



## Laois Kayak & Canoe Club

**Laois Kayak & Canoe Club**  
**Constitution & Rules**  
 www.LaoisKayak.com

**Operating under the guidance of**  
*Canoeing Ireland (Irish Canoe Union)*  
 Sport HQ  
 National Sports Campus  
 Blanchardstown  
 Dublin 15

### 1. NAME

The club shall be known as Laois Kayak & Canoe Club hereinafter known as THE CLUB.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Club are to promote the sport and recreation of kayaking and canoeing.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

#### 1. Qualification

Any person who undertakes to behave in the best interest of canoeing shall be eligible for membership.

#### 2. Classes of Membership

- A. Full Member: over the age of 18
- B. Junior / Student Member: Those under 18 years of age will only be admitted when one or both parents / guardians are active club members. Students over the age of 18 must be in full-time education.
- C. Associate Member: Those who wish to participate in club off-the-water activities only.
- D. Dual Club Member: Those who are full members of another club and registered with Canoeing Ireland who wish to join Laois Kayak & Canoe Club.

#### 3. Election

Candidates for election to membership shall make written application to the Secretary of the Club on the form provided. The power of election shall rest with the General Committee.

#### 4. Restriction

A person who has been expelled from, or refused membership of, the Irish Canoe Union, shall not be eligible for membership.

#### 5. Acceptance

The General Committee may at its sole discretion, decline to accept renewal of membership, from any person, without disclosing the reason.

#### 6. Discrimination

Laois Kayak & Canoe Club encourage membership from across the entire community. Discrimination on any grounds will not be tolerated.

#### 7. Child Protection

All members, leaders, coaches, instructors, photographers and private companies providing a service to LKCC will be bound by the club's Child Protection Policy.

#### **4. SUBSCRIPTION**

1. The rates of subscription shall be determined by the members in General meeting and shall be due on election and, thereafter, on or before 20<sup>th</sup> of April in each year.

#### **5. CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

1. Any member violating any of the rules or regulations of the Club or being adjudged guilty of unsatisfactory conduct may, by resolution of the General Committee, be suspended or expelled. Any member so suspended or expelled may appeal to a Special General Meeting if such an appeal is sponsored by not less than 33 per cent of members who are entitled to vote.

2. A member shall be deemed to have resigned from the Club if, after due notice in writing, he/she has not paid by 20<sup>th</sup> of May the annual subscription which became due on 20<sup>th</sup> of April.

#### **6. SECTIONS**

1. The Club may organise various sections to cover the various activities of canoeing.

2. The affairs of each section shall be conducted by a sub-committee of up to 3 members of whom the Chairperson or his/her deputy shall serve on the General Committee.

#### **7. DISQUALIFICATION FROM HOLDING OFFICE**

1. Only members entitled to vote are eligible to hold office.

2. Any member who is under the age of 16 years, shall not be eligible for election to the General Committee of the Club.

#### **8. GENERAL COMMITTEE**

1. The General Committee shall conduct the affairs of the Club as a whole and shall consist of a Chairperson, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Safety Officer, Child Protection Officer, Public Relations Officer, Events Officer and other officers as deemed necessary. Additionally, the General Committee may co-opt no more than 7 members of the Club to its members.

2. Nominations for the position of Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and other officers shall be put forward in the form of a motion under the terms of the Rule 12.4

3. The term of office shall be for one year, and members shall be eligible for re-election.

#### **9. DUTIES OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE**

##### *1. Chairperson*

The Chairman will preside at all General Meetings of the Club and at all meetings of the General Committee. He or she shall be responsible for guiding the activities of the club in accordance with its rules and general policy as expressed by the majority of its members. The Chairperson shall represent or arrange for the representation of the Club at Irish Canoe Union General Meetings. He/she shall ex officio be a member of any other committee of the club.

##### *2. Honorary Secretary*

The Honorary Secretary will be responsible for the organisation of meetings of the General Committee and of the Club, and the recording of minutes relating to such meetings and all correspondence relating to the general business of the Club. He or she shall be responsible for transmitting all correspondence relating to particular activities to the relevant individuals at the earliest opportunity.

