



PennineCRC Health & Safety Policy Statement – The Answer is “Yes” - Now where do you want to go?

“Our starting point for everything is recognition that the assessment of risk is second nature for experienced coaches, leaders and officials – and for many others at the grass roots – and that safety is more about culture than process.

“We insist everyone involved recognise that canoeing is an assumed-risk activity and that at all levels, participants should be aware of and accept what is involved and at all times take full responsibility for their own action and involvement.

“We commit to a light-touch approach which ensures the key questions get asked by competent people at appropriate times and to supporting enthusiasts to work in ways which make sense to them.

PennineCRC Health & Safety Policy – Keeping Life Simple!

We recognise that we cannot ALWAYS keep things simple – as our planning has to be adequate for what we want to do – so we have all activity overseen by Club Safety Advisors who are in a position to recognise where a proportionate response involves going back to British Canoeing’s guidance notes and (where appropriate) to the Club’s Safety Officers.

We recognise that most of the time, what we want to do is what we are good at doing, and it’s with people who are good at doing it – so we don’t need to over-think things, and initially, we just need to focus on the bigger picture (span of control). We have a Generic Risk Assessment in place to help all concerned ask appropriate questions.

If our activity is all going to be with guided groups or reliant on close supervision... we recognise the need to make sure the guiding and formal support we’re providing is appropriate to the activity which is planned – and that the appropriateness has been communicated!

If our activity is going to involve independent paddlers taking responsibility for themselves (fully autonomous groups or groups which merely need remote supervision)... we recognise the priority of making sure we’re all on the same page – that communication is key!

PennineCRC Health & Safety Policy – Safety Advisors

Our network of Safety Advisors is limited to individuals who have a club sign-off to fulfil this role. License to “fly solo” is limited to those who have consistently demonstrated an appreciation of the safety culture we rely upon, the reasoning behind our approach and statutory obligations.

Those wishing to serve as Safety Advisors are expected to work together as a community – to respect one another’s judgement and decision making – to serve as supportive mentors (who listen) rather than appointing “trainers” (to tell) – and to accept that lots of ways of doing things can be ok.

Wherever practicable, our Safety Advisors will accept assurances that competent people with appropriate experience and expertise will draw on their training and use good judgement and sound decision making processes to ensure adequate arrangements are always in place at the moments when they need to be in place.

Where Safety Advisors have concerns around the assurances received, or about the competence, experience or expertise of those who will be in key positions, guidance may be sought from a Club Safety Officer. If this cannot be accessed in a timely manner, Safety Advisors shall ensure all concerned are in a position to make informed decisions on how they proceed.



PennineCRC Health & Safety Policy – Facilities & Equipment

As a rule, the facilities used for Club activity are being used by members embedded within a culture which has the resilience to handle equipment and facilities in pretty much any condition, even in the most adverse of circumstances – and we expect our Safety Advisors to take such things in their stride.

Management of the Battyeford site places an additional responsibility on the Club. Site specific considerations will be monitored and reviewed as necessary (at least annually) by the Club Safety Officers.

PennineCRC Health & Safety Policy – Home Waters & Sign-Offs

The club's Activity Safety Framework Home Waters documents what is already embedded as good practice within the club. The established culture is of collaboration and joint decision making in all matters. This is reflected in the Club's commitment to including mentors in the sign-off system.

Recognising that over-constraining our members might lead to poor decision making, the club authorises deviation from established practise where a minimum of three members are in agreement. The three MUST include TWO suitably experienced paddlers capable of supporting others in the environment in question and TWO long-standing Club members.

PennineCRC Health & Safety Policy – Respecting Process

Whilst recognising that “culture eats strategy for breakfast” – that culture that keeps activity safe – we (as a community) accept there's a time and a place for process...

As a Club we will:

- Document participation & key decisions and maintain serviceable activity records
- Report any incidents, injuries or accidents sustained within our “span of control”
- Ensure that the implementation of our policy is monitored for effectiveness

Documenting, reporting and monitoring will be overseen by our Club Safety Officers.

PennineCRC Health & Safety Policy – Responsibilities of Members

The Club has no wish to take a top-down approach which specifies the responsibilities of those at the grass roots. Our “Safety Advisor and Float Plan” approach works from the culture at the grass-roots and from respect for how those at the grass roots wish to view their responsibilities.

We trust that at the grass roots, few will have an issue with:

- Taking reasonable care for personal health and safety and for impact on others
- Cooperating with others where a lead is taken on health and safety matters
- Respecting choices others make for themselves and within their groups

The current Club Safety Officers are:

- Andrew Carden (Chairman)
- Greg Spencer (Head Coach)