



PPCA Newsletter

October 2017



Introduction

Welcome to what should have been September's Newsletter. As I was away for a couple of weeks, it got a bit delayed and slipped into October. Apologies. I have, at least, managed to get it out in time for the AGM and I've included a couple of pieces from Terry and Adam that were originally sent around as emails. Please read them and consider standing for the vacant committee posts. The club can't function without a committee.

Elsewhere we have some news on the courses the club runs, two pieces on the white water season and my back-to-school "What we did on our holidays" essay.

Editorial

It has been brought to my attention that I erroneously attributed Clive's article in the last edition to somebody called Clive Ashworth who, in club terms anyway, clearly does not exist. This was an appalling lapse in the high standards of integrity and accuracy that the Newsletter has always maintained. In the circumstances, I feel that, as Editor, I have no choice but to act in accordance with the great traditions of the British press and to adopt the only honourable course of action available to me in the circumstances which is to immediately and unconditionally blame my proofreader for not noticing the mistake.

My apologies to Mr Ashton for any distress her error may have caused.

Ivor Jones

Newsletter Editor

The Committee

Committee Post	Name	Club Email	Phone Number
Club Secretary	Bob Grose	ppca@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	01803 849163
Club Leader	Ian Brimacombe	leader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07720 957304
Welfare Officer	Jane Seigne	welfare@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07891 177768
Intro Course Coordinator	Jon Seddon	intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07981 560879
Chair	Terry Calcott	chair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07828 652775
Vice Chair		vchair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	
Assistant Club Leader		acleader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	
Membership Secretary	Adam Coulson	membership@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07834 286461
Treasurer	Jenny Nicholls	treasurer@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	01752 952628
Equipment Officer	Pete Anderson	equipment@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07958 694434
Publicity Officer	George Hamblin	publicity@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07805 085499
Youth Development Officer	John Mitchell	youth@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07791 090956
Club President	Joy Ashford		

Next Committee Meeting

The next committee meeting will be at the discretion of the new committee. Please forward any items you would like considered to secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk. They will go to the secretary.

The AGM by Terry Calcott, Chair

The annual PPCA AGM will be held on Monday 9th October at 19:00, venue Mount Batten.

This is an update on where we are with filling the various committee posts. 6 of the 12 committee posts have either been filled by the post holder willing to stand again or a new club member has come forward. That leaves 5 committee positions vacant, (the assistant club leader is co-opted by the club leader). Of these posts the key jobs of Chair and Club Leader are amongst those that require filling.

If we cannot fill the posts before the AGM it will come down to volunteers coming forward on the night. Not an ideal situation and I am not sure we will be able to fill all the posts in that way.

As always you can stand for any of the committee posts but those that are vacant are:

- Chair
- Club Leader
- Treasurer
- Intro Course Co-ordinator
- Youth Development Officer

If you are thinking about coming forward to stand on the committee please let myself or any committee member know. It is vital that the club forms a full committee to carry out the club business on your behalf. It is also important that we form a well-balanced committee from within the membership with a variety of views across the whole spectrum of paddling.

A Personal View of the Committee by Adam Coulson, Membership Secretary

I hope Terry doesn't mind but I have been meaning to write a short piece as a "newbie" on the PPCA committee. I have been a club member for about 6 years and benefitted enormously from the club organisation and from the patient instruction and encouragement of the club coaches. Although I am registered as a helper, due to work commitments I am not always available to help at taster and 1 star sessions – something I would like to do more of. However I was keen to "give something back" to the club and thus volunteered for the position of "Membership Secretary" a year ago.

This job suits me as it can be done whilst at home and sat at computer – often at times when I would not be able to talk with others but can deal with e-mails and general membership business. If you're a member you'll have had some correspondence from me – probably with a request to pay up!

Since joining the committee I have a much better understanding of how the club functions and learnt more about what the club offers to its members. I have got to know the other committee members a little better, and of course, get to hear all the gossip from the paddling community! The meetings are not a huge commitment at one a month (although I didn't originally reckon on them being in my home since the Morley Arms closed its doors!) The duties are not onerous and can be done in your own time.

