



Water Safety Policy

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KWSC Water Safety Policy

As a club KWSC is afforded relatively unrestricted access to the waters of Kielder for both independent and organised activities.

The reservoir is the responsibility of Northumbria Water (NWL) and as such KWSC has to abide by the rules set out below.

[Rules-and-Regs-Kielder-2021-Final.pdf \(watersideparksuk.com\)](https://www.watersideparksuk.com/rules-and-regs-kielder-2021-final.pdf)

KWSC access to Kielder Water is exclusively to facilitate the following activities.

1. Sailing
2. Windsurfing
3. Paddleboarding
4. Training to facilitate the above core activities.

These should all be done in accordance with Kielder rules and regulations and KWSC rules with Kielder rules taking precedence.

NB – At the time of writing this policy the most current NWL guidance was published in 2021 and is an update of the 2017 guidance. It is advisable to check for any updates at the beginning of every season.

There is no KWSC access to Kielder water for any other activity unless there has been prior agreement with NWL.

Specifically, there is no swimming and no entering the water from shore unless it relates to the following.

1. Rescue of a member taking part in a core activity
2. Training as part of the RYA Safety boat course, sailing, windsurfing or paddleboard training.

There should, under no circumstances, be any jumping from shore or the pontoon into the reservoir. This is not a necessary part of any core activity or training exercise.

Tombstoning

Jumping into the water from cliffs, walls, piers, jetties etc. is known as Tombstoning. Since 2004 the Coastguard has dealt with over 200 incidents of tombstoning with 70 injuries, including paralysis, and 20 deaths.

Kielder Water has many dangers relevant to Tombstoning.

1. There is **extremely poor visibility at all times** – Submerged rocks, fallen trees etc cannot be seen.
 2. The water level can vary dramatically in a short time – An area thought to be deep may not be within a short period of time. You cannot have accurate local
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knowledge. This means there is **nowhere safe to jump in** including the club pontoon.

3. The water is very cold all year round. The surface layer may warm in summer, but the temperature drops very quickly just a few cm down. There is a **serious risk of cold shock** on immersion.

KWSC Instructed Activities

Instructors for KWSC activities should be aware of this policy and act as role models for those in their tuition.

Pre-activity briefings should include that there is zero tolerance of Tombstoning.

During activities instructors should not encourage or partake in Tombstoning.

Where course candidates are witnessed to be tombstoning the following action should be taken:

1. They should be asked to stop.
2. They should be told to return to shore.
3. They should sit out the rest of that day's activities.
4. Where the candidate is a junior their guardians should be made aware of events.
5. An incident report should be completed and brought to the next committee meeting.

Where course participants are junior members, on removal from the activity they will be returned to the responsibility of their parent or guardian.

It may be, depending upon circumstances, that there is a need to consider further action including a longer period of exclusion from activities or as a last resort cancellation of membership. This will be at the discretion of the committee and communicated in writing to the member or their guardians.

Should instructors or those assisting in this role be found to be Tombstoning they will no longer be welcome to continue in this capacity for KWSC.

Independent activities

KWSC members have the ability to pursue the core activities of the club independent of KWSC organised activity and without safety cover.

Should they be witnessed to be swimming or tombstoning by a member undertaking a club duty they should be asked to stop, and an incident report submitted.

Should they be witnessed by a club member not on official club duty KWSC would encourage this club member to ask them to stop and an incident report be submitted.

Should a KWSC member witness a member of the public engaging in swimming, tombstoning or any other prohibited activity, it should be reported immediately to NWL. A club incident report should also be submitted. NWL can be contacted:

By phone: 01434 251 000

By radio: Channel: 77

KWSC is a members club here for the enjoyment of our chosen water sports. To retain access to our club venue we have a responsibility to pursue these in accordance with both KWSC and NWL rules. Failure to do so will result in penalties for those breaking these rules but could also, at the discretion of NWL, result in restriction and loss of access for the wider membership.
