

CANOE FOCUS



**National Go
Canoeing Week**

Read more on page 40

**Stronger
Together
strategy**

Read more on page 17

**Steve Backshall
joins us for The Big
Adventure**

Read more on page 43



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Welcome to the Summer Issue of Canoe Focus

After a full 12 months of consultation, it was great to finally launch **Stronger Together**, the new strategy for British Canoeing in Manchester on 25 March. It sets out a clear Purpose, challenging Vision and 11 significant ambitions for us all over the next 4 years. On **page 17** and **18** you will find an overview of each of these ambitions and links to videos which explain more.

We are delighted that Steve Backshall agreed to become our official ambassador for National Go Canoeing Week this year. Steve is a committed paddler and recently completed the Devises to Westminster canoe race. He is massively helping us to raise the profile of the sport on TV and through his social media channels. There's a great feature on Steve from **page 43**.

As part of the strategy delivery, we have begun the work to review our membership offer and have been consulting widely with members in the past few weeks. Over 200,000 people paddle regularly, yet our membership has been static at around 33000 for a few years now.

We want to attract more members, but we also want our members to be much more satisfied with the services, more engaged with British Canoeing and to stay in membership for longer. We have recently engaged a specialist company to help us

better understand these issues, so that we will be able to make some positive changes next year.

As part of this process I will be meeting with members in 10 locations throughout the country in late June and July to provide an update on the latest developments from the strategy, and to discuss membership matters. Details of these dates and locations will be circulated very soon.

The Chairman and I had the pleasure of paddling with over 40 members on the Stoke Heritage Trail a few weeks ago and it's great to see lots of social events being promoted on **page 6**.

There are interesting features on every page of this issue of Canoe Focus. On **page 30** there is a fascinating article on Jeff Allen - A day in the Life of a Guide, news and features about our international athletes and teams from **page 34** and on **page 58** we meet Pip and JoJo who both have unique stories to share about their paddling adventures.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of Canoe Focus as much as I did. We continue to explore how we can make sure it is read more widely. If you enjoy the read, please share the news with all of your canoeing friends and encourage them to open it up and take a look.

David Joy
Chief Executive



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Upcoming Events:



South West Paddle Fest
Cornwall
2nd to 4th June

The South West Paddle Fest is an excellent family event to be introduced to the sport of canoeing. You don't need to have any previous canoeing experience, specialist kit or skills... just enjoy the festival and come and have a go!

[Click here to find out more.](#)



National Water Sports Festival Oakham
2nd to 4th June

The National Water Sports Festival is the largest participation water sports event in the UK. Fondly known as 'The People's Festival', it is designed to cater for novice and intermediate watersports enthusiasts.

[Click here to find out more.](#)



Paddle To The Heart
Birmingham
3rd June

Paddle into the centre of Birmingham from multiple start points before all meeting up at Brindley Place. Following some fun and games and a lunch break we will paddle the short distance to Ickniel Port Loop, where car parking is available at Canal and River Trust Yard, Ickniel Port Road.

[Click here to find out more.](#)



Paddle in The Park
Nottingham
3rd & 4th June

A multi-discipline paddle party held at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham! Paddle in the Park is a weekend of paddling competitions, demo boats and workshops, paddling, river racing, raft racing and much much more!

[Click here to find out more.](#)



Windermere Summer Solstice Cumbria
17th June

The Windermere Summer Solstice Lake Race is an exciting event held on England's longest lake, at the heart of the beautiful Lake District National Park. The race involves paddlers of all abilities completing either the half or full length of Windermere, and is open to an array of boats from surf skis to canoes.

[Click here to find out more.](#)



Worcester Ring Challenge Worcester
22nd July

Worcester Canoe Club invite you to take part in the third year of their special challenge event, the Worcester Ring Challenge. You can choose from one of two routes depending on your ambition, speed and boat (15 miles and 21 mile courses)

[Click here to find out more.](#)



Katakanu Treasure Hunt
Leicester
19th August

Participants will be looked after by an instructor as they paddle along the river looking for clues that will lead you to the secretly hidden treasure

[Click here to find out more.](#)



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sea kayaking



Super
September

**BRITISH CANOEING
EVENT SERIES**

SEPTEMBER 2017!

**Super
September**



2/3RD SEPTEMBER

Sprint & Paracanoe National Championships

Holme Pierrepont

9/10TH SEPTEMBER

Canoe Polo National Championships

Holme Pierrepont

16/17TH SEPTEMBER

British Open - Slalom, Rafting and more tbc.

Lee Valley White Water Centre

24TH SEPTEMBER

Marathon Hasler Finals - Richmond

30TH/1ST SEPT/OCT

Freestyle European Open & British Champs

Holme Pierrepont



News

Historic trip which saved Warwickshire canals is recreated

More than 60 canoeists recreated a historical paddle which changed the face of the Warwickshire waterways on Saturday 18 March.

Leaving from the Navigation Inn in Wootton Wawen, the flotilla passed over the

Edstone Aqueduct on their way to Wilmcote. The journey replicated the one completed by two canoeists in March 1957 which subsequently led to the cancellation of a planned abandonment of the southern section of the waterway.



Steve Watts selected for World Games

Steve Watts, one of the top canoe polo referees in Great Britain, has been selected as one of the eight referees to officiate at the World Games in Wroclaw, Poland in July.

Having already earned his top honours at two World Championships and two European Championships, this is the first time Steve has been asked to be part of the official's team for the World Games.



British Canoeing initiatives shortlisted for Sports Business Awards

British Canoeing has been shortlisted in three categories for the inaugural Sports Business Awards.

The annual National Go Canoeing Week - designed to attract new people into the sport and enjoy places to paddle – has been shortlisted in the 'Best Mass Participation Event' and 'Best Sports Governing Body Initiative' categories.

British Canoeing also features in the 'Sports Tech of the Year – for Sport and in Sport' category through Peak UK and the groundbreaking Racer ST.



Finalist In:



Best Sports Governing Body Initiative



Sports Tech of the Year - for Sport and in Sport



Best Mass Participation Event



Click here to read more

Water sports participation is on a high according to new research

Research shows that participation in water sports is on a high according to a new report from British Marine.

The watersports participation survey is conducted annually by a consortium of leading marine

bodies, including British Canoeing, and demonstrates promising figures for our sport; which revealed that the number of people undertaking the canoeing on a regular basis has returned to an all time high that was only previously recorded in 2014.



British Canoeing welcomes representatives from Uganda

British Canoeing hosted representatives from the Uganda Canoe Federation and Uganda Rowing Federation for a 4 day bench marking visit from 2 May 2017.



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Things you might have missed

“Mystery canoeists” who saved the life of a service dog were tracked down with the help of BBC Surrey!

With the help of **BBC Surrey**, Dawn Hart, the owner of service dog Boris, was able to track down Chris Carson and Mike Lambert. When Boris accidentally fell in the River Wey in Guildford the two paddlers lifted him out of the water as there was nowhere he could exit the canal on his own.



Volunteers and long serving members of staff recognised at ICF reception in Manchester

As part of the International Canoe Federation events in Manchester in March, British Canoeing was given the opportunity to host a reception event at the Manchester Museum where we were able to recognise our long serving members of staff, volunteers and retiring athletes, and present them with awards. Turn to page 20 to see more pictures from the event.



Olympic medalists

British Canoeing's medalists had a b... received their MB

Joe Clarke, Anne U... Wiggs and Jeanett... Members of the O... (MBE) in the 2017... to canoeing after th... 2016 Olympic and P...



Liam Heath re... Buckingham Pa...

Olympic gold medallist Liam Heath was presented his MBE by Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace

Paralympic gold receive MBEs

Olympic and Paralympic gold medalists receive MBEs at Buckingham Palace.

Anna Usher (Née Dickins), Emma Chippington were appointed MBEs in the New Year Honours, for services to Paralympic Games.



receives MBE at Palace ceremony

[Click here to read more](#)



“Colorado YouTube” the first British expedition by canoe.

Footage recently emerged on youtube of the First British Expedition to descend the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, by Canoe. It took place in 1971 with 23 paddlers, and included the first descent by a female kayak paddler, and the first C1 and C2. It features a few familiar faces too... see if you can spot them!



'Colorado' First British Expedition through the Grand Canyon by Canoe 1971
The Chris Hawkesworth film of the First British Expedition to descend the Colorado River through...
YOUTUBE.COM

[Click here to watch](#)

Anne Usher [nee Dickins] MBE has been elected to the board of the Sport and Recreation Alliance

Paralympic gold medallist Anne Usher [nee Dickins] MBE has been elected to the board of the Sport and Recreation Alliance.

[Click here to read more](#)

Anne who became Paralympic Champion in the KL3 200m class at paracanoe's debut at the Rio 2016 Paralympics was voted in by the Alliance's membership.

Photographing canoe slalom as a spectator

If you're a keen photographer and heading to any canoe slalom events this season take a look at this blog from Fujifilm which is full of tips on how to capture the best shots. Why not give it a go and enter our photo competition? We have great prizes up for grabs from our partners at Cotswold Outdoor (turn to **page 78** for more information).

[Click here for the blog](#)

[Click here for our events calendar!](#)



Sid the Swan

After seeing Steve Backshall's near miss with the infamous Sid the Swan we took to Facebook to find out who else had encountered him...it seems like Sid is a bit of a well known celebrity!



