

Event Safety Plan

Abbey Rapids Division 1/2

Slalom and WWR Sprint

(05 / 06 Sep 2026)

***PADDLE*^{UK}**



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Introduction

Purpose

This document has been produced by Yorkshire Slalom to comply with Paddle UK requirements for all events to have in place an appropriate Event Safety Plan.

However, each event is slightly different (course, paddlers experience, weather etc.) so the risk assessment included in this plan will be reviewed for each event and supplemented by a dynamic risk assessment throughout the event to manage safety appropriately.

Role of Individual Event Organisers

The event organiser will be responsible for the implementation of the Event Safety Plan and the safe running of the event, with the support of their Safety Officer. This includes ensuring key roles are covered, normal operating procedures are followed, appropriate safety information is provided, there is provision for Emergency procedure to be followed if required, and reporting back on incidents, near misses or other areas that could improve safety at future events.

Roles & Responsibilities in Relation to Slalom Event Safety

Paddlers, Parents and Coaches: Are responsible for their own safety or those that they are coaching / leading. Safety cover is only provided on the course during official practice and racing. No on the water safety is provided during 'free' practice or above the start area or below the finish area where safety cover must be organised and provided by the paddlers themselves.

Event Organiser: Is responsible for the overall running of the event at Abbey Rapids and the implementation of the event safety plan in conjunction with the Event Safety Officer and other event team members. Ensure that all key roles are filled with suitable volunteers.

Event Safety Officer: Is responsible for ensuring relevant safety procedures / practices are in place during the event (implementing the plan), including ensuring other volunteers are aware of / briefed on safety elements of their role, and relevant safety information is available to all participants.

They are also responsible for managing the water safety team; positioning the safety team at appropriate points, ensuring that safety members are competent for and briefed on their role and relevant emergency procedures, and setting up and managing an appropriate rota for the team members. They must also ensure any incident reporting is completed as required.

Water Safety Team Members: Are responsible for undertaking rescues as required with due regard for their own and others safety and ensuring they are in position when and where required by the Water Safety Co-ordinator.

Welfare Officer: To be available to respond to any Child Protection and Safeguarding issues arising at the event.

Catering Lead: Is responsible for ensuring the safe operation of the cafe at the event, including ensuring the catering team follow best practice regarding food hygiene.

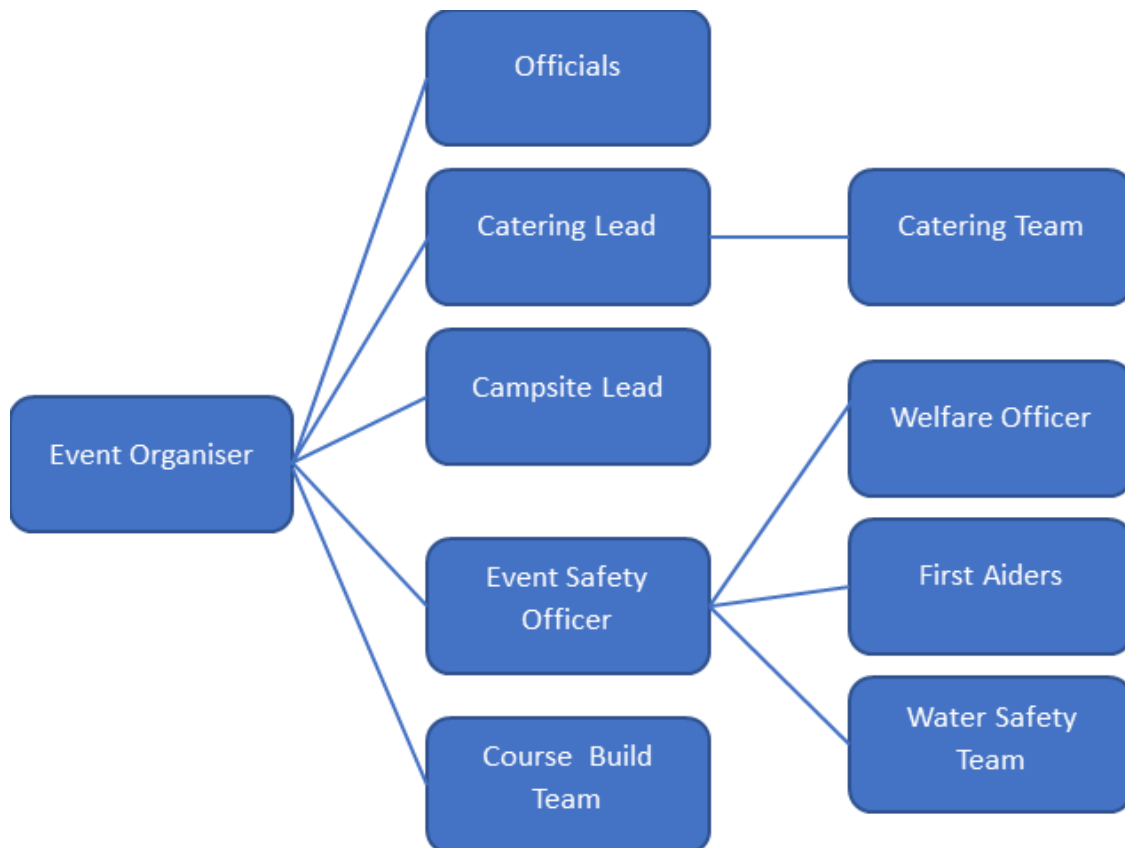
First Aider: One or more first aiders should be on site throughout the competition days and able to respond to any incidents as they occur. They are responsible for the completion of incident report forms and advising the Event Organiser of any items used or missing from the first aid kit.

