



Avon Outdoor Activities Club Health and Safety Policy

Preamble

The activities promoted by Avon Outdoor Activities Club are potentially hazardous.

This policy exists to document and draw attention to the simple actions that safeguard life and defend all Members against the personal trauma and hardship that can result from injury.

It states your responsibilities and those of other Members of the club with the aim of minimising the level of risk associated with club activities. If you fit into more than one category (for example, you are a committee member, Activity Leader and a Sport Co-ordinator), you should note the responsibilities listed in all three categories. The actions described here will not and cannot remove all risks associated with the outdoor activities undertaken by the club but they will reduce the likelihood and severity of accidents.

This policy has been prepared with extensive reference to guidance and information provided by the Health and Safety Executive.

Definitions

Activity Leader: the person who has organised an AOAC activity or a part of an activity. This would cover both the person who books accommodation for a trip, and each person leading an activity on that trip e.g. each walk leader.

Committee: committee members of Avon Outdoor Activities Club are listed on this web page <http://www.aoac.co.uk/comittee.html>;

Equipment Officer: The Equipment Officer of the club as given on the web page linked above.

Member: AOAC member.

Sport Co-ordinator: the person responsible for co-ordinating a particular sporting activity (e.g. walking co-ordinator, road cycling co-ordinator, sailing co-ordinator etc.) and if in the absence of anybody filling that role, the Activities Co-ordinator (the committee member responsible for co-ordinating activities).

1 Responsibilities of Members

- 1.1 Members will read the Health and Safety (H&S) policy, ensure they understand all details and will assume the H&S responsibilities described here when they first join the club and on membership renewal.

- 1.2 Members should be confident of their own physical ability to safely participate in and complete all activities that they attend.
- 1.3 In advance of participating in an activity, Members will inform the Activity Leader of any pre-existing health circumstances likely to jeopardise their safety while participating in the activity.
- 1.4 Members will ensure they have all necessary equipment (as given on the kit list for the relevant activity as listed on the club website, or as is provided by an Activity Leader) before attending to participate in any club activity.
- 1.5 Members will listen carefully and act on instructions received if Activity Leaders opt to provide a safety briefing before an activity.
- 1.6 Members will not abuse club equipment or hired equipment or use any equipment for purposes other than it was originally intended.
- 1.7 Members will report any faults with club equipment to the Activity Leader.
- 1.8 Members will report (to the Activity Leader or Policy Officer <policies@aoac.org.uk>.) accidents which result in personal injury or property damage to themselves or others (including third parties), and will provide such additional information as the Policy Officer may request.
- 1.9 Members will familiarise themselves with those hazards associated with everyday life in urban Bristol. These can be assumed to apply to AOAC events which are described as exclusively social events.
- 1.10 In accordance with the Non-Member Participation Policy, Members are responsible for the conduct of their non-Member guests. The club does not accept responsibility for non-Member guests.
- 1.11 Queries on this policy should be directed to the Sports Co-ordinators or to the Policy Officer <policies@aoac.org.uk>.

2 Responsibilities of Activity Leaders

- 2.1 Activity Leaders will evaluate the risks associated with activities they are leading and then undertake actions they deem necessary to mitigate the level of risk. Activity Leaders are not required to remove all risk, *but to protect people as far as is reasonably practical from harm*.
- 2.2 In advance of an activity, Activity Leaders will consider whether they need to borrow a club first aid kit. There are available from the First Aid Officer, or, in the absence of a First Aid Officer, the Equipment Officer.
- 2.3 In advance of an activity, Activity Leaders will provide a full list of the personal clothing and/or equipment that is necessary for Members to minimise risk while participating in activities, unless the list is already available on the club website to which Members should be referred.