So to be a committee member you really don't have to be a hugely experienced paddler with a wide knowledge base. Enthusiasm is required but you will get out of it in proportion to what you put in. They are a great bunch and do a

good job of keeping the club on the straight and narrow. Please ask me or any of the others if you would like some more info on any of the positions, but before you ask the answer is “no”, you’re not getting my job just yet!

PPCA Courses by Jon Seddon, Intro Course Co-ordinator

We’ve now come to the end of the season for our courses. We’ve had 41 participants on our Introductory courses, where people gain their 1* qualification. We’ve also had 20 participants on our half-day Go Canoeing taster sessions. Additionally, we had 7 children on the multi-week Paddle Power course in May and June.

Many people have enjoyed their courses so much that they’ve progressed from the taster session to the 1* and have then joined the club and come along to Tuesday and Saturday club sessions. The courses are a valuable source of new members and income for the club.

One of the most frequent items of feedback that we’ve had after courses is how great and helpful the instructors were. Many thanks to the coaches and their helpers who have achieved all of this!

Dates for the 2018 courses will be arranged early next year and will be put up on the website.

The White Water Season by The Editor

Anyone who knows me will know that I am singularly unqualified to write about white water paddling. Accordingly, when a couple of people asked on Facebook how the season worked I suggested that somebody could write a piece describing things like where to meet, how to contact the coach etc. for the Newsletter. Buck kindly responded with a piece which, by his own admission, he largely nicked from Clive. Doug provided a few updates for this piece. Clive then separately sent me a piece of his own for this month. As they both approach the topic from slightly different angles, I’ve included them both but I’ve edited Buck’s piece where they duplicated information and/or jokes and seamlessly added Doug’s bits. Hopefully, that’s clear.

White Water Anyone? by Clive Ashgrove

Whitewater paddling is exciting and gives the participant new and interesting ways in which to entertain their coaches. The season starts on Oct 1st and finishes on 14 March and the PPCA run trips on most Sundays during the season, all trips being dependent on water levels.

We are not talking rocket science here. October to March means that we are paddling through the winter and whitewater means that we are paddling on the rivers. Gentle readers, by using the words “winter” and “river” in the same sentence you should be able to make the connection to the word “cold” without any prompting. Dress accordingly.

You do need to approach whitewater paddling with the right attitude. It’s not really a gentle day out on the water but instead needs some commitment from the paddler. With river paddling you only get out what you put in and if you don’t put anything in you get out cold, wet and miserable.

Whitewater paddlers need to be close to 2* standard, particularly with respect to low brace and edging. If in doubt have a chat with one of our marvellous coaches.

The PPCA categorise trips into two classes, beginners and intermediate, which sort of define themselves really. Again if in doubt talk to someone.

In order to participate in whitewater paddling you will need a boat, paddle, spray deck, buoyancy aid and helmet. Failure to comply with this list will result in you not paddling.

Trip details, including where and when to meet, will appear on the club forum. It will help the session leader to get the staffing levels right if you can indicate that you are going to attend.

See you all somewhere cold and wet.

Have fun.

White Water Club Trips 2017 by Buck Taylor and Doug Sitch (and Clive Asquith)

I've stolen this bit from 2015 and probably authored by one of our senior WW coaches, Clive Ashford. The river season kicks off this year on Sunday 1st October 2017 (water levels dependent) and runs until the middle of March, Clive is the nominated coach for the first trip. White Water paddling is a great branch of our sport and we are blessed with a whole range of rivers in Devon for you to enjoy and develop/polish your WW skills. We have some excellent coaches and enthusiastic helpers who will get you up and running WW and look after you as you progress.

So in the week leading up to each paddle, the nominated coach will post on the club forum with an assessment of the likelihood of a paddle taking place on the Sunday and what river we might be running. A decision whether the paddle runs maybe made as late as Saturday afternoon and again will be posted on the club forum and possibly on the club's FB page depending on the coach or by contacting the coach by phone. The trips will normally meet at 09:00 on Sunday morning at the Plympton Co-op or other nominated venue. In previous years we have met in the former B&Q car park at Coypool but this is no longer available to us, so instead we will meet at the Co-op car park in the Ridgeway ready to leave at 09:00. We will then we will utilise the minimum number of cars by sharing cars, some cars will/may be left at the meeting place.