### *3. Honorary Treasurer*

The Honorary Treasurer will be responsible for the collection of all monies including subscriptions and shall keep such books of account as required by the General Meeting. The Honorary Treasurer shall audit the accounts of the club annually and shall produce at the AGM balance sheet showing the financial state of the club and where required this to be accompanied by an Honorary Auditor's report. All cheques drawn on the club's funds should have two signatures. The Treasurer must make the General Committee aware of any existing or potential financial or cash flow problems.

### *4. Child Protection Officer*

The Child Protection Officer is the link between the young people and the adults within the club. They are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and advising the General Committee on Child Protection Matters. They are the first point of contact for anyone within the club who may have a concern about child protection.

### *5. Safety Officer*

The Safety Officer will be responsible for promoting safe practices amongst club members. The Safety Officer will ensure that club equipment complies with all current safety recommendations. It is also expected that the Safety Officer would be familiar with the Irish Canoe Union's Award Scheme and encourage participation in the Scheme by Club members.

### *6. Public Relations Officer*

The Public Relations Officer will manage all public communications regarding the club, club notices, updates to website etc.

### *7. Events Officer:*

The Events officer shall be responsible for arranging a programme of events and activities. The role will plan and schedule meets and training that support opportunities for active recreation, development and competition in paddlesports.

### *8. Duties of other Officers*

Officers may be elected to be responsible for other duties as deemed by the General Committee such as Social Secretary: The Social Secretary shall organise a programme of social events.

## **10. GENERAL COMMITTEE**

1. The General Committee is responsible for the general conduct of the Club's business and activities.
2. The General Committee shall meet at regular intervals during the year, as required by the business to be transacted.
3. Special meetings of the General Committee shall be called by the Honorary Secretary on instructions from the Chairperson, or not less than three committee members.
4. A quorum shall consist of not less than 5 members of the General Committee.
5. In the case of casual vacancy among the General Committee, the said Committee shall appoint another eligible person to act until the next AGM.

## **11. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

1. An Annual General Meeting shall be held each year and no later than 18 months after the preceding Annual General Meeting.
2. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called on the instructions of a simple majority of the General Committee, or on a requisition signed by not less than 20 per cent of the members entitled to vote.

3. Not less than 14 day's clear notice shall be given, specifying to all members the time and business of the General Meeting.
4. Motions for discussion at the Annual General Meeting, not of origin from within the General Committee, shall be lodged with the Honorary Secretary at least 21 days preceding the AGM, and be signed by 2 members entitled to vote.
5. At any General Meeting, a resolution put to the vote of the Meeting shall be decided by a show of hands, of those entitled to vote, except when more than one nomination has been received for a position on the General Committee, in which case voting will be by secret ballot.
6. At all General Meetings the Chairperson will preside or, in his/her absence, a Chairperson for the meeting will be elected by the voting members present.
7. At all General Meeting not less than 50 per cent of the members of the Club shall constitute a quorum.
8. If after a half hour from the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present, the Meeting, if called at the request of the members shall be dissolved. In any other case, the Meeting shall be adjourned. If a quorum is not present with half an hour of the time appointed for an Adjourned Meeting, the members present shall be a quorum.
9. Accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of notice of, a meeting by any member shall not invalidate the proceeding of the meeting.

## **12. LIABILITY**

1. The General Committee shall manage the affairs of the Club. Financial or legal liability incurred in the rightful exercise of their office shall not, however, be the personal liability of the Committee, but shall be the responsibility of the Club as a whole.
2. All members or other persons who attend club tours or meets do so at their own risk, and neither the Club nor its officers can accept liability for any loss or injury of any kind sustained at its premises or whilst on a Club tour, meet or other activity.

## **13. VOTING**

1. Only full members, and members over the age of 16 years are entitled to vote at all meetings.

## **14. ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION**

1. This constitution shall not be altered, amended, or rescinded except by a General Meeting of the Club.
2. A resolution to give effect to a change must be passed by majority vote of the members present at the General Meeting.

