

# CANOE FOCUS

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# Welcome

Spring is certainly on its way and with it comes that real sense of a new beginning. As this is coinciding with the further easing of Covid-19 restrictions, I am sure that we are all now looking forward to the year ahead, with a sense of excitement and optimism. Within British Canoeing this is particularly true now, as we prepare not only for the busy summer ahead, but also for the launch of our new strategy Stronger Together 2022-26. During the next four years we will continue to encourage everyone to go paddling and make positive progress around our ten big ambitions for 2026;

- Creating more opportunities for everyone to enjoy paddling
- Increasing membership and improving member satisfaction
- Improving access to water, promoting places to paddle, environmental awareness and sustainability
- Improving the support to clubs and delivery partners
- Developing our qualifications and awards and supporting instructors, coaches, leaders and guides
- Improving the support and recognition of volunteers
- Supporting talented athletes to achieve international success
- Providing excellent championships, competitions and events
- Further strengthening our governance and compliance and being recognised as a great place to work
- Improving digital services, raising the profile of paddling and improving communications

Feedback from members was crucial in developing our strategy and last year's membership survey really helped to shape our plans to further improve membership satisfaction and membership services over the next few years. Feedback from this membership survey is shared on page 11.

We know that issues around access and the environment are very important to our members and we hope that many of you will become involved in Europe's biggest clean-up campaign, which is being coordinated again by Surfers Against Sewage. More details of how to get involved are presented on page 18.

On page 14 we celebrate the recognition of our Paralympic gold medal winners from Tokyo, Jeanette Chippington, Charlotte Henshaw and Laura Sugar and our Vice president Alan Laws, whose achievements were all recognised with national honours in the Queen's New Year Honours list. There have been so many significant achievements in every area of British Canoeing in recent years, and I'm sure that there will be many more to come.

I will be leaving my role as CEO of British Canoeing at the end of May, having been in post just over six years. I have enjoyed it immensely and believe the organisation to be in a strong position and ready to take advantage of the many opportunities ahead. It has been my privilege to work with so many friendly, committed and talented people, all doing their very best to build a better British Canoeing.

Thank you all for making my time in the organisation so enjoyable and best wishes for the future.

Happy paddling

**David Joy**  
CEO, British Canoeing





# NEWS

Receive regular updates plus exclusive discounts for our partner products with a British Canoeing

[members.britishcanoeing.org.uk](https://members.britishcanoeing.org.uk)

[www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news](https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news)

## ERDINGER Partnership Announcement

British Canoeing is pleased to announce a new commercial partnership with ERDINGER Alkoholfrei. The non-alcoholic wheat beer is known as the sporty thirst quencher, due to its isotonic properties which help replace lost fluids after exercise. Find out more about how this new partnership will support our growth and development of all forms of paddlesport here. Find out more here and on page 20



[www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/british-canoeing-to-partner-with-erdinger-alkoholfrei](https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/british-canoeing-to-partner-with-erdinger-alkoholfrei)

## Emma Wiggs awarded Hogan Lovells bursary

Paralympic Champion Emma Wiggs MBE has been awarded one of the ten Hogan Lovells Para Athlete Bursary for 2022. Now in its fifth year, the 2022 bursary will provide financial support to para athletes participating in the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games or, in Emma's case, have aspirations of being selected for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Find out more here



[www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/emma-wiggs-awarded-hogan-lovell-s-bursary](https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/emma-wiggs-awarded-hogan-lovell-s-bursary)



## Wombourne Kayak Club Achieve Clear Access, Clear Waters Champion Club status

British Canoeing is delighted to announce Wombourne Kayak Club as our first affiliated club to be awarded Clear Access, Clear Waters Champion Club recognition, after achieving their Quality Club status. This recognition is awarded to those clubs who have committed to champion our access and environmental campaign in their local community by protecting the places we paddle so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of being connected to nature. Find out how your club can be the next Clear Access, Clear Water Club Champion here



[www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/wombourne-kayak-club-achieve-clear-access-clear-waters-champion-club-status](https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/wombourne-kayak-club-achieve-clear-access-clear-waters-champion-club-status)

## Go Paddling Photo Competition

Launch into the New Year with our photo competition and be in with a chance of winning some Gill Marine goodies! Have you taken any brilliant photos on the water? We would love to see it! To take part, all you need to do is head over to Instagram and use the hashtag #GoPaddling on your photo. We'll choose our favourite photo each month and share it with our followers.

Find out more here - \*T&C'S apply.



[www.instagram.com/p/CYtGWSys0HT/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/CYtGWSys0HT/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

## A View from the Riverbank - The Government publish full response to the Landscapes Review

The Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra) has published its long awaited response to the Landscape Review. The review considered the next steps for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, making recommendations about how protected landscapes could be made more accessible to more people. Find out more here



[www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/a-view-from-the-riverbank-government-publish-full-response-to-the-landscapes-review](https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/a-view-from-the-riverbank-government-publish-full-response-to-the-landscapes-review)



## The Pursuit Wetsuit.

Featuring thermal protection technology, the Pursuit Wetsuit features glued and blindstitched construction with critical taping on the inside to keep warm water in and cold water out. Made using 4/3mm zoned neoprene to offer full coverage, flexibility and protection when on and in the water.

Available in Men's, Women's and Junior.

British Canoeing members receive 15% off Gill products.

Shop now at [gb.gillmarine.com](http://gb.gillmarine.com)

**GO**  
/Paddling!

**Gill**



# Paddling kit bag — How to create a capsule wardrobe.

Having a hobby can be expensive. We all start off with the same enthusiasm but can easily be put off by the mounting costs associated, particularly when it comes to kit. That's why it's a good idea to apply 'capsule wardrobe' thinking that is often associated with daily wardrobe planning to your sport/activity wardrobe.

