



# PPCA Newsletter November 2021



## Introduction

Welcome to November's Newsletter. This month Terry has news of the Christmas Paddle, Sharne explains the role of the club's trustees and Ken passes on some very useful advice for those paddling over the winter.

## Editorial

It's good to see the news of the return of the Christmas Paddle - a long standing fixture of the PPCA calendar. Hopefully this is a further indication of a return to some sort of normality, assuming your definition of normality includes paddling round the Sound on a chilly December day with a rubber roast chicken on your head.

We also have the return of the Christmas Gift Guide where our rival publishing magnates vie for your custom over the festive season. I not only own the books concerned but have actually read them and even enjoyed parts of them so I can recommend them with a clear conscience.

Incidentally, following the AGM, we now have a new committee (details on the last page that nobody reads) so please make sure you're moaning to/about the right person. I notice there are a couple of vacancies if anyone is interested....

Ivor Jones

Newsletter Editor

## 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.

## 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)

## Acknowledgements

As ever, I have plundered Facebook for the cover photos - my thanks to all concerned.

### Christmas Paddle Saturday 18th December 2021 by Terry Calcott

It has been a few years since we have managed to have a club Xmas paddle. Brush off those hats and Santa costumes, and come join your fellow club members for a paddle feast and make merry. The paddle venue will probably start and finish from Mount Batten, but if a good weather window occurs it may be away from MB. The minimum dress requirement for this paddle (in addition to your normal paddling and safety gear) is a festive hat. The preferred costume is fancy dress above the spraydeck. We will have a communal picnic of festive fayre, out in the fresh air. I will be compiling a list of sweet or savoury nearer the time.

Please let me know if you are intending coming along by email [terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk) or phone 07981489857 or a post on the forum or Facebook (I will start these posts nearer the date).



## Features

### Winter Paddling Advice from British Canoeing by Ken Hamblin

*The article below was published in British Canoeing Publicity. Ken has passed it on in the hope that it will be useful.*

#### Winter Paddling | Changes in the Weather

The weather has changed in the UK and winter conditions have arrived. Strong winds, torrential rain, high river levels and a drop in temperature as well as shorter days all require factoring in before you paddle.

These conditions have an effect on:

- The places where you paddle
- The equipment you take
- Who you paddle with - experienced and inexperienced paddlers
- Whether you paddle at all

Returning to a familiar stretch of water you paddled in the summer, but now transformed by heavy rain can produce a hazardous environment beyond your capability.

When planning to paddle always check river levels

**River levels can rise very quickly.** Consider past, present and future weather forecasts this can help determine whether a planned trip is postponed for another day.

**Strong winds** can cause increased debris in the water as well as fallen trees that could block or restrict your descent.

**When water and air temperature drop**, consider your clothing and additional equipment carried, we would strongly recommend waterproof and warmer garments and layering to keep yourselves warm and dry. Always be prepared for immersion in cold water.

Please take care, consider your and others capabilities and no matter how well you have planned ahead, undertake a dynamic risk assessment of the conditions on the day.

#### Winter Paddling: Top 10 Tips for Paddling During Winter

Winter paddling can look uninviting to say the least. Cold weather, rain, snow, early nights, and limited daylight in general. We're not selling it to you right....

But paddling through winter can be absolutely beautiful and very rewarding. You just need to consider a few more things before you head out.

To help you keep paddling through winter, we've put together our top 10 tips and things to think about before you brave the cold and head out on that paddling session.

##### Our winter paddling top ten tips

**1. Clothing and BA.** Let's start with what you wear. In winter, you might want to think about places you lose a lot of heat. Consider wearing a hat, investing in some pogies and/or gloves and wear some thicker wet boots. A BA (Buoyancy aid) is also an important piece of kit in winter. It will help keep you warm and also keep you afloat, plus it can prevent you from getting into difficulties with cold water shock (more on that later).