Steve Backshall and Helen Glover complete DW

Steve Backshall and Helen Glover successfully completed this year's Devizes to Westminster marathon race. The pair paddled non stop and landed the title of fastest mixed pair.

Turn to **page 43** to see our interview with Steve and find out all about his paddling career, his DW training regime and his best places in the UK and abroad to paddle.

Andy Maxted Sid had a go at me too. He was looking decidedly grumpy on Waterside D so I hid behind a #2 (I know!). On DW I thought I'd passed him safely but then I heard the beating of wings and a loud splash followed by a substantial jolt as he hit the back of my boat. That spurred me on and I'm pleased to say he seemed satisfied that he'd done his bit to defend his territory...
Like · Reply · Message · 2 · April 18 at 1:51pm

Richard Matheson Harpham Yup he chased us 3 times but didn't connect - we did the old Jedi trick of holding the paddle high - on waterside he hit the adjacent c2 😊 last year he delivered a karate blow to my team mate rob - must love our aftershave !!
Like · Reply · Message · 2 · April 18 at 2:19pm

A grumpy swan lets us know who's boss...World Land Trust British Canoeing <https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=4JShyNx84Hw>



The Canoe Show - Steve Backshall and Helen Glover meet 'Sid' on DW 2017

Steve Backshall & Helen Glover get the 'Sid' treatment at Cocklebury Farm during the Devizes to Westminster 2017...
M.YOUTUBE.COM



Lizzie Carr becomes first female to solo paddleboard English Channel

British Canoeing would like to congratulate Lizzie Carr, who became the first female in history to solo paddleboard across the English Channel.



Incident reporting!

British Canoeing launched a new online incident reporting system earlier this year. If you encounter an incident whilst on the water remember to let us know!



British Canoeing Launches New Strategy

In March 2017 British Canoeing unveiled its ambitious plans for the next four years, Stronger Together, at a launch event in Manchester.

More than 80 people from across the canoeing community in the UK, including members, clubs, centres, funding partners, committee members, members of the ICF, volunteers and staff came together to officially mark the new strategy which provides a blueprint for all parties to work together.

Stronger Together sets out a clear purpose and vision which will shape the work of British Canoeing for the next four years and sets out 11 key ambitions. The 11 key ambitions focus on the core areas

of canoeing, including participation and membership, developing coaches, volunteers and leaders and creating more opportunities for exploration, adventure and challenge. It will also focus on communications and governance, competitions, access and the environment.

On the next page you will find an overview of each of these ambitions and links to videos which explain more.



”

This is just the beginning of our four-year plan, it's a strong start and there is lots to do in the delivery phase to achieve our ambitions but by working together we hope to see positive and exciting results in years to come.

David Joy, chief executive British Canoeing

”

The strategy seeks to better harness the skills, enthusiasm and commitment of all of those individuals and organisations who want to play their part in building an even brighter future for the sport in England and throughout the UK.

John Coyne CBE, chair of British Canoeing



Our 11 ambitions

The 11 ambitions have been thoughtfully crafted and set an agenda for action for the next four years, designed to put the sport in a better place.

Ambition four

Develop a stronger network of clubs and centres



[Click here to watch on Youtube](#)



Ambition One

Increase regular participation in paddlesport



[Click here to watch on Youtube](#)



Ambition Two

Attract new members to British Canoeing and improve member engagement and satisfaction



Ambition six

Improve access and promote environmental awareness



[Click here to watch on Youtube](#)



Ambition Three

Create and promote more opportunities for exploration, adventure and challenge



[Click here to watch on Youtube](#)



Ambition Eight

Improve pathways to performance and international success



Click here to watch on Youtube



Ambition five

Create more places to paddle and improve facilities



Click here to watch on Youtube



Ambition Nine

Develop volunteers, coaches and leaders

Ambition Ten

Strengthen governance and financial sustainability within the sport



Ambition seven

Provide excellent competitions



Click here to watch on Youtube



Ambition Eleven

Improve the profile of paddlesport and communications throughout the sport



Click here to watch on Youtube

Manchester Awards & Dinner Celebration

British Canoeing was given the opportunity to host a reception and awards dinner for the International Canoe Federation during their visit to Manchester in March.

Attended by the Mayor of Manchester Councillor Carl Austin-Behan, and held at the Manchester Museum, the evening provided an opportunity for British Canoeing to present Awards of Honour to volunteers, staff and athletes in recognition of their outstanding achievement and contribution to British Canoeing



Volunteer Award of Honour recipients

Terry Best

Terry became involved in kayaking to support his son, Jon, a regular member of the GB freestyle team. He went on to become a member of the national committee for the discipline and was elected onto the ICF's freestyle committee. His work has enabled the discipline to evolve significantly, delivering quality events which dynamically demonstrate freestyle paddling

Terry continues to help the sport through supporting events, advising committees and providing an international context. He is one of those behind the scenes people who are seldom recognised but without whom the sport would not be what it is today

Kevin Dennis

As an active coach across six disciplines Kevin has trained and assessed over 1,000 coaches. He has been a member of the Southern regional development team for over 20 years and elected as the Chair for British Canoeing's English Council

Andy Maxted

Andy has been involved with the British Canoeing coaching committees for 17 years, after being elected as a local coaching officer for South Buckinghamshire in 2000. During this period Andy served two terms as vice chair and chair. He was the representative on the UK coaching management committee and its successor the coaching strategy group, as well as speaking for coaching within the English Council

Ken Trollope

Ken became an active member of Sailsbury canoe club to support his children when they began competing in canoe slalom. He later became the secretary of the canoe slalom committee and has taken a keen interest in the administration of the sport. Ken is an internationally qualified slalom judge and has devoted a considerable time and effort in developing and maintaining a software programme which is used extensively by canoe clubs running competitions for the lower slalom divisions

He also produces the slalom yearbook, a copy of which is sent to every competitor and organiser. Regarded as the 'bible' of canoe slalom it is testament of Ken's dedication to the sport.

Cathy Wynne

Cathy is a highly experienced senior ICF information technical official (ITO), having worked at the highest level at international regattas. Cathy managed all the ITO's at the London 2012 Olympic Games and has been the mainstay of the national regattas held at Holme Pierrepont for many years, not only acting as chief official but setting the programme, ensuring in conjunction with the regatta committee that competitions operate to the highest standard.

She has been secretary of the sprint racing committee for many years and British Canoeing has benefitted immensely from all of Cathy's efforts and abilities.



Staff award winners

John Anderson MBE

John Anderson has been the performance director for British Canoeing since 1998 and has been the team leader at five successive Olympic Games, working closely with athletes and coaches to win 16 Olympic medals, including five golds. John also played a wider role in the success achieved by British sport as a founder member and chair of the UK Olympic and Paralympic performance director's forum.

Sue Hornby

Sue Hornby has worked for British Canoeing for two decades and has had a significant impact on the development of the sport during her career. As director of development, Suzy has led on a wide range of roles including participation, waterways and environment, English coaching and club coach programmes. She played an integral role in setting up the foundations of the paracanoe programme on which the current, highly successful Paralympic programme was built.

Mike Devlin

Having first sat in a kayak aged 11, Mike has gone on to make a significant impact on a number of different paddlesports throughout his career. During his 20 year tenure he has invested his passion for paddling into the transformation of the coaching landscape at British Canoeing. Mike re-positioned the sport's understanding and acceptance of coaching as a defined skill and craft and coordinated the redevelopment of the qualifications to gain UKCC endorsement of British Canoeing's coaching awards, and established its external regulatory awarding body presence.





Athlete award winners

Tim Baillie MBE

Tim Baillie reached the pinnacle of his canoe slalom career at the London 2012 Olympic Games, winning the C2 gold medal along with his long term paddling partner, Etienne Stott

Richard Hounslow

Richard Hounslow is a two-time Olympic silver medallist and World Champion in Canoe Slalom. He claimed his second successive Olympic medal in C2 in Rio with David Florence, to become one of Great Britain's most decorated canoe slalom athletes of all time

Ed McKeever MBE

Ed McKeever is an Olympic, World and European Champion in canoe sprint. During an impressive 17 year career he was a regular feature on the podium and domestic and international events.

Etienne Stott MBE

Etienne Stott is one half of the historic C2 duo who won Great Britain's first ever canoe slalom gold medal at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Together with partner Tim Baillie, the pair overcame all the odds to finish on top of podium in front of a home crowd at Lee Valley White Water Centre

// It's an absolute honour and a privilege to have received this award. I've had great fun working with everybody that's been involved in coaching, everyone who I've met through the committees and all the work that we have done to help this fantastic sport. //

Andy Maxted



British Canoeing has launched the NEW Guide Scheme

The British Canoeing Guide Scheme launched on the 3rd April 2017 complements the existing suite of Leadership awards. This endorsement is aimed at supporting and recognising the additional skills required when fulfilling a guiding role, giving the client the knowledge that their Guide adds value to the customer experience, giving them a quality day out on the water.





BRITISH CANOEING

GUIDE

Guide Modules

British Canoeing offer a selection of Guide Modules that are open to ALL British Canoeing and Home Nation members wanting to gain knowledge and develop in specific areas of interest. The British Canoeing Guide Modules include:



- Camp Craft and Expedition Skills
- Environment and Sustainability
- Leadership
- Customer Experience
- Trip Planning and Organisation

with each module giving an 18 month CPD update. Providers can be found on the British Canoeing website [British Canoeing website](#).

