



20 March 2026

Policy for leaders and coaches

This document sets out the Deben Canoe Club's (DCC) policy in respect of members who have coaching and / or paddle leadership qualifications recognised by Paddle UK (including those issued by the British Canoeing Awarding Body). It also sets out our policy for financial and other support for leaders, coaches and prospective leaders and coaches. In the remainder of this document references to leaders includes coaches where relevant. This document supersedes and replaces all previous club policies in respect of leaders and coaches.

Any DCC member who has such leadership or coaching qualifications is eligible to be recognised by the club as a leader or coach. This recognition is at the discretion of the club committee. There are only two categories such members may fall into:

- active leader or coach
- non-acting leader or coach

Active leaders and coaches

All qualified leaders and coaches who wish to take an active role in the running of DCC events are encouraged to do so and should identify themselves as such when completing their annual membership form. Leaders and coaches who meet Paddle UK's Standards for Deployment will be treated as active following discussion with a lead coach and at the discretion of the club committee.

In order to be treated as an active club leader or coach, such members **MUST** meet the following club obligations:

- complete the club's usual annual membership form, identifying themselves as qualified leaders or coaches
- be current members of Paddle UK
- select Deben Canoe Club as one of their clubs in the Paddle UK online members' portal
- ensure that their Paddle UK online record of their coaching and leadership qualifications is complete and up-to-date
- have passed a DBS records check (at the 'working with minors' level)
- accept that the committee will regularly monitor their ongoing compliance with all the relevant requirements
- meet whatever other requirements the club committee might from time to time require

In addition, active leaders and coaches must meet Paddle UK's ongoing Standards for Deployment. That is, they **MUST**:

- be in date for CPD
- hold a valid, current first aid qualification
- have completed the required safeguarding training
- have complete the required risk assessment training
- have completed the required Code of Conduct training
- meet any other requirements set by Paddle UK from time to time

Membership privileges

Active leaders and coaches are entitled to complimentary membership of the DCC, for themselves and their family, and do not need to pay any fees to hire club equipment during club paddles.

To qualify for free attendance at pool sessions, a coach must either be actively coaching club members (not their own family) or attending a mandatory safety and rescue training session. If a coach is at the pool with family or non-members, they should all pay the pool charge. Likewise, if a coach is receiving training or merely working on their personal skills, they should also pay the pool charge.

Leaders only qualify for free attendance at a pool session if they are actively supporting a coaching session or to attend mandatory safety and rescue training.

In order to remain classified as an active leader or coach and justify free membership, leaders and coaches are required to demonstrate ongoing support to the club committee and membership. They are expected to do at least one of the following per year:

- coach / assist a formal course on the river
- coach club members (not including family) at a number of pool sessions
- lead club paddles on the river or elsewhere
- regularly participate in club paddles where they contribute to leader / paddler ratios

It is insufficient to merely attend the occasional club paddle where they are neither the leader-in-charge, nor contributing to the paddler ratios on a paddle already covered by numerous other leaders and coaches.

Throughout the season, active leaders and coaches are expected to regularly attend club activities and events and be proactive in their support and encouragement of other club members

Club management

Active leaders and coaches are also invited to contribute to the management of the club. This includes access to committee discussions and papers, and a standing invitation to attend committee meetings. This is entirely voluntary. Leaders and coaches who wish to participate in committee activities should let the committee know. (Of course, any coach is also entitled to stand directly for election to the club committee, like any other club member).

Safety Framework

Active leaders and coaches will be divided into four categories for the purposes of the club's safety framework and to facilitate the allocation of roles during club events and activities. This categorisation will be made by the committee having considered the recommendations of the existing Lead Coaches. The four categories are:

- Assistant Coach
- Club Leader
- Club Coach
- Lead Coach

A list of current club leaders and coaches is published on the club website. The committee also maintains a detailed record of active leaders and coaches' qualification status.

Non-acting leaders and coaches

Members who have leadership or coaching qualifications need not act as leaders or coaches during any club activities or events. Such members are very welcome in the club and are treated consistently with all other members.

Members in this position should simply decline to identify themselves as leaders or coaches when filling in their annual membership form.

Thereafter, they will not be eligible for any of the benefits or privileges available to club leaders and coaches, nor liable for any of the duties or responsibilities of club leaders and coaches.

Such members should note that, following the introduction of Paddle UK's Standards for Deployment policy, a member is either deployable as a leader or coach or not. Any club member who is not recognised by Paddle UK as potentially deployable as a leader or coach for on-the-water activities can only be treated by the DCC in line with any other comparably experienced paddler.

Financial (and other) support towards leadership and coaching qualifications

The club encourages all members who are interested in pursuing leadership or coaching qualifications to do so. The club recognises that club members benefit immensely from the efforts and contributions made by our active leaders and coaches, and is very grateful for their support.

The club also recognises that there is a material financial cost involved in obtaining and upgrading leadership and coaching qualifications, and offers some support towards this.

Financial support towards the achievement of leadership and coaching qualifications is provided at the discretion of the club committee. Any member is welcome to apply to the committee for such financial support as follows:

- a request for financial support must be made before payment is made for the training or assessment
- requests should be made by contacting the Club Chair or a Lead Coach in sufficient time that the Committee can reach a decision on the percentage and timing of payments before any training or assessment takes place

- applicants must state that they intend to continue as active leaders within the club following completion of their training and qualification

The club is particularly keen to support members seeking to achieve the following awards:

- Leader and Touring Leader – Club Leaders
- Paddlesport Instructor – Assistant Coaches
- Coach and higher coaching qualifications – Club Coaches and Lead Coaches

The amount and timing of support is set for each applicant at the complete discretion of the club committee. A possible pattern is as follows:

- following a successful application, the club will pay 50% of the costs, including for training, registration and assessment
- after successful qualification, and following a complete summer season as an active leader in the club (that is, typically in the winter of the following calendar year), the committee will consider paying the remaining 50% of the incurred costs

The club will typically not pay for any accommodation costs, travelling expenses, or annual membership of Paddle UK, however it is happy to consider requests for additional support from any active leader or coach who is suffering from financial hardship.

The club also periodically offers its own formal and informal training towards the achievement and maintenance of coaching awards, for example, first aid training, safety and rescue training, etc.

Financial support towards maintaining leadership and coaching qualifications

Active leaders and coaches may claim reimbursement of reasonable ongoing expenses for first aid training and safeguarding training, etc.

Variations to this policy

All of the rights, privileges, responsibilities and obligations of leaders and coaches within the DCC, and in particular the availability of financial support, are subject to ongoing review by the club committee, who may vary any of the terms of this policy at any time and for any reason without prior notice.