Whether you're kayaking, canoeing or SUPing, chances are you're going to get wet, especially if you're a beginner. It is also likely that you'll be going out in a range of temperatures and conditions, which means you'll need to ensure you're prepared for every eventuality. Again, this doesn't need to break the bank. We've put together a list of essential items that can be layered up or down depending on the season and that can also be worn for a range of activities, meaning you'll definitely get your money's worth!

Wetsuits are a fantastic item of clothing to get you started on the water. When you're learning, the chances are you're going to find yourself taking the occasional dip, so a wetsuit, made from insulating neoprene rubber, is a good piece of basic gear to invest in. The initial investment may seem expensive but a good wetsuit (if cared for correctly) will last you for years and can also be used for other activities such as open water swimming and surfing (you can also wear throughout the year and simply layer up or down depending on the temperature). There are a variety of wetsuits to choose from, ranging in thickness and design (full arm, short sleeve or sleeveless).

The Gill Pursuit Wetsuit is a full arm wetsuit made from 4/3mm neoprene. It features glued and blindstitched construction with critical taping on the inside to keep warm water in and cold water out. Although it's important to make sure your wetsuit fits well, if it's too big then it will let too much water in and your body won't be able to warm the water up. The Mesh Skin chest and back panel with a thermal fabric lining will keep your core and upper body warm even in the coldest temperatures. The double lined Glideskin collar stops cold water flush while being comfortable enough for day long wear.



Pursuit Wetsuit – £145





Pro Top – £98

Cags, also known as spray tops, are a must in cold weather conditions. They help to create a protective outer shell keeping you dry and shielded from wind chill. When looking for a cag you want to pick something that repels water and offers good wind protection.

The Gill Pro Top is a great all-rounder due to its XPLORE® 2-layer fabric construction, fully taped seams for a waterproof seal and adjustable neoprene waistband. It's also lightweight so can be worn all-year round. In the colder months wear on top of a thermal base layer and wetsuit and then when the weather heats up wear over a T-Shirt or rash vest.



Waterproof Gloves – £37

When it comes to paddling or other boardsports, gloves can be a personal preference. Aside from the obvious warmth factor they bring in the winter, some like to wear year-round to help with grip. That's why it might be a good idea to combine a glove that can be worn in various scenarios.

The Gill Waterproof Gloves are not only a staple option for off the water, they are also great for on the water too as they are (as the name suggests) waterproof and have a non-slip silicon printed palm to help with grip. They also come with touch screen fingers and thumb, so no more taking off your gloves when you need to check your phone!



Aqua Parka – £140

A staple for most paddlers is a good quality changing robe that will keep you warm in the winter and protected all year round.

The Gill Aqua Parka has been engineered using welded seam construction which allows it to move with you as you change, making getting out of wet clothing while outdoors much easier. The wipe clean fabric is ideal for getting rid of any marks and doesn't hold water which is great for spontaneous downpours! There is also no end to its usage... taking the dog out, watching the kids sports matches, camping etc.!



Pursuit Buoyancy Aid – £70

Finally something every paddler needs is a buoyancy aid. Although not as many ways to wear, it's something that needs to be worn year-round and can be the difference between life and death. A lot of us may think we're confident swimmers, but we can become easily disorientated when falling into the water, particularly in cold temperatures.

The Gill Pursuit Buoyancy Aid has adjustable shoulders with neoprene padding for a secure and comfortable fit. It also has a self-draining zippered front pocket for storing essential items and reflective detail on the front and back for visibility.

Gill has a wide range of multifunctional quality products for on and off the water. Don't forget British Canoeing members receive 15% off all the items mentioned above as well as Gill's entire product range.



# Go Paddling



## Safety Awareness Course

**British Canoeing Awarding Body is delighted to introduce the NEW Go Paddling Safety Awareness course. The course is designed for anyone new to paddling, wanting to gain knowledge and raise their awareness of paddling safely in a sheltered water environment, in the craft of their choice, including kayaks, canoes, stand up paddleboards, sit-on-tops, inflatables and skis.**

The main focus of the course is 'supporting the paddler', encouraging the individual to consider where they might paddle, the equipment they use and to provide practical solutions if they get into difficulty.

**The course is approximately two hours and covers –**

- **Equipment**
- **Environmental factors**
- **Planning**
- **Rescues**

Open to paddlers of any age and ability, participants will be able to explore and practice a range of techniques to support them to get the most out of their paddling safely.

These courses will be available soon, so keep an eye out on the Go Paddling website for more details.

### How to become a Provider of the new safety course

British Canoeing Awarding Body Instructors, Coaches, Leaders and Guides can offer the Go Paddling Safety Awareness Course by completing the Safety Awareness Provider eLearning, as well as ensuring they remain up to date.

The eLearning provides guidance and structure on the ethos and delivery of the course as well as how to certificate participants. Visit the British Canoeing Awarding Body website to start your eLearning, which includes a session guide and a range of resources to support your delivery.

### Resources to support your Safety...

There are a range of resources to support you paddling safely on the Go Paddling website including a video gallery which offers bite-sized advice on a range of subjects from Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) to sea kayaking and the weather. There is also a range of downloads with easy to digest PDFs, including a checklist so you can double check you have everything before you paddle.