Become a British Canoeing Guide

The Guide Endorsement is for British Canoeing Leaders who are involved in guiding activity. The ethos of the scheme is to support, share and recognise the leaders guiding development. The cadre of Guides and aspirant Guides will be a supportive network of leaders, sharing best practice and like-minded ideas, in order to aid their learning and support paddlers on their journeys.

The endorsement is available to British Canoeing Leaders who have completed learning relevant to their guiding role. Aspirant Guides should develop their specific areas of interest, relevant to their guiding, by attending the British Canoeing Guide modules or our APL process will recognise formal, non-formal and informal development.

Full details of how to become a British Canoeing Guide can be found on the [British Canoeing website](#).

BRITISH CANOEING HAS LAUNCHED THE NEW PADDLESPOrt LEADER AWARD

British Canoeing has launched the **NEW Paddlesport Leader Award** which is aimed at paddlers taking on formal leadership responsibilities in benign, sheltered water environments and aims to support Leaders to run safe, quality, enjoyable trips based on their group's needs and aspirations.

The Paddlesport Leader Award is aimed at Leaders wanting to introduce others to the water and enable them to lead a variety of craft on a journey. The Leader can choose the craft from which they work and can look after others in both single discipline and mixed fleets. Paddlesport Leader training is NOT compulsory so candidates can cross check their requirements and opt for bespoke training opportunities. For example, private tuition, in-house training through your work place, working alongside/shadowing other Leaders, or conference/symposium workshops.

To aid the Leaders' journey towards assessment, there are a range of supportive resources available including the Paddlesport Leader Award Learning Experience Record, **Journey Planner** and **Self-Reflection template** or access to our

brand new Paddlesport Leader E-Learning

Choose the craft you lead in:



Racing



Touring



Stand up Paddleboards



Open Canoes



General & Sit on tops



Crew Boat



Full details can be found on the **British Canoeing website** or read our **Paddlesport Leader case study** to find out more.

PADDLESPORT LEADER AWARD CASE STUDY:

AMANDA WILSON & GRAHAM DICK

My husband, Graham and I, are relative newcomers to paddlesports and are also heading rapidly towards our fifties!

We first started kayaking about 3 ½ years ago, our first initiation being a week's "Introduction to White Water Kayaking" at Plas Menai. Our then 11 and 13 year old boys made it look easy and we swam repeatedly but we were hooked! We fell for that adrenaline buzz hook, line and sinker and headed home, purchasing the exact boats we had just spent the week in and went on a mission to try and find a new club that was prepared to take us and the boys out on the rivers.

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BISHOP AUCKLAND CANOE AND KAYAK CLUB HAD PAVED THE WAY TO A NOW FULL BLOWN FAMILY ADDICTION TO KAYAKING.... WE ARE INDEBTED TO THAT CLUB.

In March 2016, we had decided to take on more responsibility of running the club and started to make tentative steps to running regular, club river trips, lake paddles, etc. However, following a shoulder injury, I lost my confidence totally in a blink... all the hard work over the last 3 years gone. I was so upset. Our dreams of being able to take new paddlers to experience the thrill and sheer unique pleasure of running rivers and exploring lakes looked like a pipe dream. I wasn't happy!

It enters Matt Haydock, Glenmore Lodge Instructor, where our boys were mock students on his Advanced Water Endorsement. We liked his approach and felt he had a lot he could pass onto our boys and were very keen they both get professional coaching prior to heading off to University or wherever they end up. Matt took the boys for a weekend paddling of a lifetime, doing what they do best on the Tees, running from high force to and including low force. Matt didn't disappoint and at some stage during the weekend mentioned a new British Canoeing scheme called the Paddlesport Leader Award, for which he had just become qualified to assess and train.



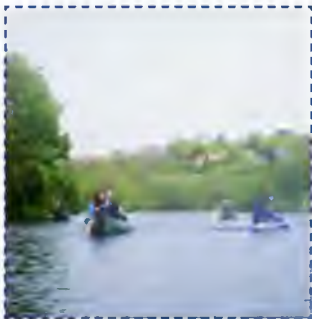
THE PADDLESPORT LEADER AWARD
SOUNDED DIFFERENT. IT SOUNDED LIKE
SOMETHING WE MAY BE ABLE TO DO
THAT WOULD HELP TO MOVE US ON BUT
ALSO ENABLE US TO GET OUR SCOUTS
AND CLUB MEMBERS ON THE WATER...

We have no pressing aspirations to run Grade 3s and 4s. We advertise the club as one aimed at total beginners of any age, gender or ability, welcome those with disabilities and welcome anyone who would like to experience this wonderful pastime. The Paddlesport Leader Award sounded perfect all round!

We booked our assessment at Glenmore Lodge and also decided to go for 2 days' training at the same time. Although strictly speaking with our previous experience we didn't really need this training, Graham and I are both firm believers that you can never get too much coaching, there's always more to learn. We weren't wrong or disappointed! On arrival at Glenmore Lodge on Good Friday, we turned to each other in disbelief to find out we had been allocated the Head of Paddlesports, Dave Rossetter for all 3 days... a mix of delight and nerves hit us both in equal measure. However, we needn't have worried, Dave was great!

THE TRAINING INVOLVED A GOOD MIXTURE OF "TOP TIPS", COACHING, ACCESS TO AND GENTLE PERSUASION TO EMBRACE THE ETHOS OF THE AWARD BY ABANDONING OUR VERY FAMILIAR & COMFORTABLE WHITE WATER KAYAKS...

and instead use a mixture of canoes, cross over sea kayaks and touring kayaks, which was great! We were also treated to the introduction of two stunning locations in and around Inverness and Aviemore – The River Spey into Loch Insh and the River Glass and Beaully & Aigas Gorge, both locations ideal for the remit of this award.



Assessment day came far too quickly, neither Graham or I are comfortable under assessment conditions, but we were well prepared and were provided the ideal candidates all of whom had travelled over the night before and were extremely excited to be part of the whole experience! They were a delight to lead, they had a little experience of paddling and were happy to try very different boats! Despite a couple of unplanned capsizes and the wind getting up on Loch Insh we both passed! We were so pleased and relieved it had been a very good day!

THE AWARD SUITS OUR STYLES OF LEARNING AND WE ARE ALREADY USING THE AWARD...

We have a club trip organised on the lower section of the River Tees, near Stockton this coming weekend. We already have 10 signed up, a family with youngish children, all with limited outside paddling experience, two new members who have lost some confidence and just want to ease themselves back into paddling, a couple new to canoeing and a chap who is looking to find his river legs, slowly – looks like there may well be an appetite out there for this kind of paddling, not a bad first event since qualifying!

Above all this award allows Graham and I to get out there, with confidence, independently and legally introduce a host of prospective new paddlers to the great outdoors. What's not to like about it!

Jeff Allen:

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GUIDE





I always wake early on expedition, I like to sit and meditate for a while. The background noise of a camp coming to life, is observed remotely, zips un-zipping as clients exit the warmth of their sleeping bags, the clink of a cook pot and whoosh of a camp stove bursting into flame all tell me stories of who is up and about.



I exit my tent and go straight to the fire to reignite any embers, a few gentle puffs and the grey, seemingly lifeless coal, brightens into an orange glow, threatening to singe the hairs of my beard

The open fire, which last night gave warmth as well as distraction, where my group got to know each other and layers of each individuals' personality started to melt away in front of the flames. An open fire has so many uses, this wilderness TV is an essential ingredient on any expedition. I often see modern man as being like an onion, a protective husk on the outside, but beneath are layers and layers of experience. Expeditions help to remove this outer husk and let the real person free. My job as a Guide is to provide protection to this exposure, my reward is to witness it. It's the greatest of privileges my job has allowed me

Today we are paddling around the outside of Culross Island. I shall also guide and protect my group from any threats that the environment may have in store. It's three days since I last had a weather report but my

barometer is holding steady and skies are crystal blue. I listen to my clients chat to each other about their experiences so far

