

## SAFETY PLAN

### BISHOPS STORTFORD HASLER MARATHON 7 JUNE 2026

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#### 1. AUTHORISATION

The event is an official Hasler race authorised by the Paddle UK Marathon Racing Committee (MRC)

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#### 2. RACE ORGANISING TEAM – KEY PERSONNEL

The club will appoint

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|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Race Organiser        | Kevin Short                              |
| 2. Safety Coordinator    | Andrew Gurney (BSCC Club Safety Officer) |
| 3. First Aid Coordinator | Ruth Kirtland                            |
| 4. Welfare Officer       | João Spinola (BSCC Welfare Officer)      |

The Safety Coordinator will have final approval of the safety arrangements. He will be assisted by the two members of the organising committee (including the Race Organiser).

The Race Organiser will appoint

- An acting Race Organiser / Safety Coordinator / First Aid Coordinator as required to take on each or any of those roles for periods when the nominated person is away from Race Control
- Marshals at key points on the bank at the start finish points, turns, road crossings and portages
- Safety boats (canoes/kayaks) at the start, Downstream side of Twyford Lock, Geoff Sanders turn and following the GS races.

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#### 3. RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment has been prepared which covers activities on land and water and the impact on other river users and members of the public.

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#### 4. WELFARE

The club has a Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy overseen by the club Welfare Officer. If the Club Welfare Officer is not available to be the Welfare representative on the day, another club member who has been on the Time to Listen course will act as Welfare Officer for the event. Their contact details will be published as part of the race details.

The club is committed to ensuring best Safeguarding practice throughout the event. Under-18s must be accompanied by an adult (e.g. parent or Team Leader appointed by their club) who takes responsibility for them. The public nature of the race means that there will be little or no opportunity for children or vulnerable adults to be unmonitored.

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#### 5. INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

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##### PARTICIPANTS

- Race details, Risk Assessment and Safety Plan to be
  - submitted to Canal River Trust and PUK Marathon Race Committee
  - published on the event page the BSCC website
  - available for inspection by anyone on the day

- Specific written instructions will be prepared for the marshals and safety boats including special attention to the Accident and Emergency Action Plan
- A race briefing for Team Leaders and Competitors will be held on the day to highlight the key points for competitors including any last-minute issues, following a pre-event inspection of the course.
- A marshals' briefing will be held on the day to highlight the key points for marshals and safety boats including any last-minute issues.
- A senior marshal will be placed at all portages involving a road crossing to supervise safety activity and act as a sole point of contact with race organiser.

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## PUBLIC

Warning notices will be sent electronically to all known stakeholders operating on this stretch of river: canal river trust, environment agency, fishing clubs, boating clubs, local residents. A poster will be displayed on the exterior club noticeboard, and at key points such as locks where portaging is occurring and at either end of the course.

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## 6. RACE ENTRIES

A sheet of race details are distributed to racing clubs across the region by direct mail and by submission to the Marathon Racing Committee. These details include deadlines for race entry. Late bookings are permitted on the day (up to a specified cut off) where individuals are additional members of a team who have already pre-booked, or are able to demonstrate membership of Paddle UK.

Participants are registered onto the official Paddle UK Marathon Race Entry and Management system. The race rules require that all participants can swim 50m in canoe clothing. Most entrants do so as part of a team and train under a coach who will advise on their competence to participate.

Data will be held in line with the BSCC Privacy Policy.

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## 7. VEHICLE AND TRAILER ACCESS ROUTES

Visitors with mobility impairments may park on the hard-standing car park at the clubhouse. Most competitors and spectators visiting by car will park on the adjoining field. The field will be checked on the morning of the event and any hazardous areas marked with barrier tape. In the event of the weather making the ground hazardously soft in the field, it will not be used. At the key times for vehicles entering and leaving, the lane entrance and field will be supervised.

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## 8. BOAT STORAGE ARRANGEMENTS

There is ample open space on which boats can be placed safely on the ground.

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## 9. BOAT CHECKING & LICENCING

Standard marathon committee rules require all boats to have sufficient buoyancy to remain afloat and support the crew in the event of a capsize, and this must be provided by fixed flotation material or sealed bulkheads. Random spot checks of boats will be undertaken as the paddlers get onto the water and any unsafe craft discovered will be disqualified.

All competitors are required to use boats licenced for use on CRT water.

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## 10. LAUNCHING AND LANDING PROVISION

There are adequate landing stages at the start and finish, and at the portages along the route.

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## 11. CIRCULATION PATTERNS TO BE FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES DURING THE PERIOD OF RACING AND WARM-UP, WARM-DOWN

While racing, warming up and cooling down, paddlers will be advised at the briefing to keep river right and all turns are anti-clockwise.

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## 12. WHEN AND WHERE PADDLERS / TEAMS CAN PRACTICE, WARM UP AND COOL DOWN ON

Divisional competitors in Divs 1-9, may warm up between the clubhouse and Winding Hole but will be reminded at the briefing that they must assemble at the pre-start line in good time before the first starts of their session. Paddlers will be called to the pre-start line 5-min before the race start. They will be asked to leave the river as soon as possible after finishing at the lock portage north of the clubhouse – if they wish to warm down they should transfer to the river above Southmill Lock.

