



# PPCA Newsletter



## May 2018

### Introduction

Welcome to May's Bumper Bank Holiday Newsletter. This month we seem to be paying particular attention to safety. Bruce recounts an unfortunate experience, Adam loses his magnetism and Tony comes over all legal.

To lighten the mood, we have news of an Open Day and Becky takes us down the Dart.

### Editorial

As you will have noticed from Adam's email, new Data Protection regulations are about to come into force which will affect whether or not you continue to receive the Newsletter and other mailings from the PPCA. If you haven't replied to Adam yet, please do so as I have no wish to produce ~~this drive~~ this excellent publication if nobody receives it.

The regulations will put you in one of four camps, as far as I can see

- You have received the Newsletter and you have said that you want to, in which case you have my admiration.
- You have received the Newsletter despite having said you don't want to, in which case you have my sympathy
- You have not received the Newsletter despite having said you want to, in which case I don't know how you're reading this
- You have not received the Newsletter and have said you don't it anyway, in which case, I quite understand.

Please make sure you are in the right camp.

Ivor Jones

Newsletter Editor

### Corrections and Clarifications

It has been brought to my attention that there was more than one paddler named John on the paddle that our anonymous paddler wrote about in the April issue and that the blame for the incidents involved should be shared equally between them.

## The Committee

Committee Post	Name	Club Email	Phone Number
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Youth Development Officer	Vacant	youth@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	
Club President	Joy Ashford		01752 344425

## Next Committee Meeting

Please forward any items you would like considered at the next committee meeting to [secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk). They will go to the secretary.

Open Day by Tony Sicklemore, Treasurer

The Club intends to stage an 'Open Day' on Sunday 20th May, from 1100 to approx. 1500, outside the Mount Batten Centre (MBC) as close to the coast path as we can get.



"Getting the hang of it?"

We are hoping this event serves many purposes, such as generally raising the profile of the club, encouraging passersby to sign up for the various courses that we run, perhaps to sign up and join the club & also to promote the MBC (the MBC reciprocate by encouraging people who pass their paddlesport courses to join the PPCA and they give out PPCA promotion material).

There will be no 'wet' activities at the event, it will be purely land based. The initial idea at this stage is to erect a gazebo or two, fly the clubs banner, lay out a selection of our boats, have on hand our club information and engage with people as they walk the coastal path. We will be posting flyers through letterboxes of nearby

houses/businesses to promote the event.

We are now asking club members to expand our initial idea and if you have any ideas or suggestions about how we can make the most of this day these would be very welcome.

Some things we are asking for now include volunteers to help on the day, you can come along for the whole period or for an hour or two. We also need a few tables and some display boards. I believe some members may have large size laminated photos used at previous events which would be useful. We could do with another gazebo, and anything else that you think would be useful for a PPCA Open Day (including perfect weather!)



But most of all we need volunteers to help out on the day (especially the younger members of the club!) and your ideas and suggestions.

Pontoon Works, passed on by Adam Coulson, Membership Secretary

The Mountbatten Centre pontoon is having significant repair works carried out over the next few months. In order that this work can be done safely areas of the pontoon are being cordoned off to all users. At present the western end is closed. The timber deck has been removed in places to allow access to the steel structure. Please could you ensure no club members/users/staff/volunteers climb around the barriers or tie boats up to the pontoon in the cordoned off area.

We have already had one member walking around the closed off area of the pontoon

Sorry for the inconvenience but this is for your own safety.

Many Thanks

Andy Mossford  
Operations Manager  
Mount Batten Group of Companies

### Lights and Paddling at Night by Tony Sicklemore, Treasurer

One topic which is always talked about regarding night paddling is displaying a light and there is always loads of advice on the subject, mostly along the lines of “be lit up like a Christmas tree” so everyone else on the water can see you. Problem with this solution is that the paddler is often left blinded by the light and can’t see anything to their front from having no night vision.