## **15. AUDITOR**

1. Every Annual General Meeting shall appoint an Honorary Auditor who shall at least once in every year examine the Accounts of the Club, and ascertain the correctness of the income and expenditure accounts and of the Balance Sheet.

## **16. FINANCIAL CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT**

1. The General Committee shall retain a minimum Bank Account Balance of €3,000 to provide for at least two year's overhead costs including utilities, maintenance, insurance premium and other expenditure. Where an exceptional circumstance may arise that it is a requirement to exceed the minimum balance, agreement of expenditure will be decided by majority vote at an Extraordinary General Meeting.
2. All expenditure requires pre-approval from the Chairperson and Honorary Treasurer.

3. Financial transactions must be conducted on a non-cash basis including payment of membership fees, equipment rental, pool sessions, sundry and other purchases. Where such transaction are not possible, written agreement from the Honorary Treasurer is required.

4. Receipted evidence of expenditure or costs incurred is required for all reimbursement payments.

5. Under no circumstances can any profit be distributed to members, but any profits earned shall be contributed to a General Fund for furthering the objectives of the Club.

## **17. TERMINATIONS**

1. The Club shall not terminate except by resolution of a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose and, in such an event, any surplus assets shall be handed over to a body or bodies with similar objectives or to a charity or charities agreed by the meeting which formally terminates the Club.

## **18. POWER OF DECISION**

1. Any matter not provided for in this constitution, or any question over the interpretation of it shall be dealt with by the General Committee whose decision shall be final.

## **19. SAFETY RULES**

1. The General Committee shall be empowered to draw up rules for the safe conduct of canoeing activities.

2. All members are bound by the Laois Kayak & Canoe Club Child Protection Policy.

## **20. DECLARATION**

Each member upon joining shall sign an application form containing the following declaration:

1. Name.
2. Date of Birth.
3. Gender.
4. Email address.
5. Agreement to Club Rules and Regulations.
6. Agreement to Club Child Protection Policy.
7. Agreement to club Data Protection Policy.
8. Personal Risk and Safety Statement.
9. Declaration of Medical Conditions or Disabilities\*.
10. Signature of member and that of Parent/Guardian if member is under 18.

*\*Should a medical condition exist, this does not necessarily preclude you from membership/participation, but it must be declared. Should you be in any doubt, advice should be sought from your family doctor.*

## **21. ORGANISING COURSES**

1. Courses will be run to suit the need of the club and the demands of its members. Such courses will include but are not limited to proficiency and rescue courses in canoes and kayaks, instructor, coaching and official courses for competitive and non-competitive paddle sports and first aid courses.

2. In the event that there is no one qualified to deliver a course within the club, the course organiser will source an external instructor who holds an up to date and relevant qualification accredited by the Irish Canoe Union or other relevant governing body.

3. The course organiser will then report to the committee on the details of the course. The minimum details which the committee will require are:

- Name and qualification of the course provider/ instructor
- Cost of course provider/ instructor
- Location of course
- Accommodation options (where relevant)
- Number of people required/ allowed on the course
- Breakdown of the course (i.e. "Level 3 Sea Kayaking Course with assessment")
- Pre-requisite qualifications required to attend the course (e.g. "must have a Level 2 Sea Kayaking Certificate to attend")
- Additional Costs (e.g. Transportation of Equipment)
- Proposed cost for participants

4. Before a course is approved by the committee, the course organiser must demonstrate to the treasurer that the course is financially feasible. In some cases, the club may undertake to subsidise the cost of a course.

5. In the event of a course that involves overnight stays and junior members, the Child Protection Officer(s) should be consulted.

6. Once the committee deems a course to be feasible, the course organiser must actively find participants for the course. At least one month's notice should be given to all potential participants. The club has several means available to it for getting information to its members such as the website, social media, texting, email and newspaper. Promotional activity should be pre-approved by the Secretary and Public Relations Officer.

7. If there is not enough interest for a course in the club, consult the committee in recruiting externally or "outsourcing".

8. If there are more people than the instructor/ course provider can take, then an additional qualified instructor may be hired or the names of the extra people can be recorded and a second course organised.