**2. Make sure your boat is as watertight as possible.** Repair that crack you noticed last time you went out. Double check the bolts around your boat to see if any are loose and tighten if you need to. You want to keep as much water out as possible. So, it might also be worth carrying a sponge around in your boat to get rid of any excess water too!

**3. Think about using foam blocks and sheets.** Foam blocks are brilliant for places where your skin might come into contact with your boat. Blocks around the feet area and sheets where your knees might touch your boat can really help add an extra layer of insulation.

**4. Always carry a dry bag.** This should be a given all year round. A dry bag helps keep things well, dry. It's a great place to store keys and your phone, but also snacks for the paddle and a spare thermal, just in case!

**5. Warm up before you go for your paddle!** You can do your warm up either on or off the water. Get the blood pumping and the muscles warm. It will help prevent injury and also make the paddle a little more pleasant all round!

**6. Plan ahead.** Always sensible. Pack some energy foods, fruit and/or nuts. You might also want to pack a flask for a warm drink too. Also think about taking a set of dry clothes and coat if necessary (especially if you're getting off the water for a while). A changing mat is also a brilliant piece of kit if there is no changing area where you are going. It keeps your feet warm while you change and stops heat escaping from your feet.

**7. Think about the length of your session.** Do you need a super long session while it's a -10 wind chill on the water? Be sensible about the journey length and your abilities.

**8. Check the weather before you head out.** Winter can be notoriously unpredictable (as can most months here in the UK). Checking the forecast can stop you getting into avoidable trouble. It's also worth checking river levels too. Heavy rainfall through autumn and winter can change river patterns dramatically. Always check the flow before heading out on a river.

**9. Always carry a means to call for help.** Important for every paddle. A phone in a dry pouch should suffice, but if you plan on many trips a GPS transmitter might be a good investment.

**10. Remember how much daylight we get...** the days can be shorter than you think especially if the weather is already overcast. Planning is key.

Before you head off, just one more thing. There's been a lot of talk and research over the last few years around cold water shock... don't turn off yet, this is important! Cold water shock can happen at any time of the year (not just when it's icy cold!) and is the body's reaction to a sudden change in temperature. Familiarise yourself with the symptoms of this condition before heading out for a paddle, especially if you're new to paddling.

What are you waiting for? Get planning that winter trip.

### **Cold Water Shock: What is it, and How Can I Prevent it?**

Ok, so it's not often we get THIS serious here but, we do want to make sure you all have the best time on the water. And if that means sharing around some of the more serious articles like this one on cold water shock, then it needs to be done.

What do you know about cold water shock? Likelihood is very little, or maybe you just think about losing your breath when you are suddenly faced with a bucket of ice water. But the consequences of cold water shock can be well, deadly. See, we told you this was going to be an uplifting read!

It's really important you know a little about cold water shock and exposure if you're paddling. Not just to protect yourself, but to be able to spot signs in your paddling friends and keep you all safe on the water. And, if you're reading this in summer, don't think it won't affect you! **DID YOU KNOW...** the average UK and Ireland sea temperatures are just 12°C. With rivers such as the Thames being even colder – even in the summer. Cold water shock happens in any water under 15°C, so there's still a high chance in summer it could happen without you even realising. So please, familiarise yourself with the advice below, share away, and go on your paddling adventures prepared.

So, let's get started...

### **What is cold water shock?**

Cold water shock happens when you're immersed in water under 15°C and the body reacts to this immersion. Often you will experience a shortness of breath and difficulty breathing, as well as restricted movement in your body.

Let's get into the science a little more. What happens?

When you're immersed in cold water, the blood vessels in the skin restrict (get narrower) which makes it harder for blood to flow around the body. This in turn increases the heart rate, as the heart works harder to try and get that

blood around the body and keep you warm and your organs functioning. For this reason, cold water shock can cause heart attacks, even in young people with no underlying health conditions. We're not trying to scare you here! There are simple things to prevent this happening, more on this further down.