There is advice for being on the water at night contained within the document “Plymouth Waterways a guide for small craft” published in 2016 by the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum, their members include organisations such as Cattewater Harbour Commissioners, Cornwall Council, Devon County Council, Environment Agency, Plymouth City Council, Queen’s Harbour Master (to name but a few). The advice is this: “Even very small vessels e.g. canoes should carry a torch to make others aware of their presence” (‘What you can do’ para 3).

In my copy of the 2002 BCU Canoe & Kayak Handbook the only reference to paddling at night is “On occasion paddlers operate at night and thus may need lighting” (p45) and “On any overnight trip each paddler needs his or her own torch” (p211).

#### But what is the legal answer?

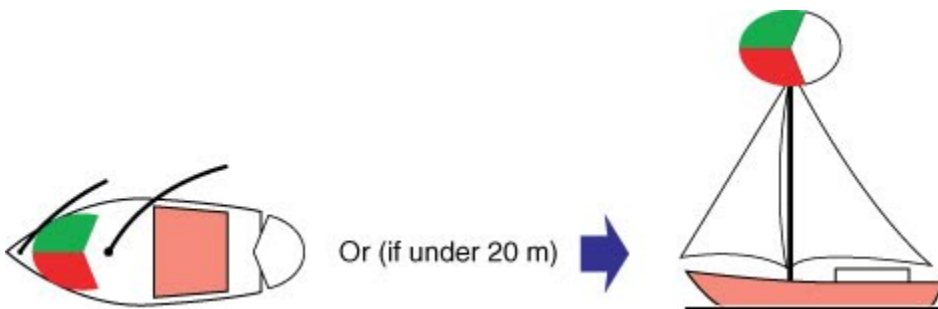
It starts with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (The ColRegs) Rule 25, and then the Merchant Shipping (Distress Signals & Prevention of Collisions) Regulations 1996 Rule 25, which is as follows:

#### Rule 25 - Sailing vessels underway and vessels under oars

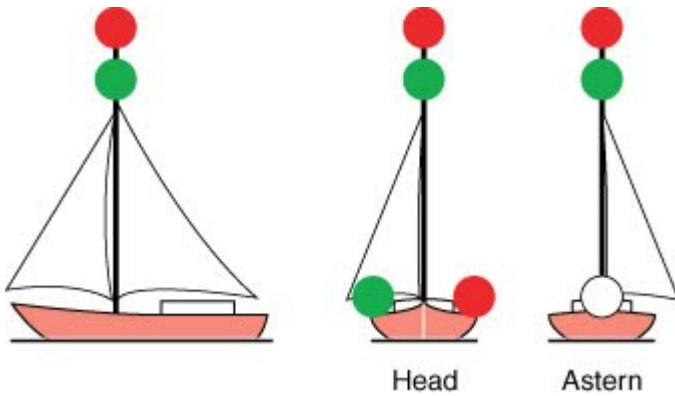
(a) A sailing vessel underway shall exhibit:

- (i) sidelights;
- (ii) a sternlight.

(b) In a sailing vessel of less than 20 metres in length the lights prescribed in paragraph (a) of this Rule may be combined in one lantern carried at or near the top of the mast where it can best be seen.



(c) A sailing vessel underway may, in addition to the lights prescribed in paragraph (a) of this Rule, exhibit at or near the top of the mast, where they can best be seen, two all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being red and the lower green, but these lights shall not be exhibited in conjunction with the combined lantern permitted by paragraph (b) of this Rule.



(d)(i) A sailing vessel of less than 7 metres in length shall, if practicable, exhibit the lights prescribed in paragraph (a) or (b) of this Rule, but if she does not, she shall have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision.

(ii) A vessel under oars may exhibit the lights prescribed in this Rule for sailing vessels, but if she does not, she shall have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision.

(e) A vessel proceeding under sail when also being propelled by machinery shall exhibit forward where it can best be seen a conical shape, apex downwards.