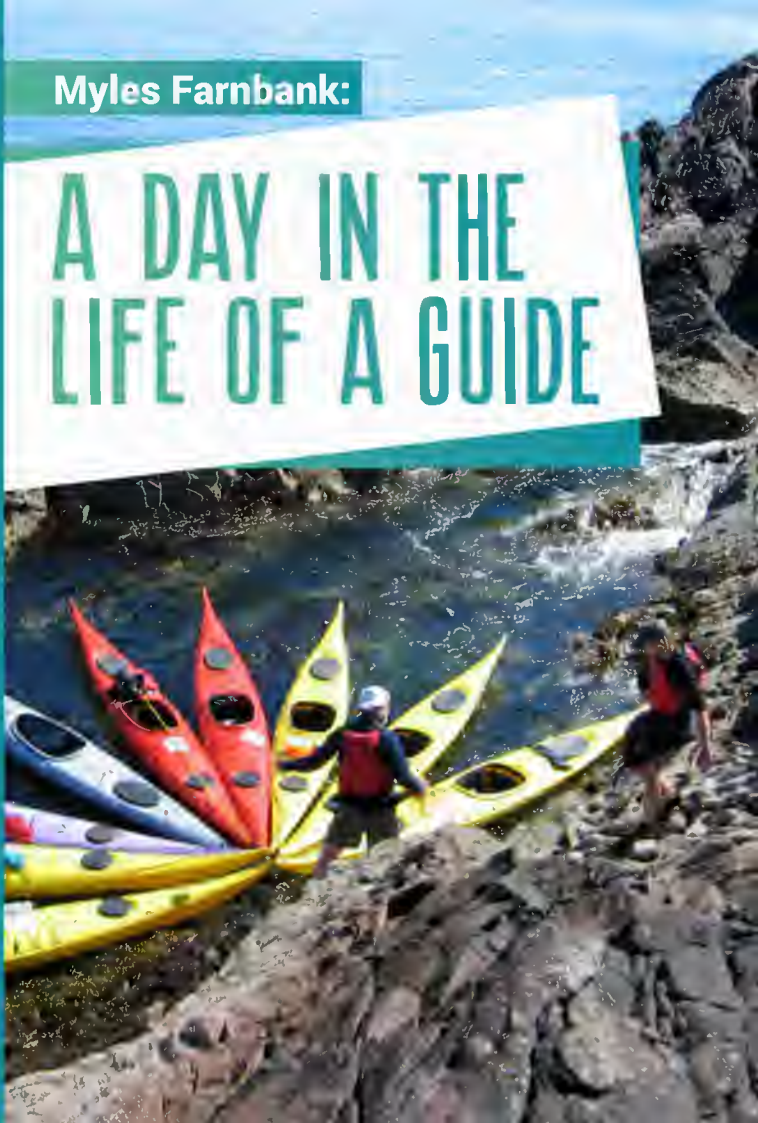
Last night we had a small black bear scamper around the outskirts of our camp, attracted by the smells of food from afar no doubt. Tonight we camp below the grandeur of a salt water glacier, hopefully we will witness Humpbacks as they explore the sound for food. I'm proud to be a wilderness guide, I'm part sea kayak leader, part councillor, I'm a fisherman and chef 'cord en Naturel', I'm a first aider and I'm a facilitator of amazing experiences, I have the best job in the world.

The new British Canoeing Guide scheme is designed to open doors into the world of guiding. Its concept of introducing potential guides to the deeper subjects of leadership, camp craft, environmental concerns and customer care are all there to encourage leaders to explore at their own speed, some of the essential ingredients of being able to guide others through a variety of environments, the common theme of water being the medium by which we travel. Under the mentorship of an experienced Guide, the aspirant Guide will follow initial direction backed up by their own intuition and explore all subjects deeply.

Having been introduced to the essentials, they are free to further develop their knowledge and skills as required and when they feel ready, return for advice and acknowledgement to their mentor, to share the knowledge and experiences before moving on to becoming a fully fledged British Canoeing Guide.

Myles Farnbank:

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GUIDE





In the past, Guides did little more than make sure their party didn't get lost and perhaps might have cooked some food. An adventure travel guide today has to be so much more! Adventure Travel is growing hugely both in the UK and around the world.



Clients have high expectations of what their Guide will provide in terms of skills and services. As well as looking after their every need, including those sometimes left unexpressed, Guides are expected to be destination and activity experts and deliver a 5 star service.

I have been lucky enough to guide sea kayak and canoe trips from Greenland to Antarctica and many places in-between. This has required many different skills, knowledge and experience, as well as good communication and buckets of empathy.

"To be a guide you've got to be an expert in lots of different things: wildlife, culture, history, politics, you name it. You have to be a diplomat, a nanny, a psychiatrist, a paramedic, a cheerleader, you've got to

be all sorts of things. You've got to be super-human." So apart from issuing guides superhero suits and capes, how do we prepare them to deliver this 5 star service?

The range of skills, training and qualifications for adventure travel guides around the world varies dramatically. In the UK, there is a history of high quality training for outdoor leaders but this has focused on technical, safety and medical issues for the most part.

British Canoeing has a great pedigree in creating qualifications and training for Paddlesport coaches and leaders. These are recognised around the world as benchmarks of good practice. British Canoeing has recently launched the British Canoeing Guide Scheme which looks to support the Paddlesport Guide working in the commercial adventure travel sector. The Guide Scheme recognises experience and training that many Leaders already possess.

As guides we should aspire to provide 'trips of a lifetime'. Furthermore, with good training, careful thought and practice, we have the potential to provide experiences that could be truly transformational, maybe even changing peoples lives.

The British Canoeing Guide Scheme is a great step towards this goal. So now it seems at least some of the super hero outfits provided for might have the British Canoeing logo on them!

Performance Update

British Canoeing awarded international slalom events for 2019 and 2020

British Canoeing has been awarded an ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup event for 2019 and in the following year the 2020 ECA Canoe Slalom European Championships.

Both events will be held at the Lee Valley White Water Centre, the venue which hosted the slalom competitions at the London 2012 Olympic Games where Team GB claimed gold and silver medals in the men's C2 slalom and the 2015 ICF Canoe Slalom World Championships



Click here

to view the full details of the events on our website



British Canoeing awarded World Freestyle Championships



British Canoeing has been awarded the ICF World Freestyle Championships set to be held in August and September 2021.

The event will be hosted at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottinghamshire and it is expected that around 300 of the world's best freestyle paddlers will descend on the site to compete for the right to be called World Champion.



Click here

to view the full details of the event on our website

Paralympic Champion Anne Dickins goes out on a high



Paralympic and World champion Anne Dickins MBE called time on her incredible journey from volunteer to Paracanoe gold medallist in just four years.

However the Surrey based 50 year-old and mum of two, vows she will continue to use the experience to inspire other people to step up and achieve their dreams

Anne was Paracanoe's third gold medallist at Rio 2016, winning the single kayak 200m in the KL3 classification and will also be remembered for creating another piece of history, notching up ParalympicsGB's 100th medal of the Games.



Click here

to read the full story on our website.

Paul Ratcliffe appointed as performance director for British Canoeing

British Canoeing has announced that Paul Ratcliffe has been appointed as performance director of the Olympic and Paralympic performance programme, succeeding John Anderson MBE who has led the programme to medal success in each of the last five Olympic cycles.



Click here

to read the full story on our website.

Disciplines update

British Canoe Slalom Teams Confirmed After First Class Selection Event



After one of the most competitive ever British Selection Trials at Lee Valley White Water Centre, the International Panel have now confirmed the athletes selected for the British Senior, U23 and Junior Teams for the 2017 international season

The trials were summed up by outgoing Head Coach and recently announced Performance Director, Paul

Ratliffe, as the "most brutal, most exciting, most competitive" selection trials ever

Congratulations to everyone who has been named below and in line with the selection policy a list of reserves have also been named and will compete at identified competitions



Click here
for the
 Squad lists



You can find
an overview of
the selection
trial **here**

British Canoeing sprint squads confirmed for World Cup series

Experienced Olympians, Liam Heath, Jon Schofield, Lani Belcher, Angela Hannah, Rebeka Simon and Jess Walker are all named in the squad alongside a strong group of developing young athletes.

Following the same competition plan as in previous years, Olympic men's K1 200m Champion, Liam Heath, will compete in the second and third World Cup Cups, at Szeged, Hungary (26-28 May) and Belgrade, Serbia (2-4 June)

World Cup 2 will be the first time Heath competes internationally as Olympic Champion, and he's looking forward to being back in action.



Wildwater Team Announcement

The Wildwater Committee have now officially announced the team for the Europeans, Senior World Cups, Under 23's and the Junior team. The coaching team and the selection committee were impressed by the high level of competition for this years teams and the obvious rise in standards each year.

The committee are delighted to be able to select a national team that will be both competitive and striving to improve.



Charlotte Henshaw swaps her goggles for a paddle as she joins paracanoe

On the back of her success in Rio, Henshaw has been identified by British Canoeing and is currently a member of the Talent Confirmation Programme.

Henshaw has competed in swimming for almost a decade and has won medals at every level of competition including a silver and bronze at the Paralympics.



Charlotte Henshaw Twitter



Paracanoe squad in record breaking form at May National Regatta



British Canoeing's paracanoe squad were in blistering form at the May Regatta at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham.

Rio bronze medallist Nick Beighton was first to set a new national course record for the men's KL2 class with an impressive time of 44.32. Also in the KL2 Dave Phillipson, who has recently transferred from wheelchair tennis to paracanoe, recorded a personal best time of 47.60.

In the next race it was Ian Marsden's turn to set a national course record. The Stoke-on-Trent based

athlete setting a new record time of 50.09 in the men's KL1. In the men's KL3 Jonny Young and Robert Oliver shared the spoils, by both taking a victory.

In the women's KL2 class Paralympic and World Champion Emma Wiggs produced two strong performances to finish ahead of Nikki Paterson and talent transfer athlete Charlotte Henshaw and fellow Paralympic Champion Jeanette Chippington showed consistent form in the women's KL1.



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everyone!

STEVE BACKSHALL JOINS BRITISH CANOEING TO LAUNCH NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK

STEVE BACKSHALL JOINED BRITISH CANOEING AT LEE VALLEY WHITE WATER CENTRE IN MAY TO LAUNCH THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK

The Adventurer and TV presenter is a lifelong paddler, having taken up canoeing in the scouts as a youngster and is joining National Go Canoeing Week as an official ambassador.