- 2.4 In advance of an activity, Activity Leaders will provide Members with a fair description of the nature of the planned activity and the associated level of difficulty.
- 2.5 Activity Leaders will promptly report any faults in club equipment to the relevant Sport Co-ordinator, and in the absence of a Sport Co-ordinator, the Equipment Officer.
- 2.6 Activity Leaders will report (to the Policy Officer <policies@aoac.org.uk>) any injury or property damage sustained by a Member or third party while participating in a club activity, and will provide, or will ask the Member concerned to provide, such other details as the Policy Officer requests.
- 2.7 If a Member informs an Activity Leader that they have pre-existing health circumstances that would endanger their safety during participation in an activity, the Activity Leader will, in so far as is reasonably practicable and proportionate in the circumstances, seek to address the specific requirements of the Member. As a last resort, the Activity Leader is entitled to refuse the Member the opportunity to participate.
- 2.8 If a Member appears to the Activity Leader to be ill-equipped to undertake the activity, or not in a fit state to undertake the activity (e.g. through inebriation), the Activity Leader is entitled to refuse the Member the opportunity to participate.
- 2.9 The Leader of an activity billed as a “social event” will consider whether there are any associated hazards which would not be encountered during everyday life in urban Bristol. If there are any significant additional hazards, the Activity Leader will inform the participating Members of these hazards.
- 2.10 Where Activity Leaders receive questions about activity risks and safety precautions from a concerned Member, they will engage in a constructive dialogue with the Member. Where necessary, Activity Leaders will forward unanswered H&S queries to the Sport Co-ordinator or to the Policy Officer.

3 Responsibilities of Sport Co-ordinators

- 3.1 Sport Co-ordinators will periodically review the archived risk assessments and amend the generic forms if necessary. Amended generic risk assessments should be sent to the Policy Officer <policies@aoac.org.uk> for approval by a sub-committee of the Chairman, the Policy Officer and the Activities Co-ordinator.
- 3.2 Sport Co-ordinators will maintain a constructive dialogue with Activity Leaders with the aim of ensuring that all Activity Leaders are competent and confident in managing the risks associated with their activity.
- 3.3 Sport Co-ordinators will maintain a constructive dialogue with Activity Leaders with the aim of ensuring that all club equipment is properly maintained and used in accordance with safe practice.
- 3.4 Sport Co-ordinators will monitor the age and condition of club equipment (as

relevant to their activity). They will identify equipment that is no longer fit for purpose, and notify it to the Equipment Officer.

- 3.5** Sport Co-ordinators will answer the majority of queries related to H&S within ten working days and forward unanswered queries to the Policy Officer.

4 Responsibility of Equipment Officers

- 4.1** In conjunction with the Sport Co-ordinators, the Equipment Officer will monitor the age and condition of club equipment. When notified by Sport Co-ordinators that equipment is no longer fit for purpose, they will dispose of it and update the club inventory. This action includes personal protective equipment held in club stores for hire by members participating in the relevant activity (e.g. wet suits, mountain bikes).

5 Responsibilities of the AOAC Committee

- 5.1** The Committee will ensure that the H&S policy and related information is communicated to all club members concisely and effectively.
- 5.2** The Committee will encourage a pro-active, diligent approach to health and safety amongst Members and will maintain a constructive dialogue to serve this aim.
- 5.3** The Committee will ensure that all club management documents are consistent with the current H&S policy.
- 5.4** The Committee will monitor, review and ensure the effectiveness of H&S policy on a regular basis. The policy will be updated where necessary and appropriate and with the agreement of the Committee. Members will be informed of any changes through the club's electronic newsletter, and/or the club website and/or the club notice board.
- 5.5** The Committee will monitor and keep a written record of injuries sustained by members while participating in club activities and reported by Members or Activity Leaders. Property damage or injuries sustained by third parties as a result of club activities will also be recorded.
- 5.6** The Committee will monitor the suitability of Sports Coordinators and Activity Leaders to fulfil their responsibilities under this policy.
- 5.7** The Committee will pro-actively encourage members to complete First Aid training and will subsidise this activity where available funds allow.
- 5.8** The Committee will pro-actively encourage members to complete activity leadership training in accordance with the existing AOAC policy for reimbursement of training costs.
- 5.9** The Policy Officer will receive risk assessments from Activity Leaders. Risk assessments will be filed in a secure location.

- 5.10** The Policy Officer will answer the majority of queries raise of him related to H&S within ten working days.
- 5.11** If a Member fails to comply with the H&S Policy, the Committee has power to terminate that Member's membership in accordance with paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 of the club's constitution.

Updated 21st September, 2009