#### **That's the legal answer but .....**

It depends on where and when you are going to paddle at night. A gentle paddle on the Yealm just before dawn you are unlikely to meet many other people and could quite easily go without a light being shown. But to be out in Plymouth Sound whilst the annual Fireworks Competition is underway you might just want to be a floating Christmas tree! But generally within the Port of Plymouth which is under the jurisdiction of the Queens Harbour Master and patrolled by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Police? Well, have a decent waterproof torch quickly to hand as per Rule 25, Section D para ii, (and perhaps have a spare torch close by). Keep a good look out for other moving vessels and be ready to show your white light in good enough time so as to prevent a collision.

**Advice I would also follow** whilst paddling in darkness anywhere near the HM Naval Base/Dockyard and if you carry a VHF radio is to contact "Long room" or "Flag" on Ch14 and let them know your intentions (you might want to make this radio contact even in daylight). Shortly after your radio call you might just be visited by the MOD Police, they also monitor Ch 14.

So there it is in black & white, paddling at night, the Regulations, ColRegs Rule 25(D) (ii) state "A vessel under oars **may** exhibit the lights prescribed in this Rule for sailing vessels, but if she does not, **she shall** have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision". Perhaps one other piece of advice to consider when paddling at night is this, where possible paddle in shallow water eg close to shore, where the big vessels don't go!

Note: This is my individual interpretation of the Regs and should not be taken as personal legal advice.

## In Case of Emergency: Something to Think About by Bruce Burton

As you may know, Susann and I visit California for parts of the year. When we are there we paddle with a local club, Bay Area Sea Kayakers (BASK). Just before we got back last time, there was a tragedy involving some of the club members. On the equivalent of a peer paddle a woman paddler suddenly collapsed and capsized. It seems that the club members did everything they could and should have done. They managed to right her kayak, got her to shore and tried to revive her, and also called the emergency services. This all proved to no avail and it seems probable that she had suffered a massive heart attack and had died when she was still in her kayak.

However, the point of telling you this sad story is that the people involved did not know who to contact. The lady had no identification on her and the police/ coastguard were not able to find her phone or any documentation that would provide this information. As it was a peer paddle, there had been no sign-up sheet as there would have been in a normal club paddle (as we have). In fact one of her fellow paddlers did find a phone eventually, which luckily was not password protected, and were able to notify at least someone who knew her personal circumstances.

This incident has led to a lot of discussion within BASK about carrying 'In Case of Emergency' identification when out paddling (and indeed other sports where an accident may happen) just in case there is an incident, not necessarily fatal, where someone may not be in a position to give critical information to colleagues or emergency services about who to contact or crucial medical data that might make the difference to a good or bad outcome.

If you search for 'In Case of Emergency' cards on the internet, you can find a number of solutions and there are people who are only too pleased to try and sell you something. If you have a recent smart phone it is possible to enter this information in such a way that the emergency services can access this information, even if the phone is password protected. However, being a bit of a luddite, my phone is somewhat ancient and doesn't allow this and anyway I am not sure that I want to rely on my phone working after some traumatic accident or immersion. So I (and Susann) are going for a simple solution of carrying a laminated card in our buoyancy aids with the following information:

Name

Home telephone number

Who to contact, relationship and telephone number/s (primary and alternative contacts)

Name of primary doctor and telephone number

Any key medical conditions

Any medications taken

Any allergies

Blood group

I am not suggesting that this should be Club policy or anything like that. I think it is for individuals to decide whether they want to take this precaution and what information to carry. As I said, something to think about.



The Port of Plymouth Canoe Association is affiliated with British Canoeing. This means that we send an annual return to BC and make a payment on the member's behalf so that they become Associate members of BC. You may not altogether appreciate the benefits of this at present – it is mostly liability insurance on club trips. Some of our members (including all of the active coaches) maintain Individual Memberships of BC which cost £45 per annum, or a bit less for those less than 23 years of age. This membership provides extra benefits like a Waterways license, access to boat insurance and to coaching qualifications. See <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/membership> for further details.