“ I'd encourage everyone to get out on the water this half term for National Go Canoeing Week.

Canoeing is a great activity for everyone regardless of age and ability. There is a paddlesport for everyone, from white water rafting to stand up paddle boarding. You can pack a picnic and the whole family into a Canadian canoe and have **your own big adventure**. Or pop along to your **local club or centre** to find a beginners session. It doesn't cost much to get involved but **the benefits are fantastic**.

I'd urge everyone to get on the water, just make sure you log your miles and you could win a great prize. ”

Steve Backshall





Turn to page 43 to read our interview with him to find out about how he got into paddling, how kayaking saved his life, the surprising items he takes with him on every adventure and who he would like to be stuck in a boat with!



AS PART OF THE LAUNCH EVENT 3 LUCKY GO CANOEING FANS AND THEIR FRIENDS WON THE CHANCE TO TAKE ON THE WHITE WATER COURSE AND EMBARK ON A RAFTING ADVENTURE WITH STEVE!

You can read more about how they got on on page 64 but here's some photos from the day!

Congratulations to Caroline, Luther and Sarah!



HAVING JUST COMPLETED THE EPIC DEVIZES - WESTMINSTER WITH HIS WIFE HELEN, AND ACHIEVED HIS LIFETIME AMBITION OF PADDLING THE PREVIOUSLY UNEXPLORED BALIEM RIVER IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA, WE CAUGHT UP WITH STEVE TO FIND OUT WHY HE LOVES PADDLING, WHAT'S IN HIS KIT LIST WHEN HEADING OUT ON A BIG ADVENTURE AND HOW HE WILL BE CLOCKING UP THE MILES DURING NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK.

Why do you think people should pick up a paddle this National Go Canoeing Week?

- **Fitness** - all forms of paddlesport offer you the potential if you want it to get fit and to exercise, but you don't necessarily need to get very fit.
- **Psychological well-being** - being outside in beautiful wild places is just fantastic!
- **Friendship and teamwork** - Paddling an open canoe or double kayak you need to be in sync with your friend who's in the boat with you and you need to be watching each other's backs. That's a really good bonding experience and a great way of maintaining friendships!
- There is also the opportunity to raise money for charity and win some prizes so they are all good reasons to get involved

When you're heading out on your big adventure, what is the top of your kit list and what must have items do you have to have with you?

Nowadays I usually have a rule of one luxury item so I would say I strip back all of my kit, I have the lightest sleeping bag, the lightest bivvy bag I possibly can, and then I make sure I add something like a pate, or nice biscuits, or perhaps a little hip flask with a nip of single malt scotch

What will you be doing this National Go Canoeing Week?

I'm going to make sure I log onto to the website to clock all the miles I paddle that week. I think everyone should do the same because we have a target of 30,000 miles and that would be brilliant to reach!



OUT OF THE **RAT RACE** AND INTO THE **Wilderness**

Interview with Steve Backshall by Laura Peberday



STEVE BACKSHALL SHARES ALL ABOUT HIS LOVE OF PADDLING, HIS MOST TREASURED EXPEDITIONS, AND HOW KAYAKING SAVED HIM WHEN HE WAS TOLD HE WOULD NEVER WALK PROPERLY AGAIN.

From paddling what he describes as some of the most magnificent places on earth, to an encounter with the infamous Sid the angry swan on the Thames, it's fair to say Steve Backshall has experienced more than his fair share of paddling adventures and certainly knows his way around the water. He recently brought paddling to the public spotlight when he took on the 125 mile Devizes to Westminster canoe marathon with his wife, two-time Olympic gold medallist Helen Glover, who swapped her oars and rowing boat for paddles and a K2 kayak, a move which saw the duo crowned the fastest mixed pair in the race.

Since then Helen has become a paddling convert and the couple have plenty more big adventures planned for National Go Canoeing Week and beyond...

So what sparked Steve's love for paddling in the first place? Why does he choose to paddle every day? And what's top of his paddling bucket list? We find out...

>>







Your most recent paddling challenge was the Devizes to Westminster race, which you took on with your wife Helen to raise money for charity, how would you describe that experience?

The DW is a very achievable goal even to someone who has never paddled before and it's growing year by year. It has a little bit of everything, you get tears, sweat, blood, frustration; the feeling that you just cannot carry on and finish, and then absolute elation when you cross the line. It's one of the greatest endurance events in the world and it's right here in tame old England.

Let's go right back to the beginning, how did you first ever get into paddling?

I have photos of me aged six canoeing for the first time but I didn't really get into it until I was about 11 or 12-years-old in the Scouts. I started paddling to get my Duke of Edinburgh Award so I did all of my first expeditions in a kayak. Through scouting I acquired all the skills you need to do a reasonable white water expedition, and still use all of those skills - even now!

Some of my biggest and most treasured expeditions have been in a kayak - making the first descent of white water rivers in the Himalayas, and being able to

do big crossings and circumnavigations in a sea kayak. It's something I hope to be doing until I'm in my 90's

You have 24 hours to go on an ultimate paddling adventure, where would you go?

I would go back to Bhutan, I was lucky enough to be on the first ever descent of this ridiculously stunning white water river. It was challenging and exciting, and staggeringly beautiful. We were paddling into gorges with precipitous rock faces on either side knowing we were the first people ever to go there. I will always treasure that and would go back in a heartbeat.

You've mentioned a few of your most treasured expeditions, is there anywhere on your paddling bucket list you haven't visited yet?

There really is! After doing the DW with Helen we got talking and started thinking about other paddling races we could do. There's the Dus1 in South Africa that we would love to do, but because it's got quite a lot of white water in a tippy boat we would need to do a lot of training, but it's definitely on our wish list. The Yukon 1000 is the biggie, that's the monster race and we would love to go and do that too.

>>

” I use PADDLING as a way to WATCH WILDLIFE, a way to GET FIT, a way to GET OUT OF THE RAT RACE and INTO THE WILDERNESS, because to me IT IS JUST THE PASSPORT TO a WHOLE OTHER WORLD. “



>>

I think Alaska is probably my favourite place in the whole world to kayak. I'm heading out there next month with Helen and it's something I would love to do with her, so hopefully we will get the chance.

What about your favourite places to paddle closer to home in the UK?

In the UK my favourite place to kayak is the West Coast of Scotland. Around the Knoydart Peninsula, Skye, Muck, Rum and Eigg. All of these little islands have fabulously stunning geology and incredible wildlife. The sea kayak allows you to go to places that nobody else can go to. You can be pulling up on a white sand beach you have entirely to yourself, cooking mussels around a driftwood fire at night and feel like you are in the back end of nowhere. Nobody else can go there, even the people in the flash sailing yachts can't get into some of those coves, but every single one of those is accessible to you if you have a sea kayak.

How many times a week do you hit the water?

If I'm in this country I paddle every day. A lot of the time that's flat water kayaking because it's the easiest for me to do and probably the best exercise; but there's nothing I enjoy more than packing up the sea kayak, pushing it out to shore and just going. Although you have a rough idea of where you'd like to go, you just have to let the tides, the currents and the winds to a certain extent dictate what you're going to do.

I love that freedom, it's a bit like when you're a kid and you get your first bike, and all of a sudden it is a pathway to an exciting future of possibilities that seem to be limitless - well the kayak as always done the same thing for me.

So far you've mentioned whitewater, flatwater and sea kayaking, do you have a favourite discipline?

I think I am very much a generalist. I've never tried to excel at any one discipline at any sport. What I like best about paddling is that there are so many different disciplines. Yesterday morning I got up and went stand

up paddleboarding with my wife, we were looking at all the nesting birds in our local area. This afternoon I am going out in a whitewater raft and a whitewater kayak, and in a few days time I am going off on a sea kayaking expedition in Cornwall. So all in one week you've done things which could not be more different, yet they are all part of the one same sport.

You said you go paddling to look at local wildlife, we've also seen your encounter with Sid the Swan on the Thames. What advice do you have for paddlers who want to observe wildlife on the water but are worried about disturbing it?

As a conservationist and someone who loves wildlife first and foremost, I believe that canoes and stand up paddleboards are the best way to watch wildlife bar none.

You'll notice when you're on the water that most water birds are much more accepting of you in a boat like a canoe than they would be in any motorised boat, or on land and on foot.

It's their environment so as long as you're moving relatively quietly and easily, and not making too much noise they can be very accepting of you. If you see any signs of stress, for example a bird trying to get away from you, hold your ground and slowly move away. Don't push in close, there is no need too. Use your common sense and watch the signs of bad body language from the animals you're observing.

There's another reason paddlesports mean so much to you, can you tell us how you used kayaking as a form of rehab after a serious injury?

After a near fatal climbing accident in 2009 I was told I would never walk properly again after breaking my back in two places and destroying my left ankle. A friend got me into flat water kayaking as a way of exercising; physically it was really useful for the rehabilitation of my spine, but it also gave me the psychological vent that I needed. It enabled me to go to places where I could just vent and let rip.



To hear more from
Steve Backshall
throughout National
Go Canoeing Week
head to our website or
social media channels!



NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK

THE BIG ADVENTURE

BRITISH
CANOEING

JOIN IN WITH
NATIONAL GO CANOEING
WEEK AND BE A PART OF
THE BIG ADVENTURE!



