

22.09.20

An update for British Canoeing affiliated clubs in England

Introduction

In late 2019 and early 2020 British Canoeing carried out a consultation around club matters in England.

We received a high level of engagement from clubs and paddlers to the proposals and we would like to thank everyone that took the time to provide feedback.

We promised to review the responses, carry out further discussions with clubs and provide feedback before Easter. Unfortunately, events in the form of the COVID-19 pandemic caused some disruption to our plans and delayed our response to clubs on the consultation.

This letter provides a summary of updates and progress made in the following sections:

- 1. Club Affiliation**
- 2. Club Associate membership and Club Activities**
- 3. Coach/Leader Qualifications and the Club Competency Framework**
- 4. Improved communication with clubs**

1. Club Affiliation

1.1 Changes to the club affiliation requirements

Feedback from the consultation told us that clubs wanted a simpler and clearer process for affiliating and for re-affiliating. It also showed us that many clubs were not aware of the limits of club associate membership or the need to keep records of those leading or coaching activity.

As part of the annual club affiliation agreement, from January 2021, upon renewing their British Canoeing affiliation, club committees will be required to:

- Use British Canoeing literature to inform all members of the benefits, as well as the limitations of Club Associate membership - see section 2.2
- Keep accurate records of all club members to ensure a robust approach in case of an insurance claim
- Support the requirements for coaches and leaders in clubs - see section 3
- Publish the following key documents on the club website:
 - Club Constitution
 - Club Safety Framework
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy

1.2 Annual review of affiliation fees

There were no significant objections to an annual review of affiliation fees. As requested we will notify clubs of any intended changes at, or around the time of, our Annual General Meeting in March each year, with any changes taking effect from November in that same year.

The first review of affiliation fees will take place in March 2021 with any changes implemented from 1st November 2021.

2. Club Associate membership and Club Activities

2.1 A definition of club activity

The consultation identified that there was confusion around the definition of Club Activity.

As from 1st October 2020 club activity for English based clubs affiliated to British Canoeing is defined as:

'Any activity that has been assessed as part of the club's safety framework and promoted on the club calendar, website or noticeboard.'

'Club activities also include inter-club activities where the responsibility for risk assessment and management is carried out and then shared between all participating clubs.'

2.2 The benefits and limitations of Club Associate membership

Club representatives have asked for improved clarity of the benefits and limitations of Club Associate membership.

Club Associate membership is designed for individual members of a British Canoeing affiliated club who are not full members of British Canoeing.

Fees are collected from clubs on an annual basis based on the number of Club Associate members within the club. The annual fee of £2.20 per adult member and £1.20 per junior member is charged by British Canoeing.

This provides Club Associate members with third party liability and professional indemnity insurance for any activity that has been assessed as part of the club's activity, in accordance with the new definition of club activity.

Club Associates are covered by insurance for entry-level competitions organised for, or on behalf of, British Canoeing Discipline Committees, or participation events organised by Regional Development Teams.

Club Associate members are also covered by insurance when they coach and lead groups within the constraints of ‘club activity’, as long as they have undertaken a competency framework assessment. Further details are provided in section 3.

A summary of the benefits of Club Associate Membership

Insurance for paddling within the club activity framework	YES
Insurance for instructing and coaching within the club activity framework	YES
Insurance for leading trips and journeys for the club which are designated club activity by the club	YES
Insurance for participation in designated entry-level competitions & events	YES
Boat licence for access to licensed waterways*	NO
Insurance cover for independent paddling outside of club activity	NO
Insurance cover for coaching and leading outside of the club activity	NO

*(refer to 2.3 The club boat licences – what these do and do not cover)

There are limitations to Club Associate membership.

Club Associate members operating outside of ‘club activity’ should be aware that they are not covered by any of the benefits of Club Associate membership listed in the table above.

We have produced an [infographic](#) to help clubs answer queries about the limitations of Club Associate memberships and will be providing a series of webinars for clubs.

From October 2020 clubs will be encouraged and supported to provide British Canoeing with the data of their Club Associate members, but will not be compelled to do so.

2.3 The club boat licences – what these do and do not cover

British Canoeing affiliated clubs are able to purchase ‘club boat licences’ that allow for boats used in club activity to be paddled on waterways managed by the Environment Agency and Canal and River Trust.

A summary of the cover provided by club boat licences

A Club boat licence can be used during club activity	YES
A Club boat licence can be used outside of club activity	NO
Personal boat accessing licensed waterways as part of club activity	NO
Personal boat accessing licensed waterways outside of club activity	NO

2.4 Revision of Day Ticket and removal of Youth Card

Club Associate members in affiliated clubs are now covered by insurance for their participation in some entry-level competitions organised and specified by British Canoeing

Discipline Committees, or participation events organised by English Regional Development Teams.

Youth members will no longer be required to provide a Youth Card when registering for events.

We are currently working on implementing an online payment system for Day Tickets and negotiating with a number of waterways authorities to include a day waterways licence in the cost of the Day Ticket. More information will be provided by the end of 2020.

3. Coach/Leader Qualifications and the Club Competency Framework

At present some British Canoeing affiliated clubs operate with coaches and leaders who do not hold British Canoeing coaching and leadership qualifications, but who are assessed as suitably experienced and competent by the club.

Although these individuals may be appropriately experienced there has been no guidance or framework for club committees to use to assess and record competence and to verify Continual Professional Development (CPD) and to confirm that these coaches are holding valid first aid qualifications and safeguard training.

For club committees in this position we have provided a [club competency framework](#) and some examples of how clubs have carried out this process.

However, we strongly encourage that British Canoeing qualifications are adopted, providing a robust and trusted framework for club members on the water.

The new qualifications have been reviewed and revised allowing direct entry to assessments, recognising existing experience, as well as reducing both time and costs for individuals and the club.

For all British Canoeing qualified coaches and leaders there is a membership database that tracks CPD, first aid and safeguarding validity.

This provides a framework that takes the burden from clubs having to record, track and ensure individuals leading sessions are current and hold the relevant update requirements to keep club members safe.

In cases where clubs do not have leaders and coaches with British Canoeing qualifications, it is expected that club committees meet their duty of care, as soon as possible, by putting in place a process to ensure club activity leaders/coaches have the required level of competency.

Over the next three years British Canoeing will be supporting clubs in developing a more qualified workforce within clubs as well as providing appropriate guidance for clubs to become self-sufficient in continuing to fund and support their coaches and leaders.

We will be asking clubs to provide an annual declaration, that coaches and leaders are suitably qualified through either a qualification or their own competency framework, and ensuring appropriate CPD is recorded and that valid first aid and safeguarding training is held by the individual.

In autumn 2020 British Canoeing will provide a bursary fund to support clubs to qualify their coaches and leaders, aiming to upskill and provide a robust approach to the governance of the competency of coaches and leaders in clubs.

4. Improved communication with clubs

From the feedback around proposals to offer a telephone help line, it was clear there was a desire for different ways to access information and communicate with British Canoeing and other clubs. This has been highlighted during the COVID-19 lockdown.

We will be launching a new online intranet for English clubs in late October 2020 that will contain specific resources and updates to support clubs.

We have also started a free [online webinar](#) series aimed at clubs which will continue through the year.

We hope that you find the information in this update helpful. If you have any queries please do contact the British Canoeing Club Services Team at clubs@britishcanoeing.org.uk

Yours sincerely

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