Geoff Sanders competitors will have the opportunity to warm-up/warm-down between the Southmill Lock landing stage and their start/finish at the weir.

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## 13. BUOYS

Turn buoys which are chained and weighted will be placed at each turn before the Race Start and collected in immediately after the Race.

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## 14. ANY SPECIAL POINTS OF DANGER ON OR NEAR THE COURSE

Locks/portages are the greatest points of risk, particularly the two portages which cross roads.

- Competitors will be advised not to enter the locks to portage their boats.
- Marshals will be placed at each road crossing to manage the flow of boats and warn paddlers of oncoming traffic.
- Spectators will be advised not to congregate at the locks and to ensure the towpath is not obstructed.

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## 15. MARSHALLING INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTROL

Marshals are stationed at turns and road crossings. If there are particular hazards on the day (trees down or other obstructions) the organiser will consider marking and/or stationing an additional marshal.

Some of the start/finish marshals have the use of a loud hailer. Marshals will be in touch with Race Control by mobile phone and WhatsApp.

Everyone will be reminded at the race briefing of their obligation to show courtesy and consideration towards other users of the river and towpath, and Marshals on the bank and in safety boats along the course will be tasked with avoiding any conflict by reminding paddlers of their obligations and warning competitors, spectators, leisure boaters, cyclists, anglers and walkers of each other's presence wherever possible. Any incidents will be reported to the Organiser and if competitors are found to have acted badly, sanctions will be considered.

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## 16. SAFETY BOAT TYPE, NUMBERS AND LOCATIONS

Safety boats will be unpowered, stable craft suitable for performing rescues from. This necessarily makes them slow-moving. It will not be practical for them to carry mobile phones or other electronic equipment.

They will be manned by experienced paddlers who, where possible, have completed a Foundation Safety & Rescue course or by those with special training.

There will be a safety boat stationed at the start of the Geoff Sanders races. One craft will follow the GS competitors down the course.

There will be a safety boat stationed at the starts for the Div 7,8,9, races and will follow the slowest paddler down the course. A safety boat will be positioned on the downstream side of Twyford Lock, a further safety boat will be located at the Spellbrook turn (upstream of the lock), which will sweep the course after the final paddler has past northbound to the finish of the race.

Competitors are monitored by Marshals at Portages and a post-race check is conducted to ensure all competitors are accounted for.

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## 17. SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR THE COMPETITION

The on-water safety marshals and marshals stationed at locks will use safety equipment (including buoyancy aids) provided by themselves and/or BSCC and have access to first aid kits and space blankets. The club will supply high visibility bibs to the bank marshals and throw lines (inc rope cutter) for the marshals at locks.

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## 18. FIRST AID POSITIONS

There will be a first aid point in the clubhouse and a nominated first aider will be available. This will be notified at the briefing and a sign will be placed in a prominent position. Small first aid kits will be issued to marshals along the course. Casualties requiring further attention should attend Princess Alexandra Accident & Emergency Hospital, Harlow, CM20 1QX.

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## 19. MEDICAL SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS & EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS

If medical support is required, we shall call 999. Marshals will be provided with the What3Words code for their location on the race course to for the purpose of directing assistance if there is a casualty in a remote section of the course.

For non-emergency cases of dehydration, over exertion or physical strain the course Marshals will provide any necessary First Aid or rehydration and confirm with race Control the action taken. Provision has been made to recover competitors and their boats from the course if the individual is unable to continue.

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## 20. SUMMONING HELP

There is no on-site telephone. Minor injuries will be dealt with by the designated first aider based at the clubhouse. For major/Emergency injuries/incidents, Marshals will have mobile phones which can be used to dial 999 for Emergency Assistance.

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## 21. CANCELLING OR SUSPENSION OF THE COMPETITION

If the course is suspected to be in an unsafe condition due to prevailing or recent weather, the Race Organiser will need to view the conditions at key points along the course on the previous day and consider whether the race should be cancelled or modified.

If the competition is cancelled or suspended, this information will be distributed as soon as possible to all pre-booked Team Leaders via the contact details they have given, and an announcement made on the club website where the original race details appeared.

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## 22. EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN WITH DETAILS OF IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

See the BSCC Accident and Emergency Action Plan.

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## 23. INCIDENT REPORTING

Competitors and Team Leaders will be reminded at the briefing of their responsibility to report incidents to the Race Organiser. In turn the Race Organiser will report river-related incidents to Canal Rivers Trust, and all incidents to Paddle UK and their insurers.

The Welfare Officer will report any Safeguarding incidents to Canal Rivers Trust, and to Paddle UK and their insurers.

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#### 24. POST-EVENT REVIEW

After the event, all those involved especially organisers and marshals will be invited to contribute their thoughts about problems encountered and suggested improvements. The Risk Assessment, Safety Plan and any other procedures will be revised in the light of this learning.