But what else? Your breathing can also start to change quite rapidly. With everything happening in the body at such a quick pace, a feeling of panic can sometimes come over you. The more you gasp for air and splash around, the more likely you are to be inhaling water. The involuntary gasping, less ability to control your breathing, and induced vertigo as water enters the ears, means once you go under the water, it's difficult to get back to the top.

The main thing here is how quickly this can happen. It only takes half a pint of water to enter the lungs for an adult to start drowning.

**Did you know...** One of the biggest dangers is inhaling water and drowning, even if the water is flat, calm and you know how to swim.

### **When can you get cold water shock?**

Anytime the water is below 15°C and you immerse yourself in it, you could be susceptible to cold water shock.

It's also worth noting too, that just because the air temperature is warm, doesn't mean the water temperature is. That's what can make cold water immersion so dangerous. It could be a lovely sunny day, and you're paddling in your top and shorts, but if you're on a deep lake, sea or river, the water temperature if you fall in could well be below the 15°C. Make sure you're dressed suitably in case you do take an unexpected splash!

### **But all is not lost... there's some REALLY easy ways to stay safe!**

So, this is all really quite scary right? It doesn't have to be! There are some REALLY simple, easy ways to prevent this happening so you can enjoy paddling all year round. This article absolutely shouldn't be an excuse to not get on the water all year round. But it SHOULD be an excuse to understand the conditions you're paddling in further. And go on your paddle trip prepared!

The first thing to think about if you do take an unexpected swim, is to stay calm. Stay calm and get out of the water as quickly as you can. However, if something happens where that's not possible, the RNLI recommend three simple steps if you enter the water unexpectedly and begin to suffer from cold water shock:

- 1. Take a minute.** The initial effects of cold water pass in less than a minute so don't try to swim straight away.
- 2. Relax and float on your back to catch your breath.** Try to get hold of something that will help you float.
- 3. Keep calm then call for help** or swim for safety if you're able.

And you should always try and follow the advice when heading out on a trip too:

- 1. Check conditions** – including water temperature – before heading to the coast. Visit [magicseaweed.com](https://magicseaweed.com) for full surf reports in the UK and Ireland.
- 2. Wear the correct clothing** for the amount of time you plan to spend in the water and the type of activity you're doing, if entering.
- 3. Wear a flotation device.** Whether that's a buoyancy aid, waist floatation or correct leash, it greatly increases your chances of making it through the initial shock.

### **How can I spot cold water shock in myself?**

If you enter the water unexpectedly, or you are in the water for an amount of time such as when performing rescues, be aware of:

- 1. Your breath.** Has it changed rapidly? Are you gasping for breath?
- 2. Your heart rate.** Is your heart racing or beating irregularly?
- 3. Has your movement** in the water started to become difficult or laboured?



Once out of the water, try to warm up. A warm drink, high energy foods, hot water bottle, change into dry clothes, move around... get the blood flowing through the body again to warm up.

### **How can I spot cold water shock in others?**

Keep those pointers above in your head. If you're out on a paddle with someone and you recognise, after they've been immersed in the water, that their breathing is becoming sporadic, or they're struggling to move or talk, or have become confused, that's a sign to get some help.

You might also notice that the person may be shivering, pale and cold to touch. This might indicate cold water shock and mean they're struggling to warm up.

### **How can I prevent cold water shock?**

Prevention is always better than the cure! And guess what, there's some REALLY easy ways to 6.

- 1. Wear the correct clothing** for taking a dip
- 2. Take a spare pair of dry clothes** and keep them in your dry bag
- 3. Pack a blanket** in the car, and a hot water bottle with a flask too
- 4. Take warm drinks** with you on your trip

All really basic things to help minimise the risk.

### **What do I do if I suspect myself or a paddling pal is suffering from shock?**

If the person is pale, shivering and is becoming confused, heat them up in the best way possible. Wrap them in a blanket and give them warm drinks and high-energy foods, such as chocolate, to give the body that hit of energy and kick the system into high gear.

