that priority must be given to pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>The busiest portage is at Diglis, crossing a public footpath. A marshal will help ensure canoeists give priority to pedestrians and cyclists and ensure social distancing.</p> <p>Signage at this location (facing all relevant directions pedestrians may approach by) will be placed here and at the</p>	<p>Timing and Starts Coordinator</p> <p>Marshalling coordinator</p>

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			<p>checkpoints / catering stops at Offerton Lane and Porters Mill. A4 signs will be attached to railings warning of canoes being carried.</p> <p>Marshals will supervise the parking area, with a particular responsibility to ensure the safety of passing pedestrians from collision with vehicles and entrants carrying boats, and ensure social distancing.</p>	
Collision with river debris	Participant	Low	Unlikely unless there is a significant flood (in which case race will be called off).	Challenge Committee
Collision with rowers, motor boats etc.	Participant, Other River user	Low	<p>Pre-notification of event to Rowing clubs, angling clubs etc. Rowing clubs will keep their activities to a minimum by a reciprocal agreement.</p> <p>Canal and Rivers Trust lock keepers to be informed of race.</p> <p>Inform Participants of hazards related to other river users in pre-race briefing. Pre-race briefing may be pre-recorded as a Covid precaution, with participants either viewing online prior to event, or in small group on screen outside the club.</p>	<p>Secretary</p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Timings and starts coordinator</p>
Collision with vehicles	Participants, Members of Public	Low	<p>The entire event is off road with two exceptions.</p> <p>Firstly, the need to cross a quiet country road at Ladywood Road carrying canoes. The road will be obvious to participants, there is excellent visibility and any approaching car would be heard by participants with normal hearing. No special precautions are necessary.</p> <p>Secondly, another quiet country road at Porter's Mill where</p>	Marshalling coordinator

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			<p>canoeists need to cross a narrow road. Signage will warn motorists on the approach; it is obvious to motorists that there is a bend and constricted road so most will be going very slowly.</p> <p>Marshals will supervise the parking area at the club, with a particular responsibility to ensure the safety of passing pedestrians from collision with vehicles and entrants carrying boats.</p>	
Drowning	Participants	Low	<p>The majority of Participants are experienced and have knowledge of the environment and self rescue techniques.</p> <p>Mandatory buoyancy aids for all participants, to be checked by starting marshals. Given the conditions likely there is a very low risk of drowning if a participant is wearing a buoyancy aid.</p> <p>The majority of the route is on canals that present a very low risk for canoeists – they are shallow, the bank is nearby and the water is still.</p> <p>First aid cover to be available on call; driver with suitable vehicle on standby to attend at recognised access points but primary response would be 999 for ambulance..</p> <p>Rescue cover to be provided at specific points including weirs and tunnels.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Timing & start coordinator</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Event Control</p> <p>Marshalling coordinator</p>

Hazards Identified	Persons at Risk	Risk Factor	Measures Required To Control The Risk	Action To Be Taken By (Name)
Equipment failure	Participants	Low	<p>Canoe equipment is robust and participants should check before departing.</p> <p>In the event of sudden critical failure, the paddler should leave the waterway and look to be extracted by the organisers. Other participants will help as necessary.</p>	N/A
Extreme Weather or river conditions	Participants and marshals	Low	<p>The event will called off in flood conditions, or be re-routed to stay wholly on canals, avoiding the River Severn</p> <p>Event will not start if there is lightning nearby. If lightning is forecast, participants will be warned of dangers, and advised to get off the water if they feel in danger. The event may be cancelled as appropriate in the event of a significant forecast or actual lightning storms.</p>	Event Control
Food preparation risks - injury, food poisoning	Participants, Marshals, Supporters	Low	<p>The lead caterer has food hygiene training and will ensure that any catering equipment is cleaned thoroughly before us. Any hot food preparation area outside will be cordoned off from participants.</p> <p>There are two enroute food stops which will provide water and suitable food for canoeing for paddlers e.g. bananas, flapjack, malt loaf, anything that can provide energy and be easily digested. Food will stay on a table to be erected off the footpath on a grassy area. Some paddlers may wish to stay in their canoes, so volunteers may bring food / water to them in their boats. All tableware will be disposable – paper plates etc. Volunteers will ensure social distancing, and where masks as appropriate. Transmission of Covid-19 in the open air over relatively brief periods is unlikely.</p>	Catering Coordinator

