

# CLWB SYRFFIO DYFFRYN CONWY

## SAFETY FACTORS TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO A SURF SESSION

Prior to the initiation of a session, the allocated lead for safety cover and/or allocated lead for training/coaching should be specified according to needs of the session. The leads should be competency qualified for their roles and should have suitable and sufficient experience of the conditions. The leads should recognise the activities being undertaken by participants and should familiarise themselves with the location and check the following points:

### Water State (as relevant according to location of activity)

- Ensure the weather forecast has been considered
- Ensure wave size, type and power are considered
- Ensure water depth is considered to ensure it is deep enough for the activity, but appropriate for level of ability
- Ensure that the location, direction and strength of rip currents is considered
- Ensure that the state of tide (incoming, outgoing and heights) is considered
- Ensure that the wind strength and direction are considered
- Check the area where entering and exiting the water for presence of potholes and rocks

### Beach/waterside (as relevant according to location of activity)

- Ensure that it has been considered whether the area comprises of soft sand or whether it has hard/sharp areas (i.e. rock) under or close to the surface of the sand
- Ensure that the presence of groins, headlands, cliffs or other man made/natural structures e.g. pontoons and slipways has been considered
- Ensure risk to members of public is minimised
- Ensure that the presence of stones, sharp objects and debris has been considered
- Ensure that water quality is considered. For example, pollution, blue green algae, Weils disease
- Ensure that weather conditions do not pose a risk, i.e. high wind resulting in sand in the eyes, hot or sunny conditions requiring extra fluid and sun protection, cold conditions requiring greater amounts of clothing or relevant wetsuits etc

### Other considerations:

- Ensure that the exposure to heat and cold are considered, including the effects of the sun and UV radiation that may result in sunburn or heat related conditions, or the effects of the cold and the potential for hypothermia or the effects of cold water shock.

- Ensure that other water and beach users are considered. Other water/beach users may pose a risk to the participants. Similarly, the participants may pose a risk to other water users

### **Equipment:**

- ALL equipment should be checked prior to use and faulty equipment should be repaired or replaced before it is used
- Wetsuits can protect against the cold, aid buoyancy of an individual and reduce risk of abrasions from equipment or jelly fish stings. Wetsuits must have a snug fit to be effective
- Approved buoyancy aids may be used for individuals, these aids may not prevent an unconscious casualty from becoming face down in the water, but may restrict the swimming ability of a competent conscious person. The merits of an approved buoyancy aid should therefore be considered on an individual basis and suit the needs of the session
- Leashes may be used to keep equipment close at hand and accessible in difficult training conditions particularly for lesser experienced individuals
- Equipment should be checked after use and securely stored. Any damage should be reported and acted upon, as appropriate

### **Participant Capabilities**

- Ensure that the number and level of the participants are considered
- Consider special needs and potential behavioural issues of participants, which may exist

### **Participant Readiness**

- Ensure the participant is a club member and therefore has the relevant level of insurance for the activities they will undertake
- Ensure written consent has been obtained from the individual or parent/guardian (if under 18) to participate
- Ensure the participant is in adequate physical and mental health to participate and has a completed an up to date health declaration
- If participants have a medical condition, are over 40 years old or have not participated in recent physical activity, it is advisable for them to seek permission from a doctor
- Ensure any medication required by the participant is close at hand, e.g. Asthma pump
- Ensure participants are aware of their responsibility to report to Instructors/Leaders any changes in health, illness or injury status as it may affect their ability to participate. Ensure that training is halted or modified when participants have an acute/chronic injury or feel ill
- Ensure participants and parent/guardians are aware of the responsibility to behave accordingly for safety and enjoyment of themselves and others
- Ensure participants are using appropriate equipment and clothing
- Ensure the planned session is appropriate to all members of the group

- Ensure all participants are aware of appropriate Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) and Normal Operating Procedures (NOPs) for planned session (Refer to Appendices Resource)
- Ensure participants perform an adequate warm-up and cool down
- Ensure the session plan is appropriate to the participants' age
- Ensure the session plan is appropriate for participant knowledge/cognitive ability
- Ensure the session plan is appropriate for participant physical ability. Participants should not enter the water if they do not feel up to taking part in the conditions, but should be gently encouraged to build their skills and confidence to do so in the future
- Ensure the session plan is appropriate for the number of participants and level of safety cover provided

### **Other factors to consider**

- Ensure that a safety briefing is completed
- Ensure that access to all documentation and participant details are close at hand
- Ensure that participant details are up to date
- Ensure that the clothing and equipment are appropriate for the session
- Ensure that safety cover and any additional actions have been put in place
- Ensure that effective preparation and delivery can be undertaken for the level of participant
- Ensure that participants are physically ready to participate
- Ensure that emergency contacts are available for the services and the nearest first aid box for the location has been identified
- A buddy system is also useful and should be considered, as appropriate.

### **Safety Briefing**

Prior to entering the water or beginning a beach training session, a safety briefing should be given to all participants. This briefing should include;

1. Explanation of specific safety issues/hazards of the environment that were identified in the risk assessment
2. Explanation of specific safety requirements associated with the planned activities/session
3. The purpose of the session
4. How to safely undertake techniques for session
5. Reminder of rules, codes of conduct
6. Reminder of location of first aid kit/ required medication and first aid/safety cover, and what to do in an emergency