Judges / Timing team: Are responsible for their own safety, wearing buoyancy aids as per the risk assessment if there is a risk of entering the water from their position. They also have a responsibility to advise control of safety concerns or incidents on their section of the course via headsets.

Pre-start Official: Are responsible for carrying out a visual check to ensure that paddlers are wearing all required safety equipment (BA, helmet) and preventing competitors from starting who are not suitably equipped.

Other Roles: The organiser should identify other roles required for the event as appropriate and ensure each is aware of their responsibilities

Span of Control for Abbey Rapids Slalom Event



Normal Operating Procedures

Generic Risk Assessment: A generic risk assessment for Abbey Rapids Slalom Events is provided. This will be reviewed and updated as required and at a minimum annually.

Event Set up / Take Down: Event organisers must ensure that setting up and taking down for events can be done safely in accordance with the event risk assessment. Particular care is needed in relation to:

- manual handling.
- setting up and dismantling event shelters.
- loading / unloading equipment within the confined space of a van.
- safety during course building - using ladders to work at height, working around the riverside.

First Aid: As stated in the role outlines above at least one First Aider with an up to date qualification should be available throughout the competition.

A First Aid kit is located in control. First aiders should inform the organisers if any items used so that these can be replaced.

Fire Safety: Event organisers must ensure there is appropriate consideration of fire safety particularly related to operating a café and the use of the generator. This should include:

- Ensuring cooking appliances are clear of tent walls.
- There are clear exit routes from the kitchen in the event of fire.
- A fire blanket is provided for use in the café.
- Ensuring the generator is positioned away from any tent walls or other combustible materials.

Food Hygiene: The Event Organiser should ensure the catering team is led by someone suitably experienced at running a busy event cafe. The cafe should be run in line with best practice for food hygiene as far as reasonably practicable for a temporary kitchen. This should include:

- Antibacterial wipes / washing of tables, cooker, and equipment.
- Hand washing facility for catering staff.
- Appropriate storage of food (e.g. cool bag for raw meat and dairy etc., when not in a fridge).
- Allergy information available on request.

It is not a requirement for the catering team to have a Food Hygiene certificate, but this may be useful. Food hygiene certificate can now be gained through online learning from various outlets. Further information of food safety can be found at

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/food-hygiene/charity-community-groups>

Electrical Safety: All wiring should be visually inspected while laying out and defective leads removed from use. Only appropriate outdoor leads and connections should be used where they are exposed to the weather. All connections should be protected by RCD's or surge protection.

Cables should be laid and made safe so that they do not present a trip hazard. Tutti and PA wiring should be laid clear of the path and with slack to avoid a trip hazard.

Generator should be inspected to ensure it looks in good working order before being used.

Water Safety: The Event Organiser and Event Safety Officer will manage the water safety team during the competition. They will identify locations where safety cover is needed, ensure there is sufficient bank and boat-based safety team members, brief members on their role, create a rota to ensure all positions are covered throughout official practice and racing, and ensure the team are in place as required throughout the event.

During the event they will respond to and dynamically risk assess any new or altered hazards, making changes to safety provisions as required.

A supply of buoyancy aids and throw lines will be available at control for team members or officials that require these.

Car Parking / Vehicle Movements: Vehicles moving in the car park must do so at low speed. Event personnel will ensure that a clear route for emergency vehicle access to the campsite (access to the riverbank is not through the car park) is maintained at all times.

Insurance: All those paddling at the Abbey Rapids event must have appropriate membership to support participation, which they may be asked to show. Any paddler who is unable to provide evidence of their membership will be required to pay for membership. Yorkshire Slalom is affiliated to Paddle UK and a such is covered by Paddle UK's public liability insurance.

Paddler Risk Acknowledgement: Paddlers (or a parent/guardian/responsible adult for under 18s) **must** sign their entry card / form (or tick the appropriate box during online entry) to acknowledge they understand the risks associated with competing. Event information and notices will provide details of any specific hazards that paddlers need to be aware of at the event.

Communication of Risk to Paddlers and Others: Information on generic event hazards and site safety information will be communicated to paddlers through:

- Event information published through the Slalom and WWR websites and emailed to all those entered through the online entry system.
- Safety information signage on site.