British Canoeing are changing their structure and would like all affiliated clubs to send them more details of their members so that they can communicate directly with you, the paddler. Under the new General Data Protection Regulations we cannot share this data without your explicit consent. ---*As an aside on this topic, many thanks to all who have replied to PPCA that they are happy for us to communicate by e-mail and if you have not please do so now or you won't be reading the June Bulletin!* ---\* All membership renewal forms will now ask you to confirm that you are happy to be a listed associate BC member. The main benefits are that BC will then get in touch with you to find out what branch of paddle sport you are interested in and whether you would like further communication from them on those areas of interest. In addition the larger number of named members will increase the political clout of BC in lobbying on behalf of our sport. This benefit will not increase the cost of your PPCA membership.

You will be asked this question at the time of your membership renewal, but if you would like to confirm this sooner then please just scan this code, or click on it, or enter the web address in your browser. I promise this will take less than a minute!



<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/7BYDZJN>

Thanks for your attention, Adam Coulson (Membership Secretary)

\* Send a message to [membership@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk](mailto:membership@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk) for further details

I suspect most of you will agree that paddling offers a truly unique experience. The sense of satisfaction achieved from a great river trip is difficult to describe in words but encapsulated perfectly by beaming smiles at the “get out” on any successful river trip. I suspect we have all witnessed various paddling buddies achieving personal firsts in their paddling journeys.

I have been lucky enough to spend time with paddling friends who have achieved great milestones this season. Despite at times experiencing freezing cold temperatures and icy rivers, I have observed time and time again the unmasked delight of my paddling buddies at various “get outs” following another enjoyable trip.

As a regular enthusiastic inspector of the Dart Loop riverbed I fully empathise with my fellow swimmers but equally, I also celebrate when people achieve great success. :) What you are about to read involves the achievement of a certain river paddling milestone known as the Upper Dart. Special thanks go to Clive Ashford, Mark Upton and Gavin Bennett for allowing me to act as a river mole.

When the very talented Mr Ashford suggested that Mr Upton might be keen to paddle the Upper Dart I figured I might be able to tag along. In fairness, I pretty much gatecrashed their session but I figured that bribing my way to Dartmeet might be made possible with the aid of some Jammy Dodgers. As I subsequently discovered, a little too late, none of my fellow paddlers appreciated Jammy Dodgers which resulted in them making a return trip home with yours truly. (In the highly unlikely event that anyone is unfamiliar with Jammy Dodgers, they are a type of two layered biscuit with a jam filling.)

I feel the need to set the scene.

The sun was shining. The birds were singing. My fingers didn't succumb to frostbite. In short it was a perfect day for paddling.

Mark was so keen to shine that he even did a demo roll en route. He then sailed successfully over every drop and made it all look rather intuitive. I tumbled along behind occasionally getting in the way but mostly just grinning at Clive and Tony delighted to still be in an upright position Mr Ashford did his gentle but firm guiding routine nudging Mark forward and providing him with enough guidance to make it safe but not enough to stifle independent progress. Mark was very keen to remain upright and not require any rescues. I don't think he realised this at the time but I would never permit him to take over my role of being the rescued party. (I'm pretty accurate in stating that I have been rescued by just about everyone in the river paddling community at some point.) :)

Some people make river paddling look far too easy. :) Mark sailed down the first boulder garden as if it was a mini version of Lover's leap. He soared over most drops and even made Euthanasia look relatively easy as he bounced through it without difficulty. If Clive needed a Great River Guide Badge Award to recognise his coaching skills he would have earned it as Mark made it all look followed Clive's wise guidance without any signs of difficulty. (Naturally Clive doesn't need proof that he is a great coach so no formal award ceremony was arranged.)

There are lots of talented paddlers in the club who seem to take up river paddling and appear instantly at home on moving water.

Some have youth on their side as in the case of a certain young man called Bradley. Bradley is super-talented and makes rolling look super slick. He also surfs waves with serious style Similarly a certain George Hamblin also has youth on his side and pops onto the Upper when he's not busy working, playing rugby or running marathons.