To get to the Co-op car park leave the Marsh Mills roundabout and head towards Plympton. Keep going until you eventually reach a mini roundabout. Take the second exit (towards the Ridgeway). At the next mini roundabout take the first exit. The car park we will meet in is then on the right. For those who need such things the postcode of Plymco is PL7 2AW.

This means that we will be paddling through the winter, so think cold and dress warm. River Paddling is great for those thrill seekers who want to raise their adrenaline levels! If you are new to river paddling it's a steep learning curve and the environment can be unforgiving. Can I suggest you get along to the beginner sessions early on in the season? A few swims are inevitable for the white water novice paddler (and experienced) and the water temperature in Plymouth Sound is like a bath compared to our rivers, especially as the winter sets in. If you are unsure about what you need to wear or take then please contact me on 07717821934 to discuss.

Our River trips are divided into 3 categories:

- Beginners.

These trips are aimed at the kayak paddler who is either a white water novice or is not yet ready to step up to our intermediate trips. Intermediate kayak paddlers are welcome on these trips on the understanding that they give our beginners plenty of time, room and encouragement to develop their river / entertaining skills. These trips will be on easier grade 2/3 rivers like the Lower Dart, Tamar or similar.

- Intermediate.

These trips are for the kayak paddler who now finds our beginners sessions easy and want to progress. The rivers here are possibly the Dart Loop, Lower Tavy, Walkham, Barle and are grade 3.

- Open boat.

These trips are for our open boat enthusiasts. There may (or may not) be opportunities for open boats to join the kayaks trips and vice versa, but please seek the coaches permission first, don't just turn up expecting to paddle.

If you can't make the first beginners sessions, then look at the calendar & forum for others through the season. On many Sundays the club hopes to provide both beginner AND intermediate trips on the same day! Keep looking at the forum to check! After developing some white (moving) water skills, then please ask the coaches about going on the intermediate trips (water levels dependent).

In general the trips last 2-3 hours and we do not stop mid-trip for lunch (often too cold), but in the first few trips of the season, we may do so. It is a good idea to carry a flask of something hot and some choccy bars in any case.

Club equipment on white water

Club kayaks with accompanying equipment, to be used only on Club river trips, will be available for long term loan again this year, at a charge of £30. To borrow club equipment please contact Pete Anderson, equipment officer on 07958 694434 or via e-mail at equipment@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk .

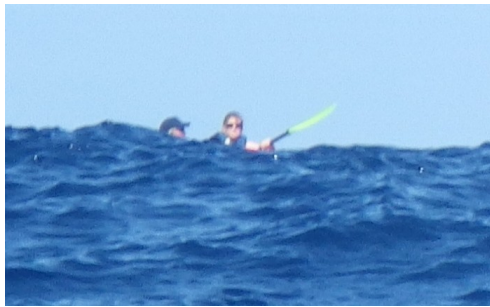
If you want to give WW a try and do not possess a roof rack to get your "borrowed equipment" to the river then post your intentions on the club forum and it's possible that one of the coaches/club paddlers will be able to pick you up for your trips.

Paddling in Croatia by The Editor

One of the reasons why the Newsletter is late this month is that Tracy and I were in Croatia for a couple of weeks. Part of this was an activity week on the island of Vis (about 30 miles from Split) which included walking, cycling and paddling.

Vis is noted for its tranquil climate, millpond-like seas and generally excellent paddling. Except for the week we were there. Our introductory paddle was scrapped due to high winds and heavy rain and mist and we spent the day admiring the view from the highest point on the island in dense fog and sitting in a café while torrents of rain poured down the hillside and over the tops of our waterproof shoes.

The next day was better, in terms of rain at any rate, so we piled into the Land Rover with the boat trailer on the back and followed what was alleged to be a road to a very scenic bay on the north coast of the island. The plan was for a



Perfectly safe conditions for novices

7-8 mile paddle around the coast to Vis town – the main town on the island where the Land Rover would be waiting for us. This should have been on glassy seas and have presented no difficulties even for those members of the party who had never paddled before. Unfortunately, Croatian weather forecasts seem to be about as reliable as they are anywhere else, the wind was strong and in our faces and there was enough swell that you could lose sight of a paddler in the troughs. I don't think the PPCA would have taken a two-star trip out in it let alone complete newbies. Fortunately we were on sit-on-tops (not a phrase I ever thought I would use) which made up for in stability what they lacked

in manoeuvrability so there was relatively little chance of anyone going over.

