ANGEL COMMUNITY CANAL BOAT TRUST

Risk Assessment:	Working at Height – cleaning/painting narrowboat roof
Effective Date:	October 2026
Health and Safety Manager:	Lindsey Hood, Project Manager and Skipper
Relevant Legislation:	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 The Work at Height Regulations 2005
Related Policy / Document:	ACCT Health and Safety Policy ACCT Risk Assessments and Control Measures – *Angel II* and *Long Tom*

1. Scope and assumptions

This assessment covers cleaning, preparation and painting of the cabin roof of a canal narrowboat, and is equally applicable to narrowboats *Angel II of Islington* and *Long Tom*. It assumes the boat is stationary and securely moored alongside a bank or in a suitable boatyard, and that the work may involve brushes, rollers, cleaning tools, paint and associated materials.
Mandatory restriction: No person may stand or work on the narrowboat roof unless suitable scaffolding or a suitable working platform has first been provided and checked as safe for the task. The roof's low handrail is not fall protection. Work must not proceed from the roof if the required scaffold/platform is absent, incomplete, unstable or unsuitable.
The assessment must be checked against the actual site, boat, roof condition, access arrangements, weather and products used. It is not a substitute for a site-specific assessment or competent judgement.

2. Risk rating guide

High: do not start until the risk has been reduced.
Medium: additional controls and supervision are required.
Low: risk is controlled to an acceptable level provided controls remain in place. Ratings below are indicative and must be confirmed by the person responsible for the work.

3. Hazards, risks and control measures

Hazard	Who might be harmed / possible harm	Control measures	Residual risk
Fall from roof edge onto bank	Workers; fractures, head injury or fatal injury.	Do not work on the roof unless suitable scaffolding or a working platform is provided. The platform must be suitable for the task, stable, properly erected and inspected, with edge protection where required. Do not rely on the existing handrail, which is only about 5 cm above roof level.	To be assessed once platform is in place
Fall into canal / drowning	Workers; injury, cold-water shock or drowning.	Prevent unprotected work at roof level. Keep the boat securely moored. Establish suitable emergency arrangements; have a lifebuoy or rescue line readily accessible where there is a risk of falling into water. Do not rely on rescue equipment as a substitute for fall prevention.	To be assessed once controls are in place
Unsafe access and egress	Workers; slips or falls when getting on or off the boat/platform.	Provide safe, stable access appropriate to the site. Secure ladders where used and do not carry bulky items while climbing. Keep access routes clear and transfer tools/materials separately.	Low if controls maintained
Slippery roof or platform	Workers; slipping and falling.	Clean in a controlled manner; avoid unnecessary flooding or detergent residue. Keep the platform and access route free of water, paint, algae and debris. Use suitable footwear and stop if surfaces become unsafe.	Low if controls maintained
Boat movement or unstable platform	Workers; loss of balance or falls.	Secure the boat and check mooring lines and fenders. Ensure the platform is stable and suitable for the location; account for movement between boat and bank. Stop work if movement makes access or work unsafe.	Low if controls maintained
Weather, wind, rain, frost or poor light	Workers; slips, loss of balance or reduced visibility.	Check weather and lighting before starting. Do not work in conditions that make access or footing unsafe. Stop if conditions deteriorate.	Low if controls maintained
Trips and obstructions	Workers; trips and falls.	Keep access routes and working areas tidy. Manage ropes, hoses, cables, tools and roof fittings so they do not create trip hazards. Keep materials away from edges.	Low if controls maintained
Falling tools or materials	People below or nearby; impact injuries.	Keep people clear of the area below and beside the work. Secure tools and materials where practicable. Do not leave containers or equipment where they could fall into the canal.	Low if controls maintained
Paint, solvents and cleaning chemicals	Workers; skin/eye irritation, inhalation effects or other chemical harm.	Follow product labels and safety data sheets. Use suitable gloves, eye protection and any specified respiratory protection. Provide ventilation, avoid skin contact and wash hands after use. Do not eat or drink while handling products.	Low to medium, depending on product
Spills, fire and pollution	Workers and others; burns, fire or harm to the water environment.	Keep containers closed when not in use. Keep ignition sources away from flammable products. Have suitable spill materials available and prevent paint, solvents, wash water and waste entering the canal. Dispose of waste safely.	Low if controls maintained
Manual handling	Workers; strains, sprains or back injuries.	Use small containers where possible, avoid awkward lifting/twisting and use assistance for heavy or bulky items. Transfer materials using a	Low if controls maintained

		safe method.	
Heat, sun exposure and fatigue	Workers; dehydration, reduced concentration and increased likelihood of an accident.	Provide drinking water, breaks and sun protection as appropriate. Stop or rotate tasks if fatigue, heat or reduced concentration affects safe working.	Low if controls maintained

4. Pre-work checklist

☐ Boat securely moored and working area checked.
☐ Suitable scaffold or working platform provided, correctly erected and checked before roof work.
☐ Platform access is safe; edges protected where required; no unsafe gaps between bank, boat and platform.
☐ Roof and any areas to be accessed checked for corrosion, weakness, hatches or fragile sections.
☐ Weather, lighting and surface conditions suitable.
☐ People kept clear of the area below and beside the work.
☐ Suitable footwear, gloves and eye protection available; other PPE determined from product safety information.
☐ Paint and cleaning-product labels and safety data sheets checked.
☐ Water-rescue and first-aid arrangements confirmed as appropriate to the site.
☐ Workers briefed on this assessment and stop-work conditions.

5. Safe system of work / method statement

1. Plan the work, identify the products and equipment, and brief everyone involved.
2. Secure the boat and establish a controlled work area, keeping unauthorised people clear.
3. Provide suitable scaffolding or a working platform before anyone works on the roof. Ensure it is stable, suitable for the task and inspected/checked by a competent person as required. Do not use an incomplete or unsuitable platform.
4. Inspect the roof and access arrangements. Do not stand on suspect, corroded, fragile or otherwise unsafe areas.
5. Carry out cleaning and preparation in a controlled manner. Avoid creating slippery surfaces and do not overreach; reposition the working position instead.
6. Apply paint in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Control fumes, spills and ignition sources, and prevent discharge of paint or washings into the canal.
7. Keep tools and materials controlled and the work area tidy. Stop if weather, boat movement, access or surface conditions become unsafe.
8. Remove materials and equipment safely, clean the area and check that the boat and site are left secure.

6. Emergency arrangements

Fall into the canal: raise the alarm immediately. From a safe position, use a lifebuoy or rescue line if available. Do not enter the water unless trained and equipped to undertake a rescue safely. Call 999 where required.

Fall or serious injury: stop work, prevent further danger and call 999 for serious injury. Do not attempt a rescue that exposes another person to an unprotected fall.

Paint or chemical exposure: follow the product safety data sheet and seek medical advice or emergency assistance as appropriate.

Spill into the canal: stop the source if safe, prevent further discharge and follow site/environmental incident procedures.

The person in charge must confirm that emergency arrangements are practical for the actual site before work starts. Do not rely solely on emergency services arriving in time to rescue someone from the water.

7. Review and authorisation

Assessment completed by	Giles Eyre
Date	22 October 2026
Review date	October 2028

8. Guidance

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance:

- Assessing the risks of work at height: https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/assess.htm
- Roof work: https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/roofwork.htm
- Working at height: step-by-step guide: https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/step-by-step-guide.htm