9. If there are trainee instructors in the club, or people interested in becoming instructors, try and arrange for them to attend. Even if the instructor cannot sign off on their logbook, it is good experience nonetheless.

10. Organising a course can be a big undertaking. If the workload involved in planning the course is too much, the committee is there to assist.

11. In order to prevent late cancellations causing a financial loss, arrange to take deposits from people when they confirm.

12. When the course has been filled, ensure that all participants are made aware of:

- When and location the course is;
- What equipment and gear to bring;
- Exactly what is involved in the course (a timetable where possible is ideal);
- If there is a possibility of the course being cancelled due to outside influences (some courses / rivers can only be run on certain water levels);
- Prerequisite qualifications to attend the course;
- Accommodation arrangements.

13. If you are giving lifts, organise so that you are not travelling alone with a junior member.

14 When the course is over, fill out an event report and submit it to the secretary. If there were any issues in either organising the course, incidents or if people had grievances on the day, pass the relevant information on to the committee.

## **22. GUIDELINES FOR LEADERS**

1. Leaders in sport should strive to create a positive environment for the people in their care. They have an overall responsibility to take the necessary steps to ensure that positive and healthy experiences are provided. Laois Kayak & Canoe Club recognises the key role leaders (instructors, trip leaders, helpers, organisers etc.) play in the lives of all people in sport.

2. All leaders should have as their first priority the safety and enjoyment of the sport and should adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in the club's Code of Ethics.

3. Leaders must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability. Leaders working with young people in canoeing should be suitably and appropriately qualified. Leaders will be expected to go through appropriate recruitment and selection procedures that apply to all people with substantial access to young people whether paid or unpaid. References will be needed and will be followed up. There will be a sign-up procedure, whereby the appointed / reappointed leaders agree to abide by the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport and the Child Protection Policy of the Club. Leaders should act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of sport and of canoeing and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct. Remember your behaviour to other leaders and participants will have an effect on the players in your care. Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout at a person for making mistakes. All people are entitled to respect.

4. Take care not to expose a young person intentionally or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks about the person or his/her family.

5. Insist that players in your care respect the rules as laid out. Insist on fair play and ensure that players are aware that you will not tolerate cheating or bullying behaviour. Remember that young people participate in sport for fun and enjoyment and that skill development and personal satisfaction have priority over highly structured competition. Never make winning the only objective.

6. Encourage the development of respect for other paddlers, leaders, and other coaches and avoid criticism of fellow paddlers.

7. When travel / overnight travel is involved, the Leaders travelling with children must sign a separate agreement. Parents and participants will also be asked to sign permission forms in these instances.

8. Leaders are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with young persons in the club. It is advisable for senior members not to involve young persons in their personal life i.e. visits to coaches home or overnight stay. Avoid working alone and ensure that there is adequate supervision for all activities. It is important to realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted by the participant or by outsiders. When young players are invited into adult groups, it is advisable to get agreement from a parent/ guardian. Boundaries of behaviour in adult groups are normally different from the boundaries that apply to junior groups. Leaders who become aware of a conflict between their obligation to the junior paddlers in their care and their obligation to their governing body must make explicit the nature of the conflict and the loyalties and responsibilities involved, to all parties concerned.

9. Set realistic goals for the participants and do not push young paddlers. Create a safe and enjoyable environment. Do not criticise other leaders (instructors, helpers, etc.). You are the role model for the children in your care.

### **23. LEADERS / COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. Instructors / Leaders should familiarise themselves with the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and follow the procedures if they suspect or receive complaints of any sort. Any person under 18 is considered a child for the purpose of these guidelines.

2. Leaders should be:

- Positive during session, praise and encourage effort as well as results;
- Plan and prepare appropriately;
- Put the welfare of young person first, strike a balance between this and winning/results;
- Encourage fair play, treat participants equally;
- Recognise developmental needs;
- Qualified and up-to-date with knowledge and skill of sport for young people;
- Involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise;
- Keep a record of attendance at training;
- Keep a brief record of injury(s), any incidents and action taken;
- Keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise.

3. Where possible leaders should avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others;
- Taking sessions alone;
- Taking young persons to your home;
- Taking young persons on journeys alone in their car.

