

Updated April, 16th 2026

Update on High Performance Community and Access to World Class Programme Water

At Lee Valley, we are building more than just a training base — we are creating a high-performance community. Our aim is to give the next generation of athletes every chance to thrive while supporting those working to bridge the gap to senior international success.

Why This Matters

We know the challenge. Too many talented athletes fall away during their U23 years because the financial and logistical barriers become overwhelming. Training at Lee Valley is expensive, and gym access is not always easy to secure. Yet this is the very point in an athlete's development where they need consistency, conditioning, as well as the sense of being part of something bigger.

That's why we are committing to providing **free access to water sessions, gym facilities to** boat storage to highly performing **athletes**. (Please see the details below). This isn't just about saving money — it's about building an environment where athletes feel supported, motivated, and connected to a community that wants them to succeed.

How It Works

Free access is provided for **Paddle UK World Class Programme water slots**. Requests must be made at least **4 weeks in advance** by emailing slalomWCP@paddleuk.org.uk. Availability will be confirmed a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the session. Please note that if you are not working with an allocated coach, you are required to paddle in a **group of at least two people**.

There is a maximum of 23 spaces per session, however some sessions may be restricted depending on the needs of the WCP, for example, delivery sessions. Available spaces are allocated in the following order:

1. Podium or Academy Athletes.
2. SNR team and SNR reserves
3. International Athletes World Ranked top 30 or achieving a top 10 at senior world cup or championships races in 2026. *
4. U23 and JNR teams
5. U23 and JNR reserves

6. Selection Qualifiers

6. Premier Paddlers **

*Final decision to be made by PD where circumstances require.

**usually only available in weeks where the podium program is away.

Free **Gym Access** for athletes on the Teams only (no reservers) who must first contact and complete an induction with the WCP physical preparation coach, Tom Haynes tom.haynes@uksportsinstitute.co.uk, and adhere to all best practice rules. Gym use must be **booked one week in advance**. Dedicated access times are from **11:30–13:00** and until the **17:00 daily close**.

Junior athletes are only eligible to train if a **coach or practitioner** is present to ensure the right balance of opportunity and safeguarding. Sessions require a **minimum of three people**, consisting of two juniors and one paid coach/practitioner.

Free **Boat Storage** is available for 1 boat per class that the athlete is competing in for GBR.

The following athletes are identified as part of the High Performance Community based on the **Paddle UK Canoe Slalom & Kayak Cross International Panel Selection Announcement**:

Senior and U23 GBR Team & Reserves

- **MC1:** James Kettle, William Mayer, Philip Smith.
- **MK1:** Jake Brown, David Paterson, Thomas Mayer, Harry Kirby, Nathan Nabili
- **WC1:** Sophie Ogilvie, Rachel Ellis, Joanna Blythe-Shields, Katie Shattock.
- **WK1:** Sofia Alfer, Tazmin Brown, Helena Nabili, Katie Shattock, Joely Walling.
- **MX1:** Jake Brown, Murray Robb
- **WX1:** Joely Walling, Katie Shattock, Sofia Alfer, Sadie Sterry.

Junior GBR Team and identified Reserves

- **MC1:** Sid Griffiths, Lewis Arden, Alex Cleator, Sebastian Reeves
- **MK1:** Sid Griffiths, Jake Mitchell, Alex Cleator, Cally De Silva, Ben Watkins
- **WC1:** Sophie Forster, Darcey McMullins, Jasmine Wilde
- **WK1:** Helena Nabili, Olwen Yates, Jasmine Wilde
- **MX1:** Jake Mitchell, Sid Griffiths, Leo Miller
- **WX1:** Olwen Yates, Helena Nabili, Darcey McMullins