[gopaddling.info/stay-safe-on-the-water](http://gopaddling.info/stay-safe-on-the-water)

The British Canoeing Awarding Body digital library includes a whole host of resources including the 'Introduction to Paddlesport eLearning'. This eLearning is the perfect introduction for those who are just getting started with paddlesport and goes through some key equipment, safety precautions and environmental factors that are vital information for beginners.

[www.britishcanoeingawarding.org.uk/resource/introduction-to-paddlesport](http://www.britishcanoeingawarding.org.uk/resource/introduction-to-paddlesport)



## Incident Reporting

Reporting an incident or notable event is important for the whole paddling community to enable us all to learn and avoid incidents happening again. At British Canoeing, we have a **reporting system** that helps us alongside other UK databases to recognise themes and action appropriate messaging and education, such as **Safety Alerts, Case Studies and Information Sheets** -[www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/guidance-resources/safety-1/safety-alerts](https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/guidance-resources/safety-1/safety-alerts)

We would encourage you to report all incidents including those notable events (near misses), as this information will help us to identify paddling issues and to establish an accurate picture of safety and other concerns across the country.

<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/news/2022/incident-reporting>

The information you submit is confidential but can be shared within specialist departments of British Canoeing and the National Associations. This is to ensure that the support and advice you receive is from specialist staff and paddlers who understand the issues or environment you were in.

As part of British Canoeing's commitment to support paddlers, we offer a service for anyone who has witnessed, been involved or has been affected by a paddlesport incident. If you would like to talk to one of our trained TRIM Practitioners who can offer support or signpost to an appropriate agency, please email [safety@britishcanoeing.org.uk](mailto:safety@britishcanoeing.org.uk)



# Top tips for taking paddling photos



**Photographing your paddling adventures is a great way to document your trips and capture special and unique moments on the water., but it can be challenging. You are up against the elements and the movement of the water, all while trying to keep your balance. Yet with a bit of practice, you will be taking stunning paddling photos in no time!**

## SKYSPACES

As we all know the British weather can vary. This can make for some dramatic skiescapes. Look out for sunlight reflecting on the water and peeking through the clouds. Dawn and dusk offer some of the best light and are also the best times to capture dreamy skiescapes.

**Top tip:** The position of the horizon line is important for taking great skyscape photos. To help accentuate the sky, try giving it more space in the frame. Rather than placing the horizon exactly in the centre of the photo, position it in the top two thirds of the frame. If you are using your phone, tap on the sky so you do not overexpose it.

## PERSPECTIVE

You are in a unique position from your craft to get up close to features on the water. Try taking a macro photo of aquatic plants, or if it is a calm day, the water will be like a mirror. See if you can capture the reflection of your surroundings on the surface.

**Top tip:** Try holding your phone as close to the surface of the water as you can. This requires a bit of balance but it is worth it.

## FEATURE YOUR CRAFT

Placing your board or boat in the shot can help tell the story of your trip. If you are paddling with a pal, include them in the frame too. It will help showcase the fantastic views you can get while paddling and put the scenery into perspective.

**Top tip:** Look for an interesting feature to frame your boat. This could be a mountain, valley or a bridge. Give the subject room to move in the shot so they are not in the dead centre, this will help create movement and help set the scene.

## SLOW IT DOWN

Being on the water is one of the best ways to spot and photograph wildlife, but patience is key. Slow down the pace of your paddle, take a moment to connect with the environment around you and get your camera ready. You will begin to notice wildlife all around you.

## USE A WATERPROOF CASE

Using a waterproof case is essential when taking your phone on the water. Practise taking photos beforehand to get a feel for the case, ensure the settings are correct and most importantly, check it is all sealed correctly. Keeping your phone dry is not only important for taking fantastic photos, but it will help keep you safe while out on the water.



## If you have taken a brilliant paddling pic, we want to see it!

If you have taken a brilliant photo on the water, why not enter our Instagram Photography Competition! To take part, all you need to do is use the hashtag **#GoPaddling** on your Instagram photos. We will choose our favourite photo each month and share it online. Find out more here [www.instagram.com/gopaddling](http://www.instagram.com/gopaddling)

**PLUS**, photo of the month winners will automatically be entered into our seasonal prize draw to win **Gill Marine** paddling goodies.

# Our Members Survey: What you had to say



British Canoeing is a membership organisation, and our members are at the heart of everything we do. Members offer us valuable insight and reflection of the membership journey. We really value what they have to say about British Canoeing and how we can improve the membership journey.

To make it easy to see what improvements we are making to membership services, we've broken them down into five key sections. See what changes are already in place and what we plan to improve in 2022.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### What you had to say...

*"Thank you for the regular emails and information. It's a pleasure to be a member. Keep it up"*

*"I get too many emails from you"*

*"Your communications are not specific enough"*

### What we are currently doing...

We have a number of email newsletters, each tailored to our different paddling audiences. We do this to ensure that the communications you receive from us are tailored to your interests within paddling. These include:

- Member News: Articles specific to British Canoeing members, with information on your benefits and discounts.
- Go Paddling News: Aimed at non member recreational paddlers that want to learn more about paddling and how they can get out on the water safely.
- Clear Access, Clear Waters News: Updates on the campaign and how you can get involved with gaining fair, shared and sustainable open access on water for all.
- Catch Up with Coaching: Updates for our community of coaches
- Paddles Up Delivery Partners: Updates for our qualified delivery partners

### What we are planning to do in 2022...

We plan to move to more personalised content across all our communications to ensure that you are seeing content that is relevant to you. Soon you'll be able to update your paddling preferences in Members Hub for more tailored communication. A new and updated British Canoeing website is also in the works. The new website will be more user friendly and easy to navigate.