If the shock is more serious, and the person is struggling to warm up or especially where the person is becoming confused, don't hesitate to call 999.

Now you're all prepared. Knowledge is power! The more you understand, the more you can be prepared and minimise the risk.

## PPCA Trustees: Who Are They And What Do They Do? by Sharne Dodds, Club Treasurer

As we entered the start of another year for the club the newly formed Committee attended their first meeting on Tues 8th November. This was a good meeting seeing all the new committee members being onboarded and discovering what they had let themselves in for, the door had been locked to prevent anyone leaving!

Anyway I digress, as part of the meeting Mark (New Chairman) drew everyone's attention to the fact that, as part of the club's constitution, we have Trustees, something that was not widely known within the committee and led us all to be asking what they do, who are these people lurking in the shadows with what seems to be a great responsibility on their shoulders!

With this I thought we should be sharing this information with our members too so here goes...

Firstly, like us I believe you will be asking who the Club Trustees are? Well, the position of trustees is held by 4 club members with long standing commitment to the club, these dedicated people are Clive Ashford, Ian Brimacombe, Terry Calcot and finally our outgoing Chair Ken Hamblin.

A Trustee is a lifetime appointment, they are not sworn in each year like the committee, their post termination occurs either by the Trustees stepping down, being removed by the committee or by death, God forbid if any of the latter were to occur!

Being a Trustee means taking on a huge liability for the club as it is our Trustees who are ultimately accountable for any contractual undertaking by them on behalf of the PPCA, they have dedicated themselves to the club knowing the 'buck stops with them'! (Limited to the assets of PPCA)

At a top line and without boring everyone their responsibilities include.

- Acting as Indemnity for the Club against any liable actions or claims, if something serious was to occur it is our trustees who would have to answer on behalf of the club.
- Provide Limitation of Liability by signing any long-term contracts if required i.e. Lease, Licence agreements.
- Holding all the property of the Club, including land and investments, although there is none today the Trustees would be the ones to hold land deeds etc.

If you are interested in reading more, the full description of the Trustees can be found on Page 7 & 8 of the Club Operating Policy which can be accessed via the PPCA Website toolbar option "Members", then "Policies" from the expanded list of topics.

I hope you found this of interest and, I hope you would agree that as a club we would like to express our thanks to our Trustees for their commitment to the club....



## Christmas Gift Guide

### View From a Kayak (Book Series) by Terry Calcott

With Xmas fast approaching, stuck for last minute stocking fillers for your favourite paddler? Then look no further.

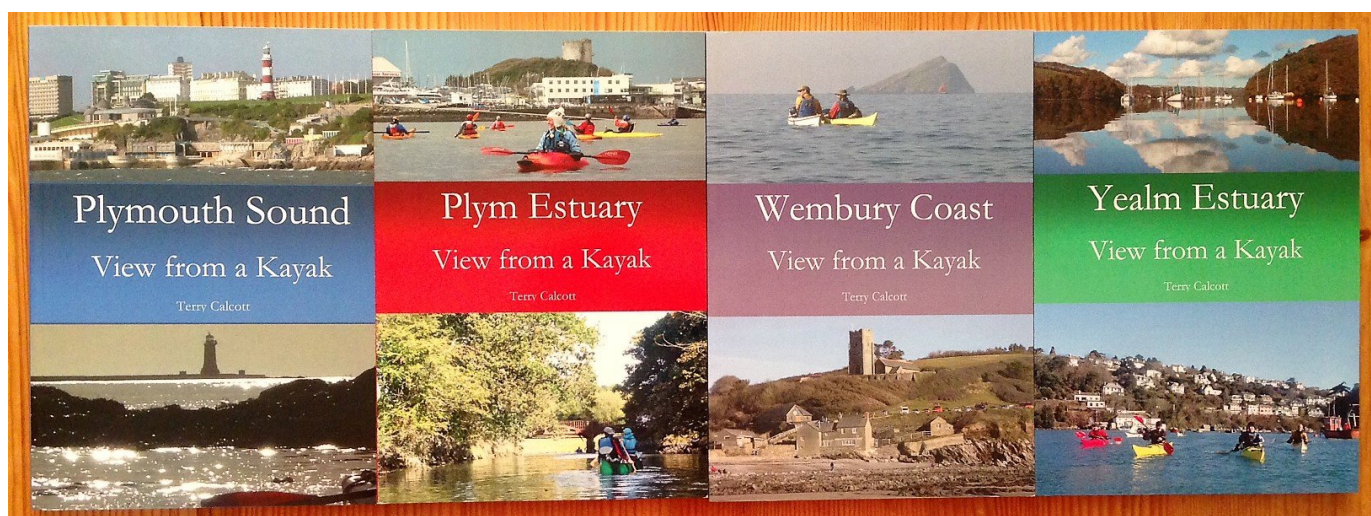
For those club members who missed out on the earlier print runs the following books are still available to purchase.