Fun events and mileage
challenges nationwide!

Whether it's your
first venture onto
the water, or if you're
a regular paddler,
we want you to get
involved!

27TH MAY
— TO —
4TH JUNE

Show us your smile
on the water!

Fantastic prizes
up for grabs!

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BE A WEBSITE STAR THIS NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK!

This National Go Canoeing Week you can be a star of the show! When you register your miles with us there is also the opportunity to upload a picture of you on the water.

We will be choosing some of your pictures, during and after the week, to feature on the homepage of the National Go Canoeing Week website. If you upload a picture you will also be automatically entered into our photo competition to be in with a chance of winning a GoPro Camera!



Get registering now and grab your little piece of fame!

SIAN SYKES - THE STORY BEHIND THE POSTER

NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK

www.britishcanoeing.org.uk



THE THEME FOR THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK (27TH MAY - 4TH JUNE) IS THE BIG ADVENTURE, SO, WHEN WE WERE CHOOSING PICTURES TO GO ON THE POSTER, WE LOOKED FOR IMAGES WHICH SUMMED THIS UP.

Sian Sykes runs her own paddle boarding adventure company in Wales and was the first person to complete our Three Lakes Challenge and Trent Loop Challenge route on a paddle board.

An image of Sian, on one of her adventures, doing what she loves, seemed the perfect fit for our poster. Here Sian tells us how she carved her route to an adventurous lifestyle.

I was so exhilarated in that picture. It was taken at Holyhead Harbour on my completion of the first SUP circumnavigation of Anglesey. The journey had taken me five days and took in 120 km of stunning coastline.

Living in Anglesey has given me a great love of the Welsh coast and countryside. That trip gave me the opportunity to raise money for The North Wales Wildlife Trust & Surfers Against Sewage as well as providing me with a good challenge.

>>





I've always been passionate about adventures. It all stemmed from my first wild camping trip, at six weeks old, with my mother, to a beautiful spot near Portmeirion. When I was growing up we would go there for family holidays filled with adventure, with wild swimming in the sea, climbing trees, exploring the gwyllt and hiking up mountains. I was such a water baby and drawn to the water.

I never knew when I was growing up you could make a career in the outdoors, so ended up working in London, in creative media. Working long hours, some days 18 hours! I started to miss home and longed to be back by the sea, mountains and nature. That's when I decided I wanted a better quality of life. I moved back home, retrained and gained my outdoor qualifications, now I run an outdoor business, **Psyched Paddleboarding**. I guide people paddleboarding to beautiful places, here in the UK and abroad, linking hiking to remote mountain lakes and sea journeys. Basically I love doing what I do now, it's my real passion. I love inspiring others to get outside.

My first experience of SUP was when some friends invited me to join them to cross England, along the canals, on paddleboards. I joined them from Bristol to Reading and loved every minute of the adventure.

I enjoyed the freedom, being close to water and reconnecting with nature. We camped in beautiful woodland forest surrounded by wild garlic, saw kingfishers and deer and the most amazing sunrises and sunsets. When I returned, I jumped on an ASI (Academy of Surfing Instructors) course in Portugal to get my qualifications and I changed my whole outdoor business around it!



Paddleboarding gives me solitude, freedom to take time out from the hectic pace of life and time away from technology. To be able to pause, be present in the moment and experience wonderful things, such as seeing porpoise enjoying the tidal race, hanging out with inquisitive seals, watching fish leap, seeing elegant jellyfish float by and an abundance of bird life. Every time I go for a SUP on the sea, lake, canal or river, I have a totally different experience. I enjoy the wild elements and paddling in all conditions improves my skills and experience. I am really wanting to push myself to see how far I can take SUP.

My passion for educating and inspiring others about environmental issues sees me actively involved with the Wildlife Trust in Wales, and a Regional Rep on Anglesey for Surfers Against Sewage. It's crucial we protect our beautiful oceans, beaches, birds and wildlife from pollution, in order for others to enjoy them in the future.

National Go Canoeing Week is a fantastic opportunity for paddlers old and new to be involved in a national campaign. I would encourage everyone to get out on the water and appreciate the unique view of nature that being in a boat or on a SUP can bring. I will be registering my miles during the week, make sure you do too!



Click here

To learn more about National Go Canoeing Week how you can get involved and to register your miles



THE PADDLERS GUIDE TO UV PROTECTION

By Cotswold Outdoor



Brilliant sunny days filled with adventure are what we long for. But the bright summer months have a hidden danger. Whether you're relaxing on a local river or heading abroad for a far flung adventure, failing to prepare for the strong sunlight can put a serious downer on your day.

We take a look at some of the best ways to minimise your exposure to the sun so you can focus on what's really important. Having fun!



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1. Invest In Your Sunglasses

Make sure you choose a pair of sunglasses that exclude 100% of UV light. Chances are that £2 pair from the market stall aren't up to the job. Paddlers in particular should consider investing in polarised lenses. Polarised lenses significantly reduce glare, an absolute lifesaver for sunny days on the water.

2. Don't Forget A Hat

Protecting our sensitive scalps from the beaming sun can be a challenge. A wide brimmed hat offers great coverage for the head and neck, but if you hate loose headgear then you could use a Buff or bandanna to keep the harsh rays at bay.

3. Take Water-Resistant Sun Cream

Okay so this one might sound obvious, but many forget that you need to reapply sun cream throughout the day. Don't forget to top up every few hours, especially if you're in a high spray area, or dip into the water for a refreshing swim.

4. Use UV Protective Clothing

The latest fabric technologies incorporate UV protection, weaving it into their clothing or applying a special UV treatment or dye. From shirts to shorts, hats and trousers, brands like Craghoppers, Ayacucho, and Helly Hansen have created unique UV protection ranges, so you can cover up in comfort and style.

5. Think About A Pair Gloves

We're not talking about unpacking your winter mitts, but a lightweight pair of cycling gloves can help protect your hands from sunburn. Sun cream will wash off all too easily, especially if you're regularly getting your hands wet.

If you need any more advice about protecting yourself from UV on or off the water, just ask the experts in your local Cotswold Outdoor store. Or you can explore our entire range of sunglasses, UV protective clothing, and sun cream online at cotswoldoutdoor.com.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU?

Did you know that the number of households owning a canoe or kayak in the UK is at an all time high?

As part of National Go Canoeing Week we are speaking to people who are new to a paddlesport discipline or trying it for the first time to demonstrate that there really is something for everyone! No matter how late (or early) you start.

Open Canoeing

Looking for a new challenge and intrigued by her neighbours love for canoeing in his open boat, Pip Piper decided to give it a try and hasn't looked back.

“ I started canoeing in October 2016 and the initial one hour paddles would leave me exhausted. Now I'm regularly completing five hour trips and proud to say I have become a competent paddler. ”

Turn to page 60 to read about what inspired Pip to take up canoeing for the first time and her latest challenge, paddling a stretch of the Caledonian Canal



More people are taking to the water than ever before with over 1.5 million of us taking part in canoeing over the last 12 months in the UK. (Find out more about the exciting research here)

THE NUMBER

OF FEMALES
PARTICIPATING
IN CANOEING
HAS RISEN BY

75%

IN THE LAST 10 YEARS AND NOW REPRESENTS 42% OF ALL PARTICIPANTS

THERE HAS BEEN A

40%

INCREASE
IN PEOPLE
AGED 55+
TAKING PART

IN CANOEING

Kayaking

At just two years old it's fair to say that Jojo has been paddling before he could talk.

00 The only way we could get Jojo to sleep was to put him in the bottom of our boat says his mum Christina

And now

Jojo is one of British Canoeing's youngest members and regularly paddles alone in his own kayak alongside his mum and dad, who are both coaches at Holme Pierrepont Canoe Club and Trent Lock Scout Activity Centre.

Turn to page 62 to find out more about Jojo's paddling journey so far



White water rafting

Our Go Canoeing competition winners were all trying white water rafting for the first time so we thought it would be the perfect opportunity to grill them on their experiences hitting the white water.

Turn to page 64 to read all about how they got on, and how one winners fear of white water is conquered!

Head to our website or social media channels over the coming weeks as we will be covering more disciplines.

Will you be trying a new discipline this National Go Canoeing Week? Let us know!

There are over 10 different paddlesport disciplines!

OPEN CANOEING

Curious and looking for a new challenge Pip Piper decided to give canoeing a go after injury prohibited her from running and rowing. Taking to the water in an open canoe with her paddling enthusiast neighbour last October, Pip hasn't looked back and is even taking on her first canoe challenge to raise money for charity.

Words Pip Piper:

I neglected exercise for many years being preoccupied with family and career. Like many women I just got heavier, less fit and less confident about my own physical strength. As a student I gained a taste for rowing, and, in 2010 at the age of 52 I was motivated to take it up again.

When I finally retired last summer I was looking forward to engaging more fully in sport so I could enjoy myself and peg back the damage of years of inactivity. Determined to 'crack on with the plan' I started running again and loved it. In June 2016 I fell down some steps and twisted my ankle, and, really stupidly, having said I would go for a run went out and ran four miles on an already painful and swollen foot. It was a mistake, and one that cost me both my running and rowing ambitions.