Safety Signage: Generic event safety information must be displayed at the event control. This includes signs required by the slalom committee (see the Slalom Organisers pack) and event specific information. Additional reminder signage will be placed at the get on and get off/ finish area as required – particularly relating to the requirement for paddlers to stay on the water until 2 more boats have finished their run.

Communication: A Whatsapp group will be set up a few days prior to the event with all those entered invited to join and will be used to communicate event and safety information to paddlers throughout the event. Officials can use event communications to notify control of any safety issues. Volunteers in key roles will be issued radios during the event to aid communication.

Impact of Weather / Cancellation: Cancellation prior to the event will be communicated via the Slalom / WWR websites as well as social media and emailing paddlers that have entered and provided their email address. This is only likely to be if water levels are so high that it would not be possible to set a safe course.

In exceptional circumstances the event may need to be cancelled, curtailed, or amended due to conditions on the day. This could include exceptional rainfall causing flooding or high winds impacting on the use of tents for catering. The decision to cancel or amend the event due to weather rests with the Event Organiser in consultation with the Event Safety Officer. Cancellation will be communicated to all at the event via the Whatsapp group.

Data Protection Issues: Staff running control should be aware that some personal information is on entry cards and be aware of anyone looking to access this while cards are being displayed, reporting this to the event organiser. The participant signing in sheets contain personal information relating to those paddling. Event organisers should ensure that entry cards these disposed of securely (ideally shredding) after being kept for the required time set out in the slalom rules.

Event Feedback: Feedback from participants and others regarding safety issues (actual, potential or near misses) should be communicated to Event Safety Officer or event Organiser as soon as practicable after the event.

Emergency Action Plan

First Aid Provision

As stated in the role outlines at least one qualified First Aider should be available throughout the event. They can be summoned to an incident via the event control.

The First Aid kit is located in control. First Aiders should inform the organisers of any items used at events so that these can be replaced.

Minor Incidents

A minor incident is defined as a one requiring first aid treatment, but not requiring emergency medical treatment at hospital, or a near miss that could have resulted in injury.

The Event Safety Officer should:

- Ensure appropriate First Aid treatment is provided.
- Consider the safety of other people or river users, warning them of any hazard or keeping them away from the incident as appropriate.
- Ensure an incident report is completed as detailed below.
- Pass any further information / recommendations for changes to avoid future incidents to the Yorkshire Slalom Committee / Slalom Committee as appropriate.

Major Incidents

A major incident is defined as a one requiring emergency medical treatment at hospital or where the emergency services need to be summoned. The Event Safety Officer should:

- Ensure appropriate First Aid treatment is provided.
- Where appropriate, ensure the emergency services have been called and that volunteers have been positioned to guide the emergency services to site and the incident as required (*see below*).
- Where relevant provide details of the nearest hospitals to the casualties party (*see below*).
- Consider the safety of other people or river users, warning them of any hazard or keeping them away from the incident as appropriate.
- Liaise with other members of the casualty's party and/or emergency services regarding notifying the casualty's emergency contact.
- Ensure incident reporting is completed as detailed below.

Summoning the Emergency Services

If the emergency services are summoned, the Event Organiser and Event Safety Officer should be informed as soon as practicable. The person calling the emergency services should have sufficient information to ensure they can provide an accurate location and details of the incident / injuries

- The nearest postcode to direct the emergency services to is: **DL12 9TN**

- The What Three Words location for the event is: **linguists.ecologist.removed**

In the event that the emergency services are called, the Event Organiser or Safety Officer should ensure a volunteer is dispatched to the road to guide emergency personnel to the site of the incident.

Local Hospitals

The nearest hospitals to Abbey Rapids are:

- **Urgent Treatment Centre – Bishop Auckland Hospital** 01388 455 000
Cockton Hill Road, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 6AD
Open: 24 hrs
- **A & E Dept. - Darlington Memorial Hospital** 01325 380 100
Hollyhurst Road, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 6HX
Open: 24hrs

Details of the nearest hospitals are also kept with the First Aid kit and can be given to anyone needing to go to the hospital.

Reporting of Accidents, Incidents or Near Misses

In the event of any accident or incident requiring First Aid treatment or a near miss that could have resulted in injury, an incident report form should be completed and forwarded by the Event Safety Officer to the Yorkshire Slalom Committee.

In addition to the above, for incidents requiring hospital / emergency services treatment, a copy of the incident form should also be forwarded to Paddle UK in line with insurance requirements.

High Water Levels

During periods of exceptional rainfall the water level can rise quickly.

If heavy rain is forecast the Event Safety Officer / Organiser should:

- Inspect and continue to monitor how fast the water levels are rising.
- The starter should be able to notify control of any sudden increase in water levels since as they are positioned on the waters edge so would have move in the case of a sudden water level increase.