## CLEAR ACCESS, CLEAR WATERS

### What you had to say...

*"I want to see more evidence of the work being undertaken"*

*"I feel strongly about the English waters Access Rights campaign.. keep it up!"*

### What we are currently doing...

Since 2018, our Clear Access, Clear Waters campaign has been championing the case of fair, shared and sustainable open access on water for all. As well as being increasingly influential in affecting Government policy, on land management and environmental issues, we are doing more to educate and inspire people to protect the precious places we paddle. Invasive species, river cleans and water quality are all major issues that British Canoeing has been tackling. For updates on the Clear Access, Clear Waters campaign you can visit [clearaccessclearwaters.org.uk](https://clearaccessclearwaters.org.uk) and sign up to our Clear Access, Clear Waters newsletter.

### What we are planning to do in 2022...

Our Clear Access, Clear Waters Campaign has gathered momentum, so we will be continuing to work closely with our access partners to push for policy change on access to inland waters, making an even stronger case for access, putting us in a good position to influence political parties.

Water quality and plastic pollution remain high priorities for paddlers. We will be doing even more to support and equip clean up activity with a Big Paddle Clean-up Campaign in the summer and focussed invasive clean up work. Our close relationship with the Canoe Foundation will fund new and improved access infrastructure, such as launches, landings, steps and slipways. Along with launching a new Paddlers Code in summer, to engage the whole paddling community on how we can all paddle safely and sustainably.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND COACHING

### What you had to say...

*"BC membership is a big support on the coaching side"*  
*"The BCU helped me from being a parent to becoming a Senior Instructor in Kayak white water, Open Canoe and Sea Kayak."*  
*"I absolutely love being a coach. It is a great joy to introduce others to the sport."*  
*"Cost is very high to initially start up coaching"*  
*"Confusion over CPD points and when/how to update qualifications"*

### What we are currently doing...

Our Coaching Qualifications have been streamlined, ensuring an individualised journey. Coaches and Leaders have a bespoke pathway to support them in the discipline and environment they operate. This has reduced costs and time as paddlers can access the qualification relevant to them. The Paddlesport Instructor is now a two day programme, rather than four. The Accredited Prior Learning process allows you to by-pass training straight to an assessment by considering your previous experience and other nationally recognised professional awards.

We have introduced online options for courses, reducing travel costs and supporting sustainability. We also recognise the demands of holding prerequisites and staying current, therefore introducing our own safeguarding, first aid and CPD courses.

Our new Continuous Professional Development process is directed and controlled by you. This means that you can pick the CPD that you find relevant and interesting. The process makes it really easy to recognise these informal opportunities, and add these opportunities to your membership record.

### What we are planning to do in 2022...

In 2022 we have plans to improve the services we provide and create more benefits for instructors, coaches and leaders. It is important that we develop specific resources for coaches and leaders working with different disciplines and levels of paddlers from recreational paddlers to adventure and competition communities.



*"I absolutely love being a coach. It is a great joy to introduce others to the sport."*

*"Love the rewards and discounts!  
Saved £23 on next year's lake district cottage already!"*



## MEMBER BENEFITS

### What you had to say...

*"Love the rewards and discounts! Saved £23 on next year's lake district cottage already!"*  
*"I don't know what my member benefits are?"*  
*"What is the value of having a British Canoeing membership?"*

### What we are currently doing...

Supporting paddlers and being part of the paddling community is core to British Canoeing membership, and income generated by membership is reinvested back into supporting projects that benefit the whole community.

On The Water membership includes a waterways licence covering 4,500km of river navigations and canals, making this package the most comprehensive and best value licence available. It includes public liability insurance that provides 365 days of cover for all paddlers. Members can also access craft insurance, developed with the paddler's needs in mind. Find an overview of your member benefits in your Members Hub. Here you will find all the amazing offers and discounts you can access, and information on your waterways licence, craft insurance and gain access to British Canoeing qualifications and courses.

### What we are planning to do in 2022...

We plan to make your member experience even more personalised. Taking into account what type of content you want to see. Making your Members Hub, emails, membership type and services personalised to you with an abundance of informative and specific blog posts, benefits and more, all tailored to your interests and your membership type.

## MEMBERSHIP PACKS

### What you had to say...

"There is too much paper within the membership packs"

### What we are currently doing...

We heard what you had to say and in order to prevent unnecessary waste from our membership packs, we offer a Go Green option when you sign up or renew your British Canoeing membership. For those who are yet to make the change, we've reduced the amount of paper within our packs and updated the paper and inks we use to ensure they are environmentally friendly and 100% recyclable.

Our Go Green option makes your membership more environmentally friendly. When members choose to Go Green they are opting into receiving all of their membership information digitally. British Canoeing is also committed to ring-fencing £2 of the membership fee of each member who signs up to the Go Green option. So far £24,000 has been raised by members choosing to Go Green and this money is reinvested back to support British Canoeing's Clear Access, Clear Waters campaign and fund river clean up initiatives.

"What is the value of having a British Canoeing membership"



To find out more about how you can become a British Canoeing member, **members.** [britishcanoeing.org.uk](http://britishcanoeing.org.uk)

### What we are planning to do in 2022...

In 2022 we have plans to update our Go Green membership option to provide more choice to our members and ensure wider promotion of the option so that more of our members are choosing to Go Green. In the coming months we also plan to reduce the quantity of printed materials, shifting to more digital communication.