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Getting Lost	Participants, Marshals	Low	<p>Marshals will receive a full brief and map of their location and duties.</p> <p>The route is simple, participants will have a detailed A4 colour route card and there will be a marshal at each significant turn.</p> <p>Race numbers of passing participants are recorded at set points, and any missing paddlers will be searched for.</p>	Marshalling coordinator
Leptospirosis	Participants, Marshals	Low	<p>Danger of leptospirosis is low on river and canals – no stagnant water.</p> <p>Good hygiene - Provision of showers etc. First aid available.</p>	N/A
Portaging risks to paddlers – falling, colliding, slipping etc.	Participants	Medium	<p>Route cards show particular issues and hazards, as well as including emergency contact number.</p> <p>Emergency access points to be identified in case of incident.</p> <p>Most paddlers should not rush portages.</p> <p>First aiders available on call. Support vehicle can extract casualties via identified access points.</p> <p>Most paddlers will be familiar with the risks and techniques of portaging.</p> <p>Marshals will assist at the most awkward portage, at Bever Weir. Matting will be put down at Bever and consideration given to alternative routes in bad weather. There is a narrow area of path by Bever, just downstream of the weir with a steep slope below. This is passable, but will be marshalled to</p>	Marshalling coordinator and Event Control

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			ensure caution.	
Temperature – Heat exhaustion or Hypothermia	Participants	Medium	<p>First aid cover will be provided. Participants reminded to carry hats, sunblock, water etc.</p> <p>Water available at 2 food stops enroute.</p> <p>If heat exhaustion occurred plans to take participants and canoes back to base via access points (and first aid).</p> <p>Hypothermia is unlikely in July.</p>	<p>Timings & start coordinator</p> <p>Marshalling coordinator</p> <p>Event Control</p>
Unseen injury, exhaustion or illness in paddlers	Participants	Medium	<p>All participants required to render assistance to other paddlers as necessary.</p> <p>Checkpoints registering paddlers as they pass Diglis basin, the first and second food stops, the turn into the Droitwich Canal and the turn onto the River Severn. In the event of any missing paddlers the marshals will inform event control who will investigate, sending marshals to search for the missing paddler. This procedure needs reinforcing with marshals.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Marshalling coordinator</p>
Weirs	Participants, Marshalls	Medium	<p>There are three weirs on or near the route, Diglis (beyond the turn to the canal - dangerous due to steep weir and buoys), Vine's Park (off route – potentially dangerous), and Bevere (enroute, significant likelihood of capsizing if it was shot). No running of the weirs is permitted.</p>	Marshalling coordinator

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			<p>Route cards and safety briefing warns participants of these hazards.</p> <p>Diglis weir – over 100m away from route and slow moving water. Route should be clear to paddlers, but rescue canoe in attendance in case of any problems. Weir is marked by large signs and linked red buoys.</p> <p>Vine’s Park – prominent CRT signs warn of dangerous weir where River Salwarpe splits off from canal. The route of the portage is not obvious (just before the lock is a grassy bank where canoeists should exit). Marshal and signage to ensure paddlers portage at right point. Equipped and trained with throw lines just in case. It is possible the canals will be at the same level and the lock left open, in which case there is much less of a danger and no marshalling will be needed.</p> <p>Bevere Weir – paddlers must portage around weir about 50m before the weir. There is a bridge across the river just after the portage. The route card and marshal at Hawford Locks (half mile before) warns paddlers to exit left before the bridge. The marshals at Bevere will ensure this happens and will have canoes on standby below the weir to conduct rescues of any paddlers who might go over the weir, or otherwise get into difficulty.</p>	
Covid-19: unable to trace participants who may be exposed	Participants and support crews	Low	We are required to record contact details of at least one person per party for NHS Test and Trace purposes. At least one participant per boat will have provided full contact details on entering, normally all participants will provide details. An	Event Control