Croatian Health and Safety regulations are a bit like Croatian swimming costumes. It's the lack of them that makes things interesting. Buoyancy aids were optional and as soon as we got on the water, our leader disappeared into the distance leaving the newbies floundering in his wake. Tracy and I found ourselves in the unusual position of being the most experienced paddlers on the water and offering coaching tips to the others. Admittedly, these didn't go much further than "try holding your paddle the other way up" and "I think he went that way" but they seemed to be appreciated. PPCA training kicked in and Tracy stayed in the middle offering words of encouragement and I stuck at the back trying to limit losses to less than 10%.



A large blowhole. And the editor



The submarine pen

We eventually regrouped and those whose enthusiasm for paddling solo had evaporated in the conditions transferred to tandem boats. We carried on for an hour or so into the wind past some stunning coastline and an impressive blowhole until we finally rounded the corner of the island and the conditions eased a bit.

We then entered one of the strangest places we'd ever paddled in. During the cold war, Vis was a "secret island" - essentially one of Tito's naval bases and it is honeycombed with redundant military tunnels and installations and tunnels, all of which you can wander into either deliberately or accidentally. What we paddled into

was a vast concrete submarine pen, now neglected and left open to anyone who wanted to enter it. The echo was impressive and irresistible.

After that it was a short hop to lunch – a picnic on an idyllic beach in the sun - and another short hop to Vis town where the Land Rover was indeed waiting for us.

Other days were a bit less eventful. We took in the fabled Green Cave (which was grey), an attempt at paddling an SUP with optional paddleboard yoga and a paddle in Komiza Bay near to the location where Mamma Mia 2 was being filmed. Hopes of seeing Pierce Brosnan and Meryl Streep were dashed, but we did see the staff canteen.



Tracy making paddle boarding look easy

As a small footnote, if anyone is tempted to purchase a cheap imitation of a well known brand of broad-brimmed hat, popular in the open boating community, please bear in mind that these may shrink on contact with salt water and end up perched on the back of your head like a pill-box.

All in all, a really good trip and I'd recommend it to anyone. It did, however, bring home to us just how (rightly) safety conscious the PPCA is and how much of the Tuesday night training has become ingrained into us.

Next Edition

There is no specific deadline as such for contributions but please bear in mind my general sloth and indolence and let me have anything time-sensitive well in advance.

Contributions

Please send any contributions to newsletter@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Club Calendar

As ever, please remember that the definitive calendar is on the [website](#) and what's printed below, while correct at the time of going to press, is liable to change depending on the weather or the whim of the coach.

Sunday, 1 October

09:00 Beginners River Trip - Clive Ashford 01752 344425

Saturday, 7 October

10:00 Sea Paddle - Joy Ashford 01752 344425

Sunday, 8 October

09:00 Beginners River Trip - Doug Sitch 07966 740025

Saturday, 14 October

10:00 Recreational Paddle - Terry Calcott

Sunday, 15 October

09:00 Intermediate River Trip - Ken Hamblin 01752 365404

Saturday, 21 October

10:00 Recreational Paddle - Ian Brim

Sunday, 22 October

09:00 Intermediate River Trip -Chris Doidge 07973 285969.

Saturday, 28 October

10:00 Recreational Paddle - Andy Kittle

Sunday, 29 October

09:00 Intermediate River Trip -Clive Ashford 01752 344425.

Saturday, 4 November

10:00 Sea Paddle - Ian Brim

10:30 Short Recreational Paddle - John Mitchell

Sunday, 5 November

09:00 Intermediate River Trip - Doug Sitch 07966 740025

Saturday, 11 November

10:00 Recreational Paddle - Terry Calcott

Sunday, 12 November

09:00 Intermediate River Trip - Ken Hamblin 01752 365404



Photo by Joy



The view from Ronas Hill. Shetland is big enough not to feel like an island.