## Membership Trends and Insight

After conducting our Membership Survey back in 2021, we have taken on board what you had to say to make improvements to benefits, membership services and more



We asked how satisfied members were. This is what they said.



with fulfillment



with services



with communication

### NET Performance score of

When asked the likelihood members would recommend us to friends or family, we scored

**44**

This has increased from 24 in 2020 and -9 in 2016

The most common craft type of members



Kayaking



Stand up paddleboard



Canoe



Inflatable (kayak/canoe)



73%

of people feel British Canoeing promotes sustainability and environmentally friendly practices.

62%

of people feel BC have successfully campaigned towards greater access for paddlers on English waterways



Top three reasons for being a British Canoeing member

1. Waterways licence
2. Liability Insurance
3. Supporting Clear Access, Clear Waters

Membership increased by **45%** in the last 12 months.

Female membership has grown from 28% to **38%** in two years.



73%

said they feel better and more positive about themselves after going for a paddle.



# All about British Canoeing Vice-President Alan Laws MBE

**British Canoeing's Vice President and former Chair Alan Laws was awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours for Services to Canoeing. Alan has dedicated more than 60 years to the sport, both as a paddler himself and as one of the founders of marathon racing as we know it today.**



Alan started paddling at Lincoln Canoe Club in 1960, and went on to become Chair of the British Canoeing Board, the Sprint Racing Committee and was Chair of the Marathon Racing Committee for 28 years. He also completed a 34 year tenure on the International Canoe Federation's Marathon Committee.

We caught up with Alan to find out more about his career in paddlesport and where his love for the sport came from.

A chance chat with Grammar School classmate, Ian Grant, started Alan's Kayaking journey. He was persuaded to give kayaking a try upon hearing of greater travel opportunities and the excitement of racing.

"I thought, that sounds like a good plan," he said, "so I went down to Lincoln Canoe Club one Easter.

"My friend Peter Trigg put me in this racing boat and of course, I fell out, three times, but I was determined to have a good thrash at it. In the end, I did manage to stay in for longer than five seconds. And that was the start of it.

"We used to go off to marathon races or long distance races as they called it then. There were only eight of them every year, unlike the busier calendar today, so you only got eight chances which meant they were big events.

"My first race was in Bedford, it was seven miles from Great Barford to Bedford. I loved it. It was partly the camaraderie of the club and partly because I just found a love of being on the water.

Time passes very quickly, it's only since I've stepped back from my volunteer roles and had time to reflect, that you realise the impact you've had.

"I've never lost that. Every time I get in the boat, even now, it's just a magic thing. It's completely different from many other sporting environments. It's an almost ethereal sensation that is almost beyond description. You either enjoy it or you don't. If you don't like water well, you're in the wrong place. But for me, it was something that was almost quite magical."

Alan took part in his first international event at the River Sella Race in North Spain in 1966, an annual event attracting around 100,000 spectators. He last raced there with David Green in 1996, some 30 years later. In that time he was also the Team Manager for the GB Marathon Racing Team.

A bad back in his mid-twenties curtailed Alan's racing so he took on the role as minutes secretary for the club so he could stay involved. Then at one of the long distance races, he stood next to Martin Boshier who asked if he wanted to

help with the long distance racing committee too.

"I said, "Yeah alright, what do you want me to do?" and at age 25/26 that was the start of my administrative career."

Alan was voted onto the committee in 1969 and became chairman in 1974, a position he held for the next 28 years. Alan was one of the founding fathers, if you will, of marathon racing along with other passionate individuals who transformed the sport both in the UK and internationally.

"It was a really interesting time, there was a new set of articles created for the agreement with the national associations. I wrote, or helped to write many of the articles that are current and are still in force now.

Domestically, the move from long distance to the more recognisable term marathon occurred in the early-mid 1970s.

"I was on the committee when David Train came up with a brilliant idea of divisionalisation. Together we put the plan into place and over the years it expanded and developed into the format we have today.

In 1982 at the ICF Congress marathon racing became a subcommittee of the ICF sprint racing committee. Alan was involved in those negotiations, and the creation of rules along with John Dudderidge and Jorn Cronberg. It was their success and the quality of competition which led to a full committee being established in 1984 with Jorn at the helm. A position he held for the rest of his life until he passed away in September 2019.

"We had 34 years working together to establish the sport, the rules, the format and presentation," remarks Alan fondly.

"We created the World Championships and Grand Prix and in 1988 the first ever Marathon World Championships was held in Nottingham at Holme Pierrepont.

"The contract between National Federations and the ICF for Marathon World Championships along with the specifications for the event were both documents that Jorn Cronberg and I created, which made sure that the event was run to ICF requirements. It wasn't as it might sound as every federation organising the event for the first time thought that they knew how to do it better than we did. This sounds arrogant, but our specifications were based on our experience of the eradication of the mistakes made by previous organisers."

Having led the organising committee for the inaugural World Championships in Nottingham, Alan went on to attend every world championships up until 2016 when he stepped away from his committee roles. "I worked out that I attended 101 senior international events, all over the world."

On being asked for his favourite?

"Oh there's a question", he said before confirming that Copenhagen's Lake Bagsvaerd would take the top spot. "It played host to the second world championship in 1990 where the top two in the senior men's event were separated by just nine inches, after a gruelling 42km race."

Alan cites two events as career highlights in his 60 years in the sport. The 1996 World Championships in Vaxholm, Sweden is top of the list.

"I was the chief official there, we had the biggest entries to date and it was an absolute spectacle. There were 52 K2 boats with the first turn only 600m from the start line so it was fantastic viewing and it was great to lead the event overall."

The second was receiving a Recognition Award from British Canoeing in 2017 for his exceptional influence and dedication to the sport. "All the years in the sport gave me the means to meet so many good people all round the world which really should have been thanks enough," he added.

