

DCC: administration risk assessment



Assessor:	Joff Hayes	Date:	8 April 2026
Approver:	David Rich	Date:	10 April 2026
Next review due:	By 31 March 2027	All ongoing DCC risk assessments should be updated as required but in any event should be formally reviewed between January and March every year, to be valid until 31 March of the following calendar year.	

As a volunteer run "group-of-friends" with minimal assets then ultimately, if we can't keep the club going, it will simply be wound up. There would be no wider adverse consequences. By definition, if there aren't enough people able and willing to run a canoe club then few people would be inconvenienced by there not being a canoe club. In general, any material unexpected problems which threatened the viability of the club would simply have to be addressed as they arose.

For completeness, any assets remaining if and when the club wound up would go to Paddle UK. However, it seems likely that most of the club's assets would have been used up if the club had declined slowly.

What are the potential problems?	How is the problem mitigated?
Club purpose	There are a wide range of options for running a successful paddlesports club. This does give us flexibility in the face of future problems – the club should be able to adapt in many circumstances. For planning and management purposes, the club maintains a formal mission statement which sets out the club committee's current high-level objectives for the club.

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What are the potential problems?	How is the problem mitigated?
Financial unviability (1) Lack of ordinary members leading to lack of inward cash flow	The club runs as many beginners' courses as it can to attract new paddlers. These cover kayaks, SUPs and open canoes. The club runs as many intermediate courses as it has demand for, to encourage and retain novice paddlers. The club runs regular weekday evening paddles on Wednesday and Thursday to interest a wide range of ordinary club members. The club runs as many weekend paddles and trips away as it can to interest a wide range of ordinary club members. The club is physically highly visible on the water every time it paddles, and has online visibility through its website. The committee should be alert to other opportunities to publicise the club in the local area. Charges for club activities are carefully set to encourage potential and actual members to participate in the club's activities. The club runs occasional social events for members.
Financial unviability (2) Loss of compound and centre	If the DWSC were to become unavailable or unaffordable to the club then that would require a major rethink on the club's structure and activities. The club committee has high visibility of the DWSC's business and should be as supportive as it possibly can be whenever the DWSC encounters any issues. Alternatives might include storing club boats and equipment at other riverside sites, such as the boatyards, yacht clubs or rowing clubs, or indeed storing kit away from the river altogether.

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What are the potential problems?	How is the problem mitigated?
Lack of qualified leaders and coaches	The club is structured so that it is primarily (near exclusively) organised around the provision of on-the-water events led by Paddle UK qualified leaders and coaches. Therefore, a shortage of such leaders and coaches would require major changes to the club's mission. The club encourages any member with an interest in formal qualifications to pursue them. This encouragement includes training, mentoring and substantial financial support. if the supply of coaches dried up, then moving towards a model of peer group paddles could prolong the club's potential lifetime, but would likely ultimately still lead to the termination of the club, since it would be hard to recruit new members without offering formal training. A peer-paddle only model would also prevent our continuing to affiliate to Paddle UK, see below.
Lack of capacity within the club committee	While the club's business is not unduly complicated, it does rely on a certain number of members to work on the committee to deliver that business. The Chair, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Secretary and Webmaster in particular need certain 'professional' skills to deliver their roles effectively. Ultimately, if insufficient ordinary members were able and willing to work effectively on the committee then the club would have to adjust accordingly, including the possibility of winding up. The club committee encourages all active members to consider volunteering on the committee, and should maintain at least some succession plans.

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What are the potential problems?	How is the problem mitigated?
Paddle UK affiliation	The club's current mission effectively requires it to affiliate to Paddle UK. Surrendering that affiliation would have major impacts on the club, in terms of reputation with members, insurance of club events, assessment of coaching and leadership, etc. The club committee actively monitors Paddle UK's developing requirements for affiliated clubs and strives to proactively meet (and where appropriate, exceed) the letter and spirit of those requirements.
Safety Officer	Following important developments at Paddle UK and its requirements for affiliated clubs, the club requires an active and effective Safety Officer. It is important that the club maintains a roster of well qualified coaches so that we have scope to appoint a Safety Officer at all times.

This risk assessment was first documented in August 2025 and has been regularly reviewed and updated since then.