There are also those paddlers who are just plain amazing. A man by the name of Gavin Bennett progressed from the Lower to the Upper in a single season.



An advert for an end of season guided trip on the Upper popped up on Facebook a few months ago. Gavin who spots everything paddling related on Facebook was not about to let this opportunity pass by. Gavin who started river paddling towards the end of 2017, decided that it would be a great idea to “give the Upper a go”. His selfless act involved donating money to the Dartmoor Search and Rescue Team in return for the pleasure of being led down the river by a complete stranger. He turned up full of enthusiasm one very cold March morning when I was still dreaming of my lovely warm duvet.

Gavin was introduced to our trip leader Ross who highlighted that paddling the Upper or similar grade rivers involves a high level of river reading skills and making your own choices. Gavin is always up for a challenge and his body language did not demonstrate any fear as he proceeded to read the Upper with style. Personally, my eyes would have been out on stalks if someone suggested that I would have to even dream about reading the Upper myself for the first time!! Gavin is however, one of the bravest people I know and he bounced down the Upper as if he had done it before. Gavin was hugely excited by completing his first Upper Trip but being Gavin he immediately wanted to go back and do it again so that he could tackle a feature called Surprise Surprise I have no doubt at all this will be the first Upper trip of many for Gavin. I felt really in awe of Gavin for simply considering signing up to the Upper never mind actually tackling it in his first season of river paddling. I think it’s certainly one for the record books.

Those of us who tend to be a tiny bit more cautious, (read more deliberating, less indestructible or perhaps just more aware of the potential for injury if it all goes pear shaped) can sometimes take a slightly less express route but the journey is definitely no less satisfying.

Mark Upton will sometimes quietly admit that his addiction to kayaking has led to space in his home being quietly taken over by increasing volumes of paddling kit. Having completed his Upper run successfully I think he was quietly pleased that he had invested his resources so wisely.

Sharing Mark’s Upper trip with Clive, Mark and Tony was an absolute pleasure. Similarly sharing Gavin’s first Upper Trip was also a real privilege. Huge thanks go out to all of those coaches who helped to develop our skills en route. A certain Wednesday Leader (AKA Ken Hamblin) contributed hugely in terms of coaching not just to Mark and Gavin but the rest of the river paddling crew.

Please note that no injuries were sustained in the creation of this newsletter article and names have not been changed for the purposes of anonymity as the river mole is not very discreet.

A final short and fluffy note

This river season has been really enjoyable and as I write this I am slowly adjusting to the fact that I will have to find other options for my Sunday mornings now that the whitewater season has come to an end. I would like to say a huge thank you to all those who have rescued, coached, guided and provided great company on so many trips over the past six months. Long may your patience last. 😊 I thought I would make a list of all the people who had helped to rescue me over the course of the season: Doug,...Clive....Pete..., Ken,... Buck, ....Mark, ....Gavin,.. Steve... Jane but as the list got longer and longer, I decided to give up and simply say thank you to each and every one of you instead.

Just imagine a couple of you have gone out on a still day in your sea kayaks on a trip away from home. In order to cut across a bay you are a couple of miles off shore. Without a lot of warning the mist descends and you can no longer see the coastline. You raft up to consult the map that you've brought but are no longer sure which way you're pointing, and suddenly this routine trip has become anything but.

There are many simple ways to get out of this, the most obvious being a compass. Everybody has seen the type that is screwed into a recess on the front deck. Others strap to the deck lines so that you can take it with you. Some people use a GPS or mobile phone to help work out their position and which way to go. I use a traditional orienteering compass that lives in the pocket of my buoyancy aid. It's not used very often but helps not just to know in which direction to paddle but to be able to work out where you are using back bearings from landmarks.



However, the last time I pulled it out for use along with a map I was a little suspicious of its guidance as it pointed in a direction that I did not consider was likely to be north! A few taps and it was pointing in a different direction. On further testing back on dry land it appears to point in a completely random direction – rather dangerous if you're relying on it.

