


RISK ASSESSMENT

LOCATION/ACTIVITY/ISSUE BEING ASSESSED:	Boat Hire		
SERVICE/TEAM:	Countryside Service / Dinton Activity Centre		
NAME OF ASSESSOR(s):	Richard Ashwell / Mike Bennett		
DATE OF ASSESSMENT:	28 October 2025		
DATE FOR REVIEW:	December 2026		
APPROVED BY:	Signature:	Date: 01/03/2026	
			
	Name: Gemma Wilford		

SUMMARY (* delete as appropriate)	
Risk level without additional controls:	HIGH / MEDIUM / LOW*
Additional control measures required:	YES / NO *
Risk level with additional controls:	HIGH / MEDIUM / LOW *

What are the significant hazards?	What could go wrong? Who could be harmed and how?	What is being done to control the risks?	Amendment notes
Equipment failure	<p>If a boat is in poor repair or not set up properly spars and rigging could come lose injuring the occupant of the boat.</p> <p>In some cases, it is also possible for the craft to sink i.e. bungs not in properly.</p> <p>Breakages could cause injuries which need attending to. In some cases, the injury may cause the participant to struggle to return to the shore.</p>	<p>Regular seasonal equipment inspections are carried out and any faults are logged, items quarantined until fixed.</p> <p>Visual inspection to be carried out before every use.</p> <p>Customers buoyancy aids/lifejackets checked by staff before going afloat. Staff to stay vigilant to customers fiddling with personal buoyancy.</p> <p>Craft simplified, where appropriate, to reduce component failure risk.</p>	

		<p>RYA Safety boat qualified staff must be on site. Participants advised to stay in line of sight of the Boat hire.</p> <p>Participants should be aware of how to call for help if required (wave arms above your head and shout help).</p> <p>Safety Boat should take participant back to shore or carry out first aid on the water as required. A first aid log entry must be completed for all first aid carried out.</p>	
Capsize or Inversion	<p>Capsize or inversion could lead to entrapment, hypothermia or drowning. Risk to all participants.</p>	<p>RYA Safety boat qualified staff must be on site. Participants advised to stay in line of sight of Boat Hire.</p> <p>Participants are briefed to stay with their boat or swim to shore if close. Raise the attention of the safety boat to come and assist righting, draining and helping them back into their boat.</p> <p>Briefing includes customers to stay seated in their boats when underway (with the exception of paddle boards)</p> <p>To hire a double handed dinghy users must be minimum adult L2 or stage 4. To hire single handed they must be minimum stage 3 or L1.</p> <p>All customers must wear a PFD at all times (including SUP hire, leash must also be worn)</p>	
Inappropriate craft users	<p>Inadequate user capabilities / maturity to get the craft to go anywhere or stay safe.</p>	<p>Minimum age of 2+ subject to fitting in the smallest life jacket.</p>	

		<p>Under 8's must be supervised by an adult on the water in the same boat on a ratio of 4:1</p> <p>8-16 years old must be in sight of a guardian for the duration of the activity within a ratio of 6:1</p> <p>16-18 year olds must provide parental permission and knowledge that their child will be unsupervised on the water before undertaking the activity. This can be done in person or by signing consent and emailing it to the activity centre office.</p>	
Customers going out of sight of boat hire staff.	Customers at risk of becoming lost and unable to call for help.	<p>Participants advised to stay in line of sight of the boat hire and not to go beyond the island.</p> <p>Buoys placed in island gaps as reminders to participants of out of bounds areas.</p> <p>Lake access passes users allowed beyond the islands but warned that they will not be insight of boat hire or visible for immediate rescue. Instructed to follow the buddy system of two people on two boards or with a bank side spotter so immediate response can be obtained.</p>	
Physical or verbal assault from members of the public or anglers	General insults or abuse could be shouted during the activity which may offend and be inappropriate in front of students.	Customers advised to keep away from occupied fishing pegs, other boats and customers.	
Poor Water quality (algal blooms)			

