

Halifax Canoe Club

River Condition Policy for Home Waters

A **Red / Amber / Green / Black (RAGB) river status system** is now being used to indicate the condition of the river **for organised club sessions on home waters** (summer evening sessions, Club Saturday / Sunday sessions, other club organised activities etc).

Home Waters are defined as: the stretch of the river Calder from below the Double Weir down to the egress steps at the bottom of the white water course and the canal between Luddendenfoot and Salterhebble locks (see the club's 'home waters' map – attached).

Each status has indicators for the river level either at the top of the white water course or at the egress steps at the bottom of the white water course. These are to help club coaches / officials to make a judgement on appropriate safe activity for the conditions (on both the flat water and the white water course). At higher levels it is the water level at the white water course egress steps that is critical.

The club coach / officer leading the club activity will interpret the RAGB status when arriving at the club, based on the river condition descriptions and weather and organise (or cancel) activities as appropriate.

Additionally, these levels should also be used as guidance for members paddling on club home waters outside of club coached sessions.

They also form the basis for when it is acceptable for members to use club equipment outside of coached sessions.

Important Notes:

1. River conditions can change rapidly and the river is prone to flash flooding after heavy rain in the valley. All paddlers should take account of recent and forecast weather when deciding to paddle and be aware of potential rising river levels.
2. Please remember that this system is designed as a guide to help members decide whether they should paddle or not, and provide guidance to members on the sort of activities that are appropriate in different river conditions. However paddling outside club sessions is a personal decision. Take into account your own skill level and experience when interpreting this advice. There will not always be a club official or coach at the club to make this decision for you.
3. Where there is guidance that paddlers should be of a certain star award standard, it is the paddler's skill level that is important, not that the paddler holds the award. Club coaches can provide individuals who do not hold the relevant awards with additional guidance.
4. Make your own judgement. If in doubt, you should always err on the side of caution. Read and respect these guidelines which have been drawn up for the safety of you and your equipment.
5. Just because the guidance say it should be safe to paddle does not mean there is no danger. Those who paddle outside of club sessions should think carefully about their safety and ensure they are aware to the hazards and risks associated with the activity.
6. Guidance on river conditions reflect that at high river levels there is no safe egress point below the club steps before the weir downstream which is dangerous in high levels.
7. Paddling on the canal requires a waterways license which is included in an individual's BC membership. The club holds 6 licenses – our membership number is 117.

Further guidance can be obtained from club coaches.

Reviewed: March 2023

Next review due: March 2024

Halifax Canoe Club

River Condition Policy: Red/Amber/Green/Black System

GREEN	AMBER	RED	BLACK
River conditions: Water up to the top of the weir at the top of the white water course (water going through low points in weir only).	River conditions: Water going over the full length of the weir at the top of the white water course. Water no higher than the top of the white line painted on brick pillar by the white water course egress steps.	River conditions: Water well over the weir at the top of the course. Water above the white line painted on brick pillar by white water course egress steps, and below the bottom metal step	River conditions: Water up to or covering the <i>bottom metal step</i> on the white water course egress steps is considered to be a maximum safe level to be on the white water course.
Club Activities: All club activities can take place, with all members taking part within standard BC coaching remits/ratios. Activities on the white water sections must be supervised in accordance with the club's Home Waters Risk Assessment	Club Activities: Beginners courses - will be relocated to the canal or be cancelled, If all participants have already achieved the BC Discover Award the coaches may take the group on the flat water section above the white water course. Flat Water - other coached sessions can run on the flat water within standard club coaching remits/ratios. Coaches must consider activity planned, ability of participants, and the potential for paddler to be swept down onto the white water course. White water sessions - must be led by a coach/leader with a remit for moderate water <u>or</u> a coach/leader signed off by the club as having suitable training/experience and supported by a signed off assistant	Club Activities: No club sessions to take place on the river. Coaches may relocate session to the canal.	Club Activities: No club sessions to take place on the river. Coaches may relocate session to the canal.
Independent Paddling Guidance: Flat Water – recommended that members should be BC's Discover Award standard (old BC 2 star). Paddle Safer Award or Paddlesport Safety & Rescue course attendance is also encouraged. White Water sections – recommended that members should be BC 'Paddle Explore Award' standard (old BC 2 star) and have experience on white water. <i>WWS&R course attendance is also encouraged.</i> Under 18's may paddle independently in accordance with the club's Young Persons Paddling Policy . It is recommended that members paddle in groups of at least 3 people.	Independent Paddling Guidance: Flat Water – recommended that members should be BC's Discover Award standard (old BC 2 star). Paddle Safer Award or Paddlesport Safety & Rescue course attendance is also encouraged. <i>On the river paddlers must be aware of the strength and effect of the current on their boat, and be sure they can avoid being pushed onto white water sections unintentionally.</i> White Water sections – it is recommended that members should be BC White Water Award standard (old BC 3 star WW). <i>WWS&R course attendance is also encouraged.</i> Under 18's must paddle under the supervision of a coach or their parent/guardian. It is recommended that members paddle in groups of at least 3 people.	Independent Paddling Guidance: Flat Water – on canal only, river will be too fast. Experienced white water paddlers only - Anyone considering paddling should ensure that they can safely exit the river at the steps before getting on and be very aware of that river levels may rise very quickly. <i>Paddlers should be aware there is weir downstream that is dangerous at this level and that there is no suitable get off between the club steps and this weir.</i> It is recommended that members paddle in groups of at least 3 people.	Independent Paddling Guidance: Flat Water – on canal only. River will be too fast. It is strongly recommended that no paddling takes place on the river at this level. <i>Paddlers should be aware there is weir downstream that is dangerous at this level and that there is no suitable get off between the club steps and this weir.</i>
Use of Club Equipment: Members may use club equipment for independent paddling in line with the recommendations in the above guidance.	Use of Club Equipment: Members may use club equipment for independent paddling in line with the recommendations in the above guidance.	Use of Club Equipment: No club equipment allowed on the river	Use of Club Equipment: No club equipment allowed on the river.

