

MDCC TRIP ORGANISATION *(these notes should be read in conjunction with the main club guidelines)*

Trips are organised by individual club members who volunteer to give up their time, free of charge, to act as a contact point for members who are interested in paddling in a stated area. They are not accepting responsibility for paddlers or for instructing them as part of the trip. These are NOT guided trips run by qualified instructors.

All members are welcome to attend trips provided they have the appropriate level of experience for the trip being undertaken. The member who is organising a particular trip is known as the Trip Organiser.

Submitting a trip for inclusion on the Touring Calendar

Well before the club's paddling season begins, the Touring Calendar organiser emails all members with a request to submit trips for inclusion on the Touring Calendar. Members should provide details of the venue, duration, any overnight camping and the grade of the trip which he/she is offering to organise. Any club member may be a Trip Organiser. The duties include choosing a suitable paddling route taking into account:

a) the distance b) landing and escape options c) any headlands to be negotiated d) open crossings – distance and remoteness e) any tidal streams f) the tide times on the date of the trip and the moon phase (neap or spring tides)	g) any overnight camping (car camping and/or kayak camping) h) start point (put-in) i) finish point j) car parking at start and finish points k) grading the trip (A, B, C or A*, B* C*) l) maximum group size (if any)
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Prior to the trip

The Trip Organiser emails the whole club two weeks before with details about the trip with a request that any interested members should respond. Only those members who have responded will receive any further information.

During the week immediately prior to the trip the organiser assesses the forecast and emails his/her thoughts and conclusion to the interested members. If the forecast is favourable the email will confirm that the trip is going ahead and may provide further details including the meeting place and time. If the forecast is clearly incompatible with kayaking then the trip will be cancelled completely. Quite often the forecast is somewhere in between these two extremes and it may be decided to wait and see and to email again when the forecast has been revisited. The trip may go ahead, be cancelled or an alternative option may be offered.

Experience required to attend a particular trip

Members are best placed to decide for themselves whether or not a particular trip is for them. If there is any doubt or if the Trip Organiser does not know the member, the following criteria can be examined:

a) the distance b) landing and escape options c) any headlands to be negotiated d) open crossings – distance and remoteness	e) any tidal streams f) any overnight kayak camping g) the grade of the trip
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If a member has successfully completed previous trips which have the same criteria as the proposed trip then it would be reasonable to attend (given that members should always review the weather and sea state at the time of launching and reassess their decision if necessary).

If the member lacks experience in one aspect it might still be appropriate to attend. It is only by taking on new challenges that experience can be significantly increased. However if there are two or more deficiencies this may be a challenge too far and the member might be better to take part in a different trip which bridges the gap and provides a more incremental increase in difficulty.

The decision-making process can be carried out by the member thinking it through on his/her own or it could be prompted by the Trip Organiser if necessary.

Please be aware that a Trip Organiser may refuse to let you come on a trip because he/she is not satisfied about your competence/fitness/equipment or because the trip is oversubscribed. Participation is always at the discretion of the organiser. Please do not turn up for a trip without having previously contacted the organiser.

Medical declaration

Members should inform the Trip Organiser of any medical condition or disability they have, including any treatment they are taking or may need which the Trip Organiser should be aware of. Members may wish to make a note of these medical details and/or next of kin emergency contact details and keep it with them for the duration of the trip.

Oversubscription

MDCC is a thriving and welcoming club and whilst this is as it should be there can be a problem of oversubscription on trips. The issues with large numbers include the difficulty of keeping everyone together on the water, lack of parking at put-ins and limited room for tents at campsites. In view of these issues Trip Organisers may wish to set a maximum group size and this should be mentioned with the trip details on the Touring Calendar. This means members might not always be able to go on a trip of their choosing. Securing places on trips is on a first come – first served basis. This can be frustrating for those who are unsuccessful but there is no other practical method. It goes without saying that members should only book onto a trip they are sure they are likely to be able to go and, in the event that circumstances prevent them from attending, they should inform the Trip Organiser as soon as possible so there is a chance that someone else can take the place.

Additional trips

If a trip is full another member can organise an additional trip to a *different area* or to the same area on a *different date*. The club encourages this as a way of providing more paddling for members. No member should organise an additional trip on the same date and to the same area as a pre-existing Touring Calendar trip. This is to avoid potential difficulty with available campsites and put-ins bearing in mind the need for groups to remain flexible in case of changeable weather and conditions.

On the water

Trip Organisers are not responsible for the safety of club members, however it is incumbent upon them to remind members of the responsibilities which we all have. Many of these responsibilities are summarised under Your Responsibilities and On the water in the main club guidelines.

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