

A Parent's Guide to Water Activities

Is it Safe?

All of our water activities are run according to the rules of the Scout Association. They are generally taken from the relevant NGB's rules so there are fairly consistent across Scout groups and Water Sports clubs. That being said, Water Activities are deemed an "Adventurous Activity" by the Scout Association and so Activity leaders need to hold permits for whatever activity they are leading.

The Thames does have a specific risk, that of Weil's disease at certain times of the year, so we recommend that anyone who has been in the water has a hot soapy shower when they get home. We have not had any incidences of Weil's disease at Viking, so it is a fairly low risk.

What Activities are offered?

We have Activity permit holders for the following water sports: Dinghy Sailing, Rowing (original Pulling boats), Canoeing, Kayaking, Bell boats, Rafting and Powerboating.

Where do these Activities take place?

Generally we use our HQ as the base for Canoeing and kayaking unless we are doing a trip. Rafting will also take place here. Rowing is run either from Cowey Sale near Walton Bridge, or else from Hurst Park in Molesey. Our Sailing base is Island Barn Reservoir in Molesey

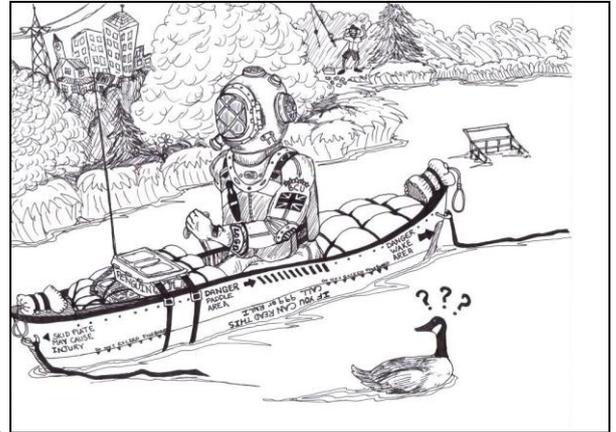
What clothing is required?

The main aim is to keep warm out of the water as we don't generally encourage swimming unless the weather is really warm. That being said, they will generally end up at least damp and at times they may need to capsize in order to learn how to rescue themselves.

A **Windproof jacket** is the main piece of clothing required. Even in hot weather there is sometimes a breeze over the water which can be chilly. In winter it will stop the wind chill. Having a man-made fibre or something that will not absorb water next to the skin is also a good idea as it will dry quickly and keep the body warmer. Cotton is not a great idea except on warm days.

Wear shorts or trousers depending on the weather. Finally trainers, wetsuit boots or something similar to protect the feet are essential. They need to have a decent sole with good grip as slipways etc. can be very slippery. They should also provide some protection from whatever is lurking on the bottom of the river. **Flip flops, crocs, sandals etc. are not suitable.**

We will provide buoyancy aids. Obviously we don't want to look like the fellow in the cartoon, so the current weather conditions will determine the amount of clothing to bring along.



Please ensure that you bring along a set of **warm dry clothes and a towel** so that you can get changed at the end of the session.

How can I help?

We are a voluntary organisation and we rely on parent to help as much as they can. Whether it is helping maintain our equipment once a term during summer, or coming paddling with us and helping us on the water. If you think you can help, then please contact Giles at giles@waltonviking.org.uk