By early autumn 2016, at the age of 58, I felt even more rudderless and decidedly twitchy. My neighbour Ian Styles had, with his son Michael recently completed a canoe trip raising money to combat breast cancer. I was intrigued – and envious – I wanted a challenge, a cause that would give me the opportunity to exercise and to achieve something I had never done before. When Ian agreed to take me out in the canoe, I was delighted. I knew I was going to love canoeing before I even got in the boat.

My first efforts must have been more than a little frustrating for Ian. My upper body strength was very poor and although I was used to being in boats, canoeing is very different to rowing so I was pretty useless.

Where am I now? I started canoeing in October 2016. We started out with a half hour paddle up the Bridgwater-Taunton Canal and half an hour back.

This usually resulted in me having to go for a lie down whilst my husband Tony bought me a much needed cup of tea. At the time of writing, (April 2017) I am regularly completing five hour paddles! I was delighted when Ian and Michael invited me to participate in their next adventure, paddling the Caledonian Canal (and back) to fund raise for Breast Cancer Now.

I am proud to say I may have become a competent paddler – although I still sometimes forget to hold on to the painter when I get out of the boat and have on a few occasions watched in dismay as the canoe has drifted down the stream!

Canoeing is a fantastic sport at any age, but for a women of advancing years and limited starting fitness it is fantastic as it doesn't put any strain on the knee or ankle joints!

I would recommend canoeing to anyone. You may not be lucky enough to live next door to an consummate enthusiast with his own boat and a determination to paddle come-what-may, but there are lots of clubs, and in my experience paddlers are a pretty cheerful and welcoming bunch.



I KNEW I WAS GOING TO
LOVE CANOEING BEFORE
I EVEN GOT IN THE BOAT





You can follow Joseph's adventures on the water by liking his Facebook page



KAYAKING

Joseph was introduced to the water as a baby. He regularly accompanies his parents, who are paddlesport coaches on trips around the Midlands, and got his first kayak for Christmas aged just 2 years old! We spoke to Jojo's mum Christina, to find out about his paddling experiences so far and for her tips on introducing young children to the water for the first time.

JoJo has had a passion for paddling since he could crawl, who introducing him to paddling in the first place?

Myself and his daddy are both paddlesports coaches at Holme Pierrepont Canoe Club and Trent Lock Scout Activity Centre; so we are always taking him with us on the water and he has always been surrounded by paddling kit. Even at home he will be trying on paddle kit and pretending he is kayaking down the course.

How old was JoJo when he began paddling by himself?

He was in a boat at 8 weeks old in the bottom of our canoe and got into his own kayak at 2 years old during a trip on the Nottingham Canal. He got his first kayak for Christmas last year and loves to paddle it on the pool, lake and river.

How often does Jojo hit the water?

He's a regular paddler at HPPCC (every Saturday) and when we're not at the club he would normally be paddling at the scout centre or participating on trips

What are other people's reactions when they see someone so young paddling in their own boat?

People like to point and watch especially other children and parents who have spotted him on the lake or river. He looks really tiny compared to the other children in the club so he stands out.

What trips, adventures and challenges has Jojo competed already, and does he have

any others on his paddling bucket list?

He has completed various trips with us in canoes on different rivers, lakes and canals. Recently we paddled with the Wooden Canoe Heritage Association on the river soar. Joseph helped crew a 12 person wooden canoe and really enjoyed using the locks and feeling part of the group.

He would love to have a go at stand up paddle boarding just like one of our paddling friends who does it on the course at Holme Pierrepont. He would also like to have a go at some moving water in a dynamic duo with his daddy. He loves watching the freestyle paddlers too which I think will be what he wants to do when he is a little bit bigger

Do you have any tips and advice for families with young children who may be looking to introduce them to the water?

Join a club!

Our club HPPCC now accept any age as long as under 8s are accompanied by an adult so I'm sure other clubs must be following suit and offering similar - just make sure they are wrapped up warm for the colder months. There is plenty of smaller kit coming onto the market so kitting up children as small as Joseph is getting easier.

Make sure the child is getting water confidence in the swimming pool as this will help with any inhibitions or worry about capsizing. Joseph can swim in a buoyancy aid in the swimming pool which gives us peace of mind and boosts his confidence in a boat.

WHITE WATER RAFTING

White Water Rafting provides you with the excitement and challenge of white water.

It emerged following the Second World War when enterprising adventurers in America realised that they could take unwanted inflatable rubber pontoons and use them as a means of descending some of the country's most challenging white water.

Our competition winners took to the Olympic course at Lee Valley to experience the thrills, spills and adrenaline pumping challenge of rafting and were lucky enough to spend their first time on the rapids with adventurer Steve Backshall who famously tackled some seriously impressive white water in his latest TV series 'Down the Mighty River'

We asked some of our winners what they thought of the experience and whether it has inspired them to take on another paddling adventure ...



Caroline

“ Awesome day .. great to meet Steve Backshall. Proud to be part of the launch of National Go Canoeing Week Feeling Inspired to go out and have #thebigadventure, especially as I seem to have overcome my fear of white water. I laughed all day! ”

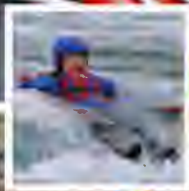
Sarah

“ Absolutely loved my first time rafting and it definitely won't be my last!

It has inspired me to get into paddlesport adventures and I have already been stand up paddleboarding since. ”

Chris

“ I have never tried white water rafting or any type of paddlesport before and didn't know what to expect It was a great adrenalin pumping experience and something I will definitely be looking to do again! ”



Members Adventures!

Where has your
padding taken you?

1
Dee Paterson and Alex Edwards sea Laying in Ha Long Bay, in north east Vietnam, exploring coves and caves along with spotting monkeys on the cliffs



2
Anne Usher (née Dickens) enjoying retirement by paddling for fun in a crater lake of a (Thankfully) dormant volcano in Nicaragua Lake Apoyo near Granada



3
Kim, Adam and other British Canoeing slalom athletes enjoy winter training in Al Ain at the Wadi Adventure centre (UAE)

Since we launched our members adventures map at the start of the year we have been flooded with pictures of your paddling adventures! From some of our favourite paddling spots right here in the UK right the way over to Australia and New Zealand, down the Zambezi river, across the Greek Islands and just about everywhere in between, British Canoeing members and athletes are certainly padding their way around the globe

Here's a few of our favourite pictures so far!



4
Dom Harness paddling the River Ouse in St Neots (UK)



10
Mike Ryder coaching paddling the Oamaru Coast



Joe Clarke trying his hand at stand up paddleboarding in New Zealand



Chris Bran and Glenn Richards working with the team at Savage Wilderness, Nairobi



5

Louise Davies kayaking at Hanga Falls



6

Matt Skuse open boating in Norway



7

Iake Berger and Family paddling the Oxford canal with their new British Canoeing membership!

The Trent Loop Challenge Takes Off!

Since the launch of our newest challenge, the Trent Loop, last August we have had a great variety of paddlers taking it on.

Sue Walters kicked things off almost immediately by completing the route, on her own, in five hours. Sue even managed to stop and go to the shops on her journey!

Sian Sykes became the first person to get around the loop on a stand up paddleboard in October. Sian decided to go around the route in reverse and thoroughly enjoyed her time on the water.

In February this year three canoeists, who know each other through the Song of the Paddle

website and forum, headed to Nottingham to conquer the route. They had a great day and knocked the fastest completion time down to four hours eighteen minutes.

A few other reports of completion times were sent to us but it has been in the last few months that stories have really started to flood in. With the first large group taking on the loop in March.

Slea Paddlers are always enthusiastic about completing our Challenge Routes. This year they have decided to get as many of their paddlers as possible to attempt all of our challenge routes throughout the year. The Trent Loop kicked off this ambition in style, with sixteen of them getting around in five hours forty-five minutes.



William Horsley and his son Cadey impressed us all last year when they completed the Three Lakes Challenge. This year they have completed their challenge route haul, along with Cadey's friend Jack. At eleven and nine years respectively, Cadey and Jack are amongst the youngest people to complete our challenge routes.

Competition for being top of the Challenge Leaderboard is really hotting up. Richard and Glyn Sainsbury are currently training to take on our Three Lakes Challenge this summer. Over the Easter break they decided to use the Trent Loop as a training exercise. Richard has been modifying their canoe in preparation for the big event and this gave them a chance to try it out.

The two brothers managed to knock a whopping one hour off the previous fastest completion time and, at time of going to press, the time to beat is three hours eighteen minutes.

The Trent Loop Challenge is not to be underestimated. It can be done as a leisurely day out on river and canal but with three portages and at almost fourteen miles in length (longer than we originally thought it was) it's no mean feat!

Over the summer months we are expecting many more stories and completion times to come in. If you are planning to take on the Trent Loop, or if you already have, don't forget to let us know and get your name on the leaderboard.



Another travel diary we loved was Teresa Yonge's, who last summer took off on a solo adventure down the Waveney river. You can read some of her trip highlights below!

Words and photographs by Teresa Yonge



Day 1:

Late August last summer the weather was perfect and I set off during the mid afternoon down this interesting river, which is on the border of Norfolk and Suffolk. As I set off the river soon opened up and got easier to navigate, passing through farmland with cows watching me go by whilst gently grazing. The sky was a beautiful blue and I was content and happy to be on my way - with everything I needed loaded up in my 13 foot open Canadian canoe.

