



## Adverse Weather and Cancellation Policy

|                             |                                              |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Date policy agreed</b>   | <b>22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019</b>            |
| <b>Date policy reviewed</b> | <b>July 2026</b>                             |
| <b>Date due for review</b>  | <b>July 2027</b>                             |
| <b>Produced by</b>          | <b>Gaye Hanson – Club Liaison Lead</b>       |
| <b>Reviewed by</b>          | <b>Vickie Hillier – Deputy Chief Officer</b> |
| <b>Club review dates</b>    | <b>27.03.2019 -05.04.2019</b>                |

### **Purpose of Policy**

This policy provides clarity regarding actions to be taken when sessions need to be cancelled or adapted due to adverse weather or other unforeseen circumstances. It now includes specific guidance for hot weather, recognising the increased frequency of heat events and associated health risks.

### **Reasons for cancellation**

Sessions may need to be cancelled for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Extreme cold or icy conditions
- Storms, high winds, or flooding
- Extreme heat or heat-related health risks
- Venue or access issues
- Any situation where safety cannot be reasonably assured

### **Specific weather condition considerations:**

#### **Cold, ice, and underfoot hazards**

If at least 80% of the route is expected to be dangerous due to ice and no safe alternatives exist, cancellation should be considered. If conditions are patchy rather than widespread, a club may:

- Switch to well-lit, gritted, or treated paths
- Move to off-road routes with better traction
- Shorten the session
- Reduce pace and intensity
- Offer a walk-only option
- Run a strength or mobility session indoors if space is available

With regard to cycling, if temperatures are forecast to be less than or equal to 4 degrees at the start of a ride then participants must stay on gritted roads.

#### **Hot Weather Hazards**

Cancellation or modification should be considered when high temperatures pose a risk to participant safety, including:

- Met Office Yellow/Amber/Red Heat Warnings
- Forecast temperatures above 28°C for running/walking sessions
- High humidity, which increases heat-stress risk
- Poor air quality
- Participants reporting symptoms of heat stress

If conditions are likely to cause heat exhaustion or heatstroke, or if safe alternatives (shaded routes, reduced intensity) are not possible, cancellation should be considered.

## **Hot Weather Guidance**

### **Risk Assessment in Hot Weather**

Before each session during warm or hot conditions the following should be considered:

- Temperature and humidity
- Shade availability
- Hydration access
- Route exposure (open fields, roads, lack of shade)
- Participant feedback and wellbeing
- Whether the session intensity can be safely reduced

### **When to Cancel Due to Heat**

Cancellation should be considered when:

- The Met Office issues a heat warning
- Temperatures exceed 28°C with high humidity
- No shaded or safe alternative routes exist
- Leaders feel member safety cannot be maintained
- Multiple reports of heat-related symptoms
- Air quality is poor (e.g., pollution alerts)

### **Adaptations Instead of Cancellation due to Heat**

Where safe to do so, sessions may be adapted rather than cancelled:

- Reduce pace and intensity
- Shorten the route
- Increase rest breaks
- Choose shaded or cooler routes
- Encourage participants to bring water
- Avoid hill sessions or speed work
- Allow participants to opt for walking instead of running
- Substituting to a grass track session if shade available

### **Thunder and/or Lightning Hazards**

Outdoor activity sessions of any type session **MUST** not take place during lightning.

UK Lightning Safety Group recommends using the 30-30 rule. 30 seconds between lightning and thunder means the storm is close enough to be dangerous. Wait 30 minutes after the last thunder before resuming activity.

### **Session leaders should:**

- See lightning or hear thunder → Stop session immediately.
- Move everyone indoors or into hard-topped vehicles.
- Avoid trees, tents, open fields, water, and metal.
- Wait 30 minutes after last thunder before resuming.

## Wind Hazards

General guidance for running/walking/coached sessions:

- **Up to 25 mph** Usually safe for most running, walking, and low-risk outdoor fitness.
- **25–35 mph** Caution zone. Sessions may continue only if the environment is safe and there is no risk from debris, trees, or equipment.
- **35 mph+** High risk. We recommend that outdoor sessions should be cancelled or moved indoors due to risk of falling branches, blown-over equipment, and loss of balance increases significantly.
- **45 mph+** Severe weather. Cancel all outdoor activity. Met Office often issues yellow/amber warnings at this level.

## Wind guidance for cycling:

- Up to 20 mph: Generally safe for most group rides.
- 20–25 mph: Caution advised. Crosswinds begin to affect balance. Riders may struggle on exposed roads. Lighter riders are more vulnerable. Cancellation advised at this point.
- 30 mph+: Unsafe — Cancel all outdoor cycling sessions as advised by British Cycling.

## Wind guidance for Dragon Boat sessions:

- Up to 10–12 mph: Generally safe.
- 12–18 mph: Caution zone. Water becomes choppy. Steering becomes harder. Increased risk for beginners or mixed-ability crews. Sessions may continue only with an experienced helm and a sheltered route.
- 18–22 mph: High risk. Significant chop and spray. Boat stability affected. Difficult to maintain straight lines. Most UK clubs cancel at this level
- 22 mph+: Unsafe — cancel all dragon boat sessions. British Canoeing guidance: no group paddling in strong winds
- 30 mph+: Water conditions dangerous, no paddle sport activity should take place.

## Decision-Making Responsibility

Decisions should be made locally by the person responsible for the session who should assess:

- Local weather conditions
- Route safety
- Participant vulnerability (e.g., pregnancy, medical conditions, new runners)
- Leader availability and willingness to lead
- Ability to modify the session safely
- Travel/traffic conditions for participants to get to the session

## Cancellation in Advance

When cancelling in advance for any reason:

- Communicate to all participants as soon as possible:
  - Ideally by 5pm for evening sessions
  - Ideally by 8:30am for daytime sessions
- Inform the Leader team
- Inform the Club Liaison Lead if support is needed
- Inform participants via closed groups
- Create a post on the Club Facebook page
- Contact the central team so an email can be sent to all members

**Contact Details:**

admin@fitmums.org.uk — 07955 281486

info@fitmums.org.uk — 07955 281485

**Last-Minute Cancellation**

If cancellation is required just before a session:

- Inform all participants immediately using all available communication methods
- Where safe, a representative should be present at the meeting point to advise anyone who arrives

**Informal Activities**

If a club session is cancelled but an informal session is arranged, participants must be advised that it is not a Fitmums and Friends session, the usual insurance does not apply and they are participating at their own risk.

**Incident Reporting**

Any incidents or accidents, including heat-related issues, should be reported via the Mumbot App.

[illegible]