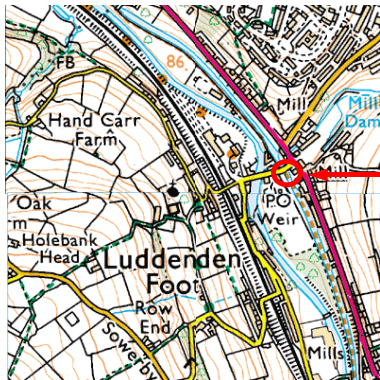
Halifax Canoe Club Home Waters Map

Halifax Canoe Club Home Waters are defined as:

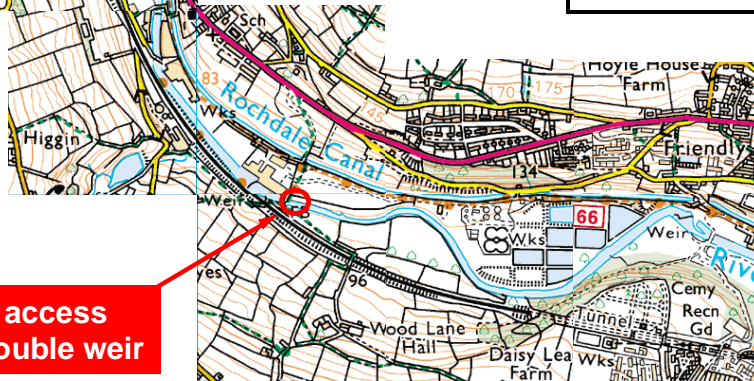
- the stretch of the river Calder from below the Double Weir down to the egress steps at the bottom of the white water course

and

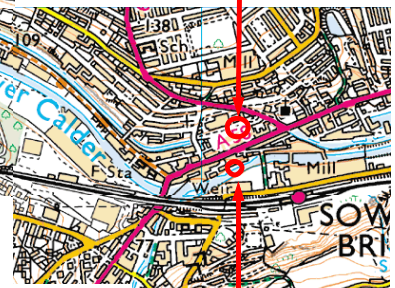
- the canal between Luddendenfoot and Salterhebble locks (canal locks must be portaged)



Canal at Luddendenfoot



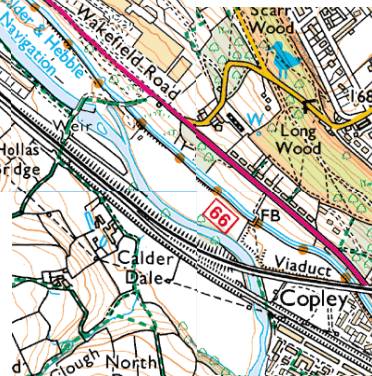
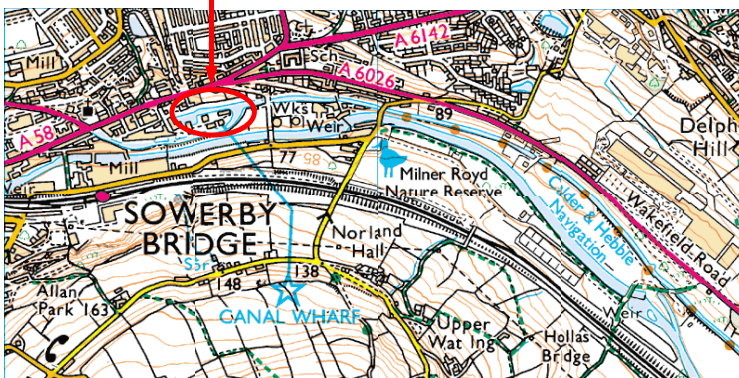
River access below double weir



Canal access Market car park

River egress white water course steps

Canal access Sowerby Bridge Marina



Salter Hebble Locks