My first stop was at the double tunnelled Billingford Guaging Station. No tent was needed tonight! A perfect nights sleep with beautiful stars across the sky and the sound of water rushing past just a few feet away.

Day 2:

I woke up to a stunning sunrise and waded down the river. It was so quiet, calm and still that I sat on the bank for hours, watching the mist disappear as the sun rose into the sky.

After passing through Hoxone Weir I found myself stuck by trees obstructing my way. One huge tree was blocking the river so I climbed over it whilst I guided the canoe. A group of lads suddenly appeared and offered me their help further down the river with their help they became team work for a while. It was always happy to help out, particularly when it came to the unknown.

There was lots to see and enjoy, from the reeds that you can hear before you see them to the rustle in the wind, the wide river and a miniature sail, even the small boats that were so to move, and give them that un-



low lying mist over the
at I took time to absorb
the sun came up. I was in

came across many fallen
tree lay right across the
ded my canoe underneath
ared, travelling fast and
e. I was very grateful for
h a tricky portage and it
s wonderful how paddlers are
arly a solo traveler paddling

I paddled past poplar trees
e them. Their leaves tremble
flat edge of the leaves act like
est breeze will cause the leaves
ique sound.



Day 3:

After spending the night camping beside the river (with special permission from a family run pub in Homersfield) I set off on my last day of paddling. I had about 11 miles left before reaching Bungay so I got up early and was on the river by 8am. It was another beautiful sunny day so I paddled on.

I came across an extraordinary site, a large grounded aeroplane. I had arrived at Flixton Air Museum, not what I was expecting in the middle of the countryside or farmland.

The paddle towards Bungay town is very pretty. The water becomes shallow in parts during the summer months and going through the quaint riverside houses I was surprised to come across a herd of calves all standing in a row by the edge of the river.

After passing under the A143 you come to what is known as the Bungay Loop. The loop goes around the Outney Common, popular with walkers, picnickers and some who even enjoy swimming in the river. The loop is really beautiful, with the common on the inside and farmland, lush trees and woods on the outside.

A perfect ending and location after my four days on what I call the Kingfisher River, the beautiful unspoilt and rather wild Waveney.





An aerial photograph of a tropical island. The island is covered in dense green vegetation and has a rocky coastline. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, transitioning to a white sandy beach. A small white boat is visible in the upper right portion of the image. The sky is a clear, deep blue.

A THAI ADVENTURE

We recently heard from John Conlin-Jones who moved to Thailand eight years ago from Wales and took his love of kayaking with him.





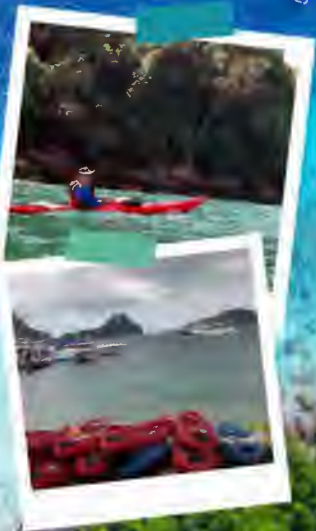
His love of paddling around Thailand encouraged him to rent a second property nearer to the coast so he can kayak more often, and he has also taken advantage of other sports living by the sea has to offer

"I have a trailer here with three single sea kayaks and one double, plus two white water boats which I use for a bit of surfing."

"The great weather here means I can get away kayaking whenever I like, and I have also visited New Zealand, Australia, Cambodia, Laos and Malaysia."

At the start of February 2017 John and his friend Andy set out on a one month adventure, paddling the Andaman Sea and The Gulf of Thailand

>>



WE ALWAYS MADE SURE TO PACK OUR KAYAK WITH ENOUGH PROVISIONS FOR TWO TO THREE DAYS AS WE WERE NEVER SURE WHAT WAS GOING TO BE AVAILABLE





Here's some highlights from John and Andy's travel diary and some photos from their trip!

>>

DAY 1

I collected the sea kayaks from my trailer and drove to the airport to meet Andy. We had paddled a 10 day trip several years ago around the islands of arcapelico in the Gulf of Thailand. This time our plan was to circumnavigate the islands down the Thai coast in the Andaman Sea.

DAYS 5 AND 6

We circumnavigated the smaller island of Ko Phayam and the larger island of Ko Chang. It was very windy and the locals said they had never seen weather like this for over twenty five years and the weather forecast kept predicting even stronger winds. We decided to go for it in the hope of getting some tidal assistance going up the east coast of the island, however it turned out to be a really hard slog against the wind which had picked up in strength with breaking waves."

DAY 11

Big day today as we circumnavigate the north island and the only stop point is a campsite over three quarters of the way around. We set off around 9am into a fresh north easterly wind with white caps and breaking waves. The north island is the best place to see reef sharks, rays, sea turtles and whale sharks so after getting half way around, after paddling through two tidal streams and lots of surf we stopped and snorkeled for an hour

DAY 15

One of the downsides to some of these islands is that when the tour boats arrive they get very busy very quickly. After camping on the beach overnight, we packed our tents and gear away before the day visitors arrive. We then started to explore a large group of islands nearby, we found several open entrances into a huge open sky lagoon with a large cave entrance and there were some fantastic stalactites and stalagmites dripping all off the cliff faces as if thrown on wet when formed

DAY 19

We couldn't complete our original route as the Chief Ranger on the Island told us it would be too dangerous. There are heavy fines for disobeying park rangers instructions in Thailand so we stuck to the innerside islands which he mapped out for us. We managed to paddle around Ko Mae and see the Emerald Lagoon but we could not get in through the caves due to high water levels.

DAY 20

We headed to Ko Sam Sao and were hit by a large tropical storm which showed amazing rainbows on the water's surface and we lost visibility for a while. Before retiring for the night we climbed a rock face with the help of fixed ropes already in position up 100 metres to a viewpoint with an amazing view of most of the islands

Photographs from John Corlin-Jones and Andy Burrow

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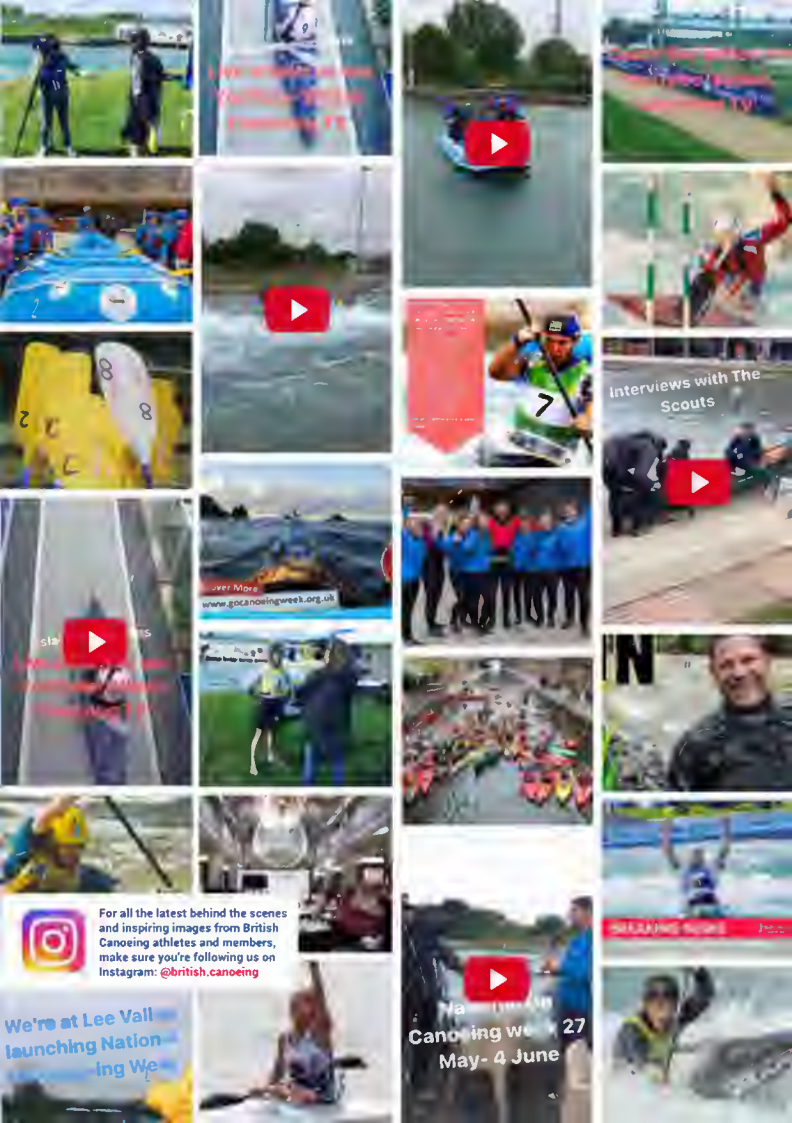
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Photo Competition

Congratulations to the winners of our Spring photo competition who each bagged themselves an Osprey Rucksack from our partners at Cotswold Outdoor.

Take a look at our National Go Canoeing Week photo competition! Snap a photo on the water for the chance to win some great prizes. www.gocanoeingweek.org.uk/prizes





For all the latest behind the scenes and inspiring images from British Canoeing athletes and members, make sure you're following us on Instagram: [@british.canoeing](https://www.instagram.com/british.canoeing)

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