The needle had lost its magnetism. It is more common that a compass needle develops reverse polarity and points South but in this case it seems to have lost it altogether. You can attempt to remagnetise the needle and I believe that Sylva offer a service for their products. However this was just a cheap compass (salt water is not the best for them) and so I replaced it. It was only the next time, with the new compass, when I was packing up to go out that I thought about why this had happened. The compass was stored in my BA pocket along with a knife, a whistle and a mobile phone. I am guessing the magnetism was affected by prolonged proximity to the phone (a cheap model that stays in the BA in a pouch).



Apparently, many modern devices are capable of affecting your compass including mobile and smart phones; magnets inside phone cases; radios; PLBs; GPS; cameras; car keys; magnets on belts and even underwired bras!

From now on I will test the compass regularly and not store it in the same pocket as my phone or car keys.. I don't yet possess GPS, PLB or radio and am not in a position to comment on the effects of ladies underwear!

Waterproof Gear Discount Coupon Code



Aquapac have issued the PPCA a discount 'coupon code' for use at their website <https://aquapac.net/store/shop/>. Once you have chosen your items go to your 'basket' and enter the coupon code **aim65bc** and hit the 'apply coupon' button. The code may not work on items which are already reduced or sale items but try it and you may get a further reduction.

## 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](mailto: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 subject to change at a moment's notice. Syncing your Google calendar with the club calendar via the website is a good way of ensuring you stay up to date.

### Tuesday, 1 May

18:00 1 x Rec Joy Ashford

18:00 2 x Damean Miller

18:00 3 x Sea Clive Ashford

### Thursday, 3 May

18:00 1 \* Group Jane Hitchings

### Friday, 4 May

18:00 Open Canoe Ian Brim

### Saturday, 5 May

10:00 Rec Doug Sitch

### Monday, 7 May

18:00 Paddle Power Ian Brim

### Tuesday, 8 May

18:00 1 x Rec Joy Ashford

18:00 2 x Damean Miller

18:00 3 x Sea Clive Ashford

### Thursday, 10 May

18:00 1\* Group Jane Hitchings

### Friday, 11 May

18:00 Open Canoe Pete Anderson

### Saturday, 12 May

10:00 Rec Terry Calcott

### Monday, 14 May

18:00 Paddle power Ian Brim

### Tuesday, 15 May

18:00 1 X Rec Ian Brim

18:00 2 x Damean Miller

18:00 3 x Sea Clive Ashford

Thursday, 17 May

18:00 1\* Group Jane Hitchings

Friday, 18 May

18:00 Open Canoe Joy Ashford

Saturday, 19 May

10:00 Intermediate Sea Kayak Trip Clive Ashford

10:00 Rec Paddle Terry Calcott

Monday, 21 May

18:00 Paddle Power Ian Brim

Tuesday, 22 May

18:00 1 x Rec Ian Brim

18:00 2 x Damean Miller

18:00 3 X sea Clive Ashford

Thursday, 24 May

18:00 1\* Group Jane Hitchings

Friday, 25 May

18:00 Open Canoe Sam Pluckrose

Saturday, 26 May

10:00 Rec Ian Brim

Monday, 28 May

18:00 Paddle Power Ian Brim

Tuesday, 29 May

18:00 1x Rec Terry Calcott

18:00 2x Pete Anderson

18:00 3x Doug Sitch

Friday, 1 June

18:00 Open Canoe Jen Nicholls

Saturday, 2 June

10:00 Sea Paddle Terry Calcott

Monday, 4 June

18:00 Paddle Power Ian Brim

Tuesday, 5 June

18:00 1x Rec Terry Calcott

18:00 2x Pete Anderson

18:00 3x Doug Sitch

Friday, 8 June

18:00 Open Canoe Joy Ashford

Saturday, 9 June

10:00 Rec Ian Brim

Tuesday, 12 June

18:00 1 x Terry Calcott

18:00 2 x Pete Anderson

18:00 3 x Doug Sitch

Friday, 15 June

18:00 Open Canoe Ian Brim