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			NHS QR code will be present at check in to account for any other persons.	
Vulnerable participates or those with Covid symptoms enter	All participants and volunteers	Low	All participants will be briefed in advance and on entry that they must cancel if they or anyone in their household has Covid symptoms or has been advised to self-isolate. They will also be informed of safety precautions at the event, the need to follow these closely, and that there is a measure of addition a risk in participating, so clinically vulnerable people should consider whether they wish to enter.	Entries coordinator
Volunteers / marshals exposed to Covid-19	Volunteers / marshals	low	Most of the event is outside, where transmission risk is low. Marshals will keep to social distancing except where necessary for safety reasons e.g. a rescue. Masks will be worn following government guidance e.g. indoors. Where possible marshals who have to work closely together will be from household groups.	Marshal coordinator
Exposure to Covid-19 during rescues or first aid.	Marshals / first aiders	Low	Most of the event is outside, where transmission risk is low, and first aid will be given outside if possible. All marshals will be issue with spare masks for their own use (and participants if possible) and hand sanitizer for use before and after contact. Any close contacts to be reported to Event Control for test and trace purposes.	Marshal coordinator
Transmission of Covid 19 in clubhouse	All visitors and participants	Low-Medium	<p>Normally the clubhouse is used for changing, catering, showers, rest and administration, including registering entries from participants. The transmission risk is higher indoors.</p> <p>All entries, administration and catering will take place outside. Participants will be encouraged to arrive changed. In line with government advice, the clubhouse will be open for use of showers, toilets and changing facilities as required. All windows and doors (including large French windows in the</p>	Event control

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			<p>lounge) will be open and hand washing facilities provided and encouraged. The numbers of users of these facilities will be limited, and enforced by marshals. Masks will be worn inside when possible (obviously not while showering).</p> <p>A one-way system will be clearly signposted and marshalled (up the main front stairs, through the club and down via the back stairs and doors.)</p> <p>All entries will be made in advance, not on the day.</p>	
Transmission of Covid 19 outside	All participants	Low	<p>Generally, the transmission risk around the course is very low. It is over 20 miles; participants will be well spread out and will mostly be well separated from the public while on the canals and river.</p> <p>All marshals and participants will be reminded in advance and briefings on the day for the need to socially distance.</p> <p>Safety briefings will be held at a distance on the broad steps in small groups, reinforcing the safety cards which will be given to all participants.</p> <p>Starts will take place in small groups, so there is less crowding at pinch points e.g. Diglis portage.</p> <p>Shouting discouraged.</p> <p>Hand sanitizer will be provided at all catering points.</p>	Event control
Transmission of Covid-19 during	All participants	Low	All participants will be reminded of the rules in place at the time regarding mixing between household groups.	Marshalling coordinator

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transport			<p>If it is necessary for a marshal to transport a paddler back to the club (e.g. due to injury or equipment failure) they will be issued with a mask, sit in the back of the car, and have all windows open.</p> <p>Only the circular full course event will run (not the Offerton cruise) so the organisers will not put on shuttles for participants.</p>	
Transmission of Covid between crews	Participants in double boats	Low-Medium	All participants will be advised that they should only be in a C2 or K2 with members of their own household / bubble unless this is permitted by national and/or local government guidance at the time of the event.	Entries coordinator

Name of assessor (PRINT): JULIAN HARRIS

Signature: _____

Date: 6 May 2021.