**'View from a Kayak' Plymouth Sound, Plym Estuary, Wembury Coast and The Yealm Estuary.**

The books are a mix of local history, nature, with plenty of maps and photos to accompany the text covering everything that you can see from a kayak in your local area. A must for anyone who paddles regularly around our fantastic local coastline.

Price £6 a copy (or a special Xmas offer of 4 for £20) with all profits going to St Lukes Hospice. If you would like any of the books please email me at [terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk) or see me on a club Saturday recreational paddle.

Coming soon **'View from a Kayak' The Rame Peninsula**



### Based on Fact by Clive Ashford

You may have read my stories in the wonderful PPCA newsletter and be wondering if they are available in a handy book form that could be given as a very much appreciated, and almost unique Christmas gift. Well, you are in luck because there are in fact not one, but two wonderfully illustrated books available entitled, "Based on Fact" and "Based on Fact Too." They are priced at £6 each or a bargain £11 if you purchase both at the same time. To avail yourself of of such an excellent offer please contact Clive on 01752 344425, 07854 648584 or [cliveandjoy01@gmail.com](mailto:cliveandjoy01@gmail.com)

## Exchange and Mart

Discount Available at Millets, 38/40 New George St, Plymouth PL1 1RW

One of our members works in the Millets store (Big 'Thank you' to Lee McKenzie!) on New George Street, Plymouth and has negotiated with his Manager a great discount of 15% on production of your PPCA club membership card. Usual T's & C's apply, e.g. goods already discounted/sales items might be excluded.

Discount Available at Kayaks and Paddles

Kayaks and paddles offer discount to local kayak and canoe clubs. The PPCA and Tamar Canoe club can get a discount up to 15%. This is an offer not a right for the person that is making a purchase, so please do not go upsetting Kayaks and Paddles employees as this discount might be taken away.



**Raise free donations** for us every time you shop online with easyfundraising!



<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ppca/>

## The Committee

### Chair

Mark Perry  
chair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07801 310 993

### Vice-Chair

Kevin Jones  
vchair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

### Club Leader

Ken Hamblin  
leader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07790 293 952

### Assistant Club Leader

Vacant  
acleader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

### Club Secretary

Jackie Perry  
secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07523 965 748

### Membership Secretary

James Hubbard  
membership@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07752 125 012

### Welfare Officer

Alan Ede  
welfare@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07799 556 876

### Intro Course Coordinator

Colin Wilding  
intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07928 578 144

### Treasurer

Sharne Dodds  
treasurer@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07964 912 837

### Equipment Officer

Pete Anderson  
equipment@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07958 694 434

### Publicity Officer

Vacant  
publicity@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

### Youth Development Officer

George Hamblin  
youth@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07805 085 499

### Health and Safety Officer

Damean Miller  
safety@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

### Club President

Adam Coulson  
president@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk  
07834 286 461