"I started the withdrawal process, some years ago, because I recognised that on the various committees that I was part of, I was occupying a space that I had occupied for a long time. There were probably people behind me with better ideas coming through, who are younger and I just felt it was wrong for them to wait for dead men's shoes as it were."

While Alan has stepped away from his various committee roles, his legacy for the sport lives on and while Covid has limited his water time, he does still enjoy a paddle.

"Once the weather starts to pick up again, I shall be heading out on the water again. At 75 it won't quite be the same effort as my younger days but I will go out, not too far and just enjoy the magic of being on the water.



Paracanoeists Jeanette Chippington, Charlotte Henshaw and Laura Sugar were also recognised alongside Alan Laws in the Queen's New Year's honours list, for their services to Canoeing.

# NEW CANOE FOUNDATION FUNDING CYCLE OPENING THIS SPRING

Are you looking for funding to complete a paddling related access or environment project?

Would you like to secure funding for better river access at your club or local paddling spot?

Maybe you need to carry out riverbank or coastal repairs to prevent further erosion or protect access spots?

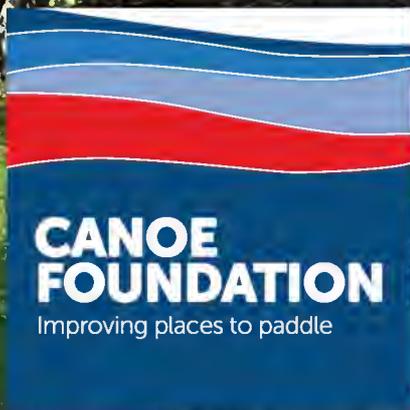
The Canoe Foundation spring funding cycle will be opening in March for a few weeks to accept applications for up to £10,000 for projects that:

- Increase and protect public access points to water for recreational users
- Create sustainable launching and landing sites, to and alongside water, for all sectors of the community and abilities
- Protect and enhance the natural environment we enjoy such as rivers or coastline

## Specifically, projects can apply for funding for:

- Launch and landing platforms, steps or ramps
- Improvements to pathways and accessible routes to the waters edge
- Signage and information that promotes positive behaviour (Countryside code, "Check, Clean, Dry", take your litter home etc)
- Designated or additional parking for water users
- Works to address erosion and create more sustainable access points
- Projects that actively engage recreational water users in helping protect the waterway environment (such as habitat creation or invasive non-native species action)
- Projects that are multi user or can benefit more than one user group
- Projects that benefit all paddlers rather than member facilities

If you're reading this and thinking 'we could do with this funding,' then head to [www.canoe.foundation.org.uk/online-funding-applications](http://www.canoe.foundation.org.uk/online-funding-applications) and apply once the window is open!



# Help us improve paddling locations across the UK

Funding infrastructure and repairs on our waterways & coastline to ensure paddling is enjoyable, accessible and sustainable across the UK



**Donate today**  
[canoefoundation.org.uk](http://canoefoundation.org.uk)

Canoe Foundation registered charity number 1121456

supporting



# SAS MILLION MILE CLEAN

In 2021 we launched our most successful beach clean campaign ever. The Million Mile Clean saw 142,428 of you join us at 4,216 events across the UK, removing a staggering 398,798.2kg of plastic and packaging pollution and covering 1,116,226.4 miles of blue, green and urban space across the year. Through the cleans we also saw 327 Brand Audit data sets being submitted, collecting vital evidence of the scale of the plastic pollution crisis and allowing us to hold those responsible accountable.

**...BUT THE MILLION MILE CLEAN IS ABOUT SO MUCH MORE.**



In our recent survey, 98.2% of Clean Leaders said that organising a Million Mile Clean supported their social health needs, while 66% said that their emotional needs were met through participating in the cleans.

**10 MILES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY**

**10 MILES FOR YOUR BODY**

**10 MILES FOR YOUR MIND**

**10 MILES FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENT**

From the launch in April 2021, wellbeing and community have been at the very core of the campaign, championing the benefits of socialising, volunteering and exercise, and the opportunity beach cleans provide for all of these. These themes will become the focus of 2022 as we look to drive more impact and bring about real, tangible change.



**I feel that taking responsibility for my environment makes me feel more connected to nature and my surroundings**

**Zoe,  
SAS Million Mile Clean Leader.**

67% of Million Mile Clean Leaders said after a clean they feel like they engaged their mind and body, got exercise and finished feeling good about themselves. There is growing awareness around the benefits for both mind and body of community volunteering and beach cleaning in general. Blue Prescribing is an emerging type of therapy and very much on the rise as more and more people turn to the ocean, rivers and waterways for support, quiet and peace of mind. It's simple; doing something good for something that has provided solace, with friends and family or likeminded people, achieving a direct result (i.e. a cleaner space) equals that warm, fuzzy feeling.

Another well documented side-effect of the pandemic is a drop in physical wellbeing – numerous lockdowns and isolation periods have limited our ability to get outdoors and exercise. That is why we are challenging YOU to clean 10 miles of your local river or waterway throughout the year.

This year marks the start of the Ocean Decade and, with many of us being deprived of Vitamin Sea over the last two years, we have been reminded just how important the water (whether it is ocean, rivers, lakes, waterways...) is to our mental and physical health.

So in 2022, reconnect with your community and environment by giving back! Head to our website [www.beachcleans.org.uk](http://www.beachcleans.org.uk) to register your clean and request your free kit – and join a community of Ocean and Environment Activist by tracking your miles cleaned on our Strava group **United Kingdom Club | Surfers Against Sewage: Million Mile Clean** on Strava.