	All water users are at risk of sickness caused by certain algal blooms.	<p>During period of algal blooms all participant and staff should be advised to consult a doctor if symptoms arise after contact with the water.</p> <p>Everyone should be encouraged to wash hand and face before eating, after being on to the lake.</p> <p>Water quality tested monthly from April to October, and results made available if needed. Check against Swim Safe Levels.</p>	
Manual Handling	When loading and unload the racks staff could lose footing and cause the equipment to fall onto them. Also, possible sprain or strain injuries from bad manual handling technique.	<p>Senior Staff to ensure Staff are trained on correct procedures and ratios. Staff to wear closed-toe footwear with good grip whilst manoeuvring boats.</p> <p>Staff to supervise participants when participants help.</p> <p>Boat hire should ideally be run with two operatives. Minimum one person with someone else on site who can assist with heavy lifting at start and end of day and as needed.</p> <p>Boat Hire container doors to be secured back to prevent crush injury.</p>	
Slips and trips	Participant or staff falling off the pontoon into the water.	<p>Pontoon to be cleaned at the start of shift.</p> <p>Ramp and steps to be cleaned at the start of shift.</p> <p>Buoyancy aids must worn on the pontoon.</p>	

Gap between boat and pontoon	Participant could fall into the gap. Bruises likely and also very wet and cold.	Staff to assist participants into and out of the boat when needed	
Amendments for operating out of duck feeding area			
Wobbly Pontoon	Slips and trips more likely due to pontoon being tied to the edge instead of bolted. Ropes could become loose.	Staff to check attachments and notify senior team if issues are found.	
Slips and trips	Wooden edge can become slippery if not cleaned regularly	Staff to clean edge at start of session. Cleaning items and sandpaper provided.	

REVIEWS AND REVISIONS

Review date	Name of Assessor	Is assessment still valid?	If not, list adjustments with details of who will action and by when	Approved by Manager	Date of next review
Feb 2020	Jack Walling	Yes	<p>Removed note about closed cockpit kayaks / spray decks as we don't have any on boat hire.</p> <p>Added note 'Briefing includes customers to stay seated in their boats (with the exception of paddle boards)'. We already do this, but it wasn't stated.</p> <p>Amended ratio from 2:1 to 4:1. 'Under 8's must be supervised by an adult on the water in the same boat on a ratio of 4:1'. Note of reason in COP's review minutes.</p> <p>Added 'Water quality tested monthly in summer and results posted in reception and online.' No action as we do this already, just wasn't mentioned in RA</p> <p>Added 'Boat hire should ideally be run with two operatives on busy days. Minimum one person with someone else on site who can assist with heavy lifting at start and end of day and as needed.' No action as we do this already, just wasn't mentioned in RA</p>	Tanya Lee	Feb 2021
Jan 2021	Jack Walling	Yes	N/A	Jack Walling	Jan 2022
March 2021	Sophie Wooldridge	Yes	Updated The Reference to COP's	Jack Walling	Jan 2022
Feb 2022	Jack Walling	Yes	Updated The Reference to COP's	Jack Walling	Feb 2023
Feb 2023	Isabel R.S.	Yes	Updated The Reference to COP's	Richard Ashwell	March 2024

			<p>Added Craft simplified, where appropriate, to reduce component failure and associated participant injury. No action as we do this already, just wasn't mentioned in RA</p> <p>Updated water quality result posting locations to "made available" to cover all locations around the lake and at the centre. No action as we do this already, just wasn't mentioned in RA</p>		
Dec 23	Mike Bennett	Yes	Participant injury moved as it's a consequence not a hazard. Age restrictions changed to inappropriate craft users as age restrictions isn't a hazard.	Richard Ashwell	March 2025
Dec 24	Mike Bennett	Yes	No action needed	Mike Bennett	Dec 25
October 25	Richard Ashwell	Yes	<p>Changed Activity Centre line of sight to boat hire line of sight.</p> <p>Updated Area restrictions and out of sight requirements.</p> <p>Added Amendments for Duck feeding location.</p> <p>Removed – Lake Access Pass users can choose between leash or Buoyancy aid – all users now must wear a buoyancy aid.</p> <p>Removed logging everyone on the booking system as tap and go customers aren't on it.</p>	Richard Ashwell (Mike Bennett reviewed as well)	October 25