



# ISLE OF PORTLAND CANOE CLUB

## Responsibilities of a Trip Organiser

The overriding premise for all club paddling is that everyone paddles at their own risk.

It is for each paddler to decide if they are comfortable with the conditions, and whether they paddle or not.

### A month before the trip.

1. Check the tides: times of high water and speed and direction of tidal flow. Check the tide flows and plan to launch at a time that will allow you to utilise (or avoid) their power. Avoid wind against tide.
2. Plan out your intended route factoring in weather, tide, landing zones, escape routes. Check access and egress for start and finish.
3. Check car parking arrangement and costs.
4. Check access egress and facilities for refreshment and comfort breaks.
5. Check access egress and facilities for camping.
6. Obtain maps and charts.
7. Find contact details for Coastguard and Harbourmaster.
8. Post the outline plan for the trip on IOPCC website forum. Any problems contact the Webmaster. Include the conditions that are likely to be encountered, the distances involved and the standard of paddling needed to safely complete the trip.
9. If your trip requires refreshments, plan what you need now.

### A week before the trip

1. Start looking at weather forecasts.
2. Look at who has signed up to go on your trip.
3. If you do not think you have the necessary skills/qualifications to lead the trip OTW then contact a paddler who is going on the trip who will be happy to help with this.
4. Check you have the necessary maps and charts. Copy and laminate if desired.
5. It may be worth planning a more sheltered alternative in the area as a contingency in case conditions are bad on the day.
6. Buy non-perishables for refreshments and give the receipts to the club treasurer.

### The Friday before the trip

1. Finalise weather forecast and make your final plans accordingly.
2. Post final plan on the forum. If major changes have been made to the outline plan then contact everyone who has signed up. Make sure the meeting place and times are clear.
3. Buy/make rest of refreshments and give the receipts to the club treasurer.



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*What happens on the water is predominantly determined by what you do before you launch.  
Prior planning based on good judgement is everything.*

### BEFORE LAUNCHING ON THE DAY OF THE PADDLE.

1. Be at the meeting place early.
2. All members of the trip should be self-sufficient and have the following gear besides their boat, paddles, appropriate paddling clothing, pfd, deck, (and helmet, throw line if it is a river or surf trip)
  - Whistle
  - First Aid Kit
  - Boat repair Kit
  - Split paddles
  - Towline
  - Pump
  - Bivvy/emergency shelter
  - Food and drink
  - Emergency food
  - Water
  - Sun screen
  - Mobile phone.
  - Map, chart, compass, GPS (Check that map compass tidal notes watch (and GPS) are easily accessible)
  - Lights & head-torch if night paddling involved
3. When you get to the access point look carefully at the local conditions and sea state. If it doesn't look good then it isn't. Adjust your plans accordingly.
4. Make a list of all paddlers with a shore contact number for everyone.
5. Check there are a number of VHF radios between the groups. Before setting out check the radios work, have sufficient battery life, agree a working channel and familiarise everyone with the call signs in the group.
6. Ideally everyone in the group should have at least a personal smoke flare. There should be at least one pack of coastal flares with the group.
7. Before leaving the beach call the Coastguard with the details of the trip via VHF or mobile phone. Tell them your plans and call them afterwards when you are safely ashore. Give details of the initial stage of the paddle and clear expectations of how you want the group to behave, particularly with reference to keeping close together.
8. Before anyone gets on the water have a briefing. Give details of the initial stage of the paddle and clear expectations of how you want the group to behave, particularly with reference to keeping close together.
9. Consider options for the trip such as each paddler having a number, or using a buddy system in specific areas, e.g. through a tidal race. Also consider allocating someone to be at the front of the group and a sweeper at the back, both with VHF, giving you the freedom to position yourself best.
10. If you can, also find a volunteer to write up the trip before you go on the water!
11. Ensure that you have a stove and sufficient fuel if your trip involves providing a hot drink.



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### RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE WATER.

Everyone in the group is expected to act responsibly. A group spread all over the place each doing their own thing is not a group and obviously problems may arise. Clear expectations given at the briefing should keep everyone on track.

The acronym **CLAP** may be used to outline effective leadership on the water and the principles that it embodies should be understood and followed by all paddlers in a group.

- **C**ommunication. Let people know what's going on and stay in touch with them
- **L**ine of sight. You should always be in a position to monitor what your fellow paddlers are up to. This can't be achieved over the horizon.
- **A**voidance is the best form of cure. Do not do anything that will need undoing
- **P**osition of most usefulness. Constantly look out for the spot within the group where you are best able to keep track of what is happening and most prepared to act accordingly.

If you are not happy to lead the group on the water you will have arranged in your planning for a suitably qualified/experienced member of the Club to lead the paddle. Consider asking another group member to act as sweeper to stay behind the slowest paddler or stay with anyone who needs to stop.

Maintain communication on the pre-arranged VHF working channel.

Check numbers of paddlers on a regular basis, and particularly on landing at the completion of the trip.

### Completion of Trip

Debrief at the end of the trip, either individually or as a group, to find out what worked well, what didn't work well, and what/how the trip could have been improved.

Feed this information back to Club members, both as general learning points, and as relevant for updating this guidance.

It is worth keeping a log of trips you have led, particularly if you are looking at BCU levels, so remember to log this trip!



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## Responsibilities of a Trip Organiser

*Coming ashore and setting up camp after a day on the water is a great experience.*

### IOPCC TRIPS. CAMPING

1. All your camping gear and provisions have to fit in your boat.
2. Basics: Kitchen: food, stove, fuel, matches, plates, and cutlery. Bathroom: toiletries, loo paper, trowel. Wardrobe: Dry warm clothes. Bedroom: Tent, Thermarest, sleeping bags (ear plugs). Fresh water.
3. An IKEA bag is very useful for carrying gear from a kayak at low tide to your camping spot above the high water mark.
4. A LW radio is useful for getting the weather forecast.

### WHERE TO CAMP

1. If there is someone to ask then obtain permission
2. Be discreet and steer away from peoples houses and gardens
3. Arrive late and leave early.
4. The loo is well away from the camp between the high and low water mark. Burn paper and bury everything else.

### RESOURCES

Wiley Almanac [www.wileynautical.com](http://www.wileynautical.com)

#### Tidal Planning.

The Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory [www.pol.ac.uk/ntslf/tidalp.html](http://www.pol.ac.uk/ntslf/tidalp.html)

Admiralty EasyTide [www.easytide.com](http://www.easytide.com)

The Climbers Club [www.climbers-club.co.uk/tides/tides.htm](http://www.climbers-club.co.uk/tides/tides.htm)

#### Weather

The Met Office [www.metoffice.gov.uk/](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/)

XCWeather [www.xcweather.co.uk/](http://www.xcweather.co.uk/)

Magic Seaweed [www.magicseaweed.com/](http://www.magicseaweed.com/)

Windguru [www.windguru.com](http://www.windguru.com)

BBC [www.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast/)

Metcheck [www.metcheck.com/](http://www.metcheck.com/)

[www.ukseakayakguidebook.co.uk](http://www.ukseakayakguidebook.co.uk) - lots of useful information and advice. Look at the 'Almanac' and 'Community' sections.

BCU Coaching Handbook. Has a good overview of leading and organising trips.

South West Sea Kayaking [ISBN 978-1-906095-05-5] by Mark Rainsley Published by Pesda Press.