# MILLION MILE MAY

This month, join Surfers Against  
Sewage in cleaning 10 miles of  
your local river and waterways.



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EARTH  
TRUST**

**dryrobe**

Join our Strava Club  
to count your miles



[beachcleans.org.uk](http://beachcleans.org.uk)  
[#millionmileclean](https://twitter.com/millionmileclean)



INTRODUCING

# ERDINGER



## ALKOHOLFREI



ERDINGER Alkoholfrei is supporting British Canoeing and is an official partner for the ICF Canoe Freestyle World Championships this July and the ICF World Slalom Championships in September 2023.

Brewed in the German town of Erding in Bavaria, ERDINGER Alkoholfrei is known as a sporty thirst quencher and has established a strong presence in endurance sports, so what can the paddling community expect?

### ERDINGER Alkoholfrei...

- is a great tasting beer featuring spicy malt notes with slightly sweet nuances that harmonise with the stimulating bitterness of aroma hops and a hint of light, fruity acidity makes it a refreshing delight
- is low in alcohol (<0.5% ABV) and in calories, with just 25 kcal per 100 ml. It supports a varied and balanced diet, and a healthy lifestyle and is brewed according to the Bavarian Purity Law, containing only natural ingredients
- is isotonic which means the body absorbs the water and vitamins it contains quickly and efficiently to help replace lost fluids after exercise
- contains valuable nutrients including the essential vitamins folic acid (B9) and B12 which help to reduce tiredness. B12 also promotes normal energy metabolism making it the perfect recovery drink
- is best served with a full head, the “crowning glory” of a correctly served wheat beer. The fine bubbles of the froth give it an almost creamy consistency – the thicker, the better
- launched a delicious alternative into the UK in 2021 with ERDINGER Alkoholfrei Grapefruit. A slightly bitter 0.3% ABV wheat beer flavoured with grapefruit juice made from natural ingredients, it is a natural, bright pink colour with a little cloudiness and a delicately rosé-tinted head, and a refreshingly tangy taste

### Team ERDINGER Alkoholfrei

The biathlon and triathlon professionals of Team ERDINGER Alkoholfrei have achieved multiple world and European championship titles and countless podium finishes. But amateur competitors form the foundation of Team ERDINGER Alkoholfrei.

Athletes have to commit to intensive training, stamina and passion before they can enjoy the magic moment of crossing the finishing line. For two decades, ERDINGER Alkoholfrei has been supporting those who give their all to achieve their goals and realise their sporting dreams. Every year in the UK, the isotonic thirst-quencher welcomes thousands of runners, cyclists and triathletes as they cross the finishing line and shares with them the emotions of this unforgettable moment.

And now, it is a great thrill to add paddlers to that list. We look forward to seeing you at an event soon.

F : @erdinger.alkoholfreiUK  
T : @ErdingerAF\_UK



**British Canoeing**

# Quality Club Success

Since the launch of the Club Improvement programme in 2021, British Canoeing has seen six affiliated clubs successfully complete the Quality Club stage of the programme. To achieve Quality Club status these clubs have demonstrated that their club management procedures align with best governance and safeguarding standards.

Throughout the process club officials have had close contact and assistance with a British Canoeing Club Support Officer. They've worked together with club volunteers to complete a self assessment to identify if any areas of club activity required improvement. And when areas for improvement were identified, they assisted with actioning these improvements.

We'd like to say a big thank you to all the club officials who have contributed their time and effort to helping their clubs achieve Quality Club status. Many congratulations to them and we look forward to seeing these clubs continue to thrive.

Throughout the year the support officers will be working with a cohort of affiliated clubs to go through the Quality Club programme together. This will give these clubs a great opportunity to collaborate and support one another through the process. If this goes well then we will be looking to enrol more clubs to future cohorts.

If you think your club could benefit from being part of this programme, your first step is to contact one of our Club Support Officers by emailing [clubs@britishcanoeing.org.uk](mailto:clubs@britishcanoeing.org.uk). They will be able to answer any specific questions and provide further information or assistance about how to start the programme.



**Upon completing the process these club officials said...**



**Oxford Canoe Club**

**“Quality Club is not a tick box, prescriptive exercise – it is a very helpful framework within which you can develop your own unique club look and feel. Decide where you want to get to then use the framework to help.”**

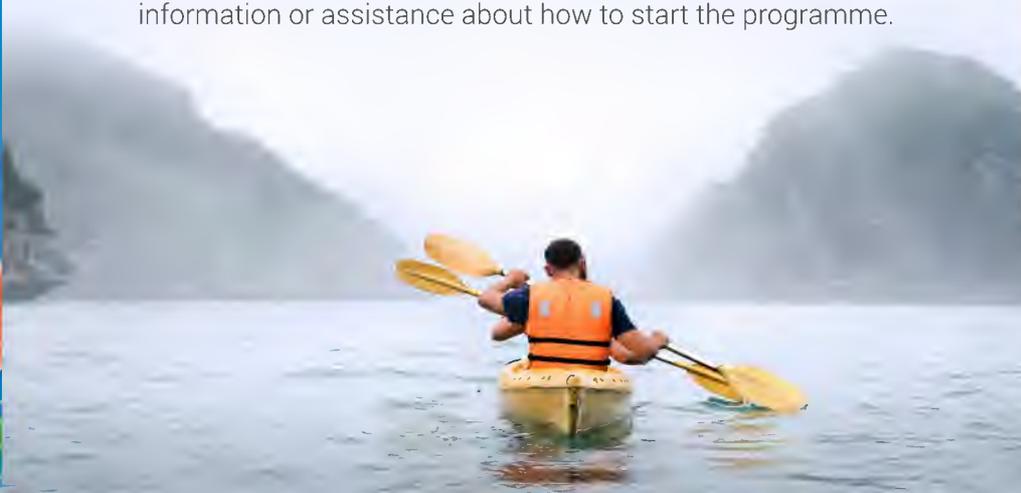
Peter Stewart, Club secretary



**Macclesfield and District Canoe Club**

**“The Quality Club process was really easy to follow which was great. It has helped to put our club systems and documentation in the best place possible.”**