4. Sports leaders should not:

- Use any form of punishment or physical force on a young person;
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward;
- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and / or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a young person.

5. Garda Vetting:

- Persons engaged in relevant work or activities as construed in accordance with schedule 1 of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 are required to have a current Vetting Disclosure for renewal at the period as set out in Canoeing Ireland's Vetting Policy.
- In effect this includes persons who are instructors and any persons who are engaged in necessary and regular contact care or supervision of children or vulnerable persons must receive Garda Vetting.
- Decisions on the suitability of a person for such relevant work or activities will be made in accordance with Canoeing Ireland's Vetting and Child Protection Policies.

### **24. ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

1. It is essential that all canoeists and kayakers leave water and its environs with no trace of their presence.

2. Minimise your impact on the natural environment at all times particularly make efforts to reduce river bank erosion at access and egress points.

3. Be sensitive when parking, changing, entering and exiting the water.



4. Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach. Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

5. Maintain positive, co-operative relationships with other water users and riparian landowners as this is important for the future of canoeing and the future of canoeing environments themselves.

6. At entry and egress points behave in a friendly, positive manner towards owners. Be mindful of the time you are spending occupying the launch or take – out area and that you do not unfairly restrict opportunities for others.

7. Our native flora and fauna are under threat from invasive species. All recreational water users can help to protect them.

8. Inland Fisheries Ireland Invasive Species Website (<http://www.ifigis.ie/InvasiveSpeciesMap>) contains a geographical information system detailing locations of invasive species by river basin district under the following headings :

- **Aquatic Plants** - Nutalls Pond Weed, Curly Leaved Waterweed, New Zealand Pygmyweed;
- **Riparian Plants** - Rhododendron, Himalyan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, Giant Rhubarb;
- **Fish** - Chub, Dace;
- **Invertebrates** - Zebra Mussel, Asian Clam.

9. Information for the identification of invasive species can be found at <http://www.fisheriesireland.ie/Invasive-Species/invasive-species-list.html>

10. The above should be consulted to determine the risk when using a particular river body. It is the policy of this Club that the publication 'Disinfection of Boats & Boating Equipment' by CASIE is observed.

11. The detection of invasive species should be reported to Inland Fisheries Ireland or CASIE at their websites or Freephone 1890 34 74 24.

12. **Gyrodactylus Salaris** - Those kayaking abroad need to be aware of the parasite (Latin name: Gyrodactylus salaris) which is less than half a millimetre in size and barely visible to the naked eye, but it can cause severe damage to salmon, and often results in the death of affected fish. It is now widespread in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, and has also been found in France, Germany, Portugal and Spain. Thankfully the parasite has not yet been found in Ireland. It is possible that even one parasite imported to a previously unaffected river could cause an epidemic in a very short time. The main threat is from the importation of diseased fish and controls are now in place to minimise these risks. However, there is also a smaller risk that watersports enthusiasts returning from these European countries could inadvertently carry the parasite back to this country. The parasite can survive in wet or damp conditions for 5 to 6 days on boats, equipment or clothing. Most affected are recreational water users returning with their equipment where they intend to re-use their equipment within a week.

13. If you are returning with equipment used in rivers in the European countries listed above you can help prevent importing the disease on equipment such as keep nets, reels, boats and canoes plus associated items, wetsuits, clothing and footwear by doing two simple things:

- **Thoroughly drying all equipment for at least 48 hours. Drying in sunlight in temperatures above 20C; or**
- **Disinfect by simply immersing equipment in seawater or a salt solution (sodium chloride concentration 3% or more) for a minimum of ten minutes can kill the parasite. All equipment should then be thoroughly rinsed in tap water.**

The parasite cannot survive in seawater but consideration should be given to tenders or other equipment used in rivers.

**25. CLUBHOUSE ADDRESS & CONTACT**

Laois Kayak & Canoe Club, The Old Bridge, Durrrow, Co. Laois, Ireland.

Email: [info:laoiskayak.com](mailto:info:laoiskayak.com)

Web: [www.laoiskayak.com](http://www.laoiskayak.com)