Alan Armstrong, Club Chair



# An Ideal Escape

## Discover the Cayman Islands

Nestled in the warm turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea, the British Overseas Territory of the Cayman Islands is made up of three idyllic islands, all offering luxurious island escapes. Average year-round temperatures of 28°C make it the perfect place to escape the British winter for relaxing winter sunshine breaks. The destination is served by up to four direct British Airways flights a week from Heathrow to Grand Cayman.

## Unique Experiences

The three islands Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman all offer visitors unique experiences beyond the pristine beaches. There's plenty to discover from the incredible stingrays, magical bioluminescence and colourful marine life to the rare indigenous Blue Iguanas at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park or learning about the islands' rich seafaring heritage at the capital's George Town Museum.

As 'the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean' you will be spoilt for choice with more than 200 restaurants all offering the freshest seasonal dishes with locally-sourced ingredients. Enjoy fish fry on the beach, dine in one of the acclaimed farm-to-table restaurants or for a fine dining experience treat yourselves to chef-inspired menus at one of the luxury hotel restaurants.

## This spring Visit Cayman Islands and British Canoeing are partnering to bring you a new and exciting paddle challenge.

Open to all abilities, we're inviting paddlers to take on a 7, 22 or 50 mile distance to be completed from 1st March to 5th June, giving plenty of time to accumulate your chosen mileage. All entrants to the virtual Challenge will receive an official finisher medal and an event rash guard designed by internationally-renowned local Caymanian artist Dready. By entering, you will also be in with a chance of winning fantastic prizes, including a holiday to visit the Cayman Islands. Get started today and enter here...

## Padding in the Cayman Islands

### Bioluminescence Bay

Crystal clear turquoise waters and stunning vistas make the Cayman Islands an ideal setting for paddling. The breathtaking Bioluminescent Bay is located on the North Side of Grand Cayman. At night the ocean lights up like a starry sky with thousands of bioluminescent plankton, known as dinoflagellates. Explore by kayak for an unforgettable experience.

### Paddleboard Yoga

Beginners or experienced yogis can connect to their breath and catch their balance while being gently lulled by the turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea. Revitalise your mind while challenging your core and balance. There is no better way to enjoy sunrise or sundown or simply relax and lose yourself to the sound of the lapping waters beneath.

### Kayak through the mangroves

Paddle your way through stunning natural landscapes and unforgettable waters as you discover the hidden wonders of Grand Cayman's mangroves

### Explore untouched Owen Island

This small piece of land just off Little Cayman can only be reached by paddlers - an ideal place to picnic or snorkel to enjoy the peace and tranquility of this spectacular sister island just a short flight from Grand Cayman.

From luxurious escapes and world class paddling to adventure trips, the Cayman Islands provides unique bucket list experiences to excite visitors and keep you coming back for more.



# Paddle Logger

by paddlers for paddlers



1

2

3



one button tracking  
so you can concentrate  
on your time on the water

keep connected to loved  
ones with PaddleLIVE®

features designed to help  
you be a better paddler



PADDLE  
LOGGER

# Events Calendar

FEB  
12-13

**BUCS Holme  
Pierrepont**  
12-13th Feb

APRIL  
2-3

**Selection Tryweryn**  
2-3rd April

APRIL  
9-10

**Selections & national  
Sprint Racing Regatta**  
Holme Pierrepont  
9-10th April

APRIL  
16-18

**Selection Lee Valley**  
16-18th April

APRIL  
16-17

**Selection Bala**  
16-17th April

APRIL  
30

**Short Course  
Nationals**  
Gunwade Lake,  
Peterborough  
30th April

JUNE  
3-4

**Open & British  
National Paracanoe,  
Seniors and Masters  
Championships**  
Holme Pierrepont  
3-4th June

JUNE  
18-19

**Standby - World  
Champs prep** Holme  
Pierrepont  
18-19th June

JN/JLY  
27-2

**World Championships**  
Holme Pierrepont  
27th June - 2nd July

JULY  
2-3

**Open & British National  
Under 23s and Junior  
Championships**  
Holme Pierrepont  
2-3rd July

JULY  
TBC

**National  
Championships - TBC**  
TBC

SEPT  
3-4

**Inter-Services  
Championship, SUP  
Championships and  
the National Inter-club  
MacGregor Challenge  
Regatta**  
Holme Pierrepont  
3-4th Sept

SEPT  
17-18

**ICF Ranking Race -  
Lee Valley**  
17-18th Sept

SEPT  
25

**Hasler Finals - Wey**  
25th Sept

SPT/OC  
29-5

**World Championship  
- set up - Bude**  
29th Sept-9th Oct

OCT  
29-30

**British Open -  
Lee Valley**  
29-30th Oct

■ Slalom
 ■ WWR
 ■ Sprint
 ■ Rafting
 ■ Marathon
 ■ Freestyle
 ■ Surf Kayak



## ICF CANOE FREESTYLE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS FESTIVAL 2022

Taking place between  
27 June and 2 July 2022

The event will see over 200 of the world's best freestylers from more than 25 countries come together at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham, England to battle it out across nine events.