



## Editorial

*Paul Hewson*

As we drift into the heart of the year, it's great to see the club calendar filling up faster than a hatch on a rough crossing. In this month's newsletter you'll find an overview of the plans for our summer programme (on page 2. There should be plenty to whet the appetite whether you prefer gentle meanders or something a little more tide-turning. There's also a roundup of everything we got up to in January 2026 (proof that winter doesn't keep us high and dry) in the Chronicle on page 7. There are also some notices about next summer's estuary paddles (page 6), upcoming sea kayak training (page 5), and a helpful reminder about those all-important session sheets (page 5).

Paperwork may not be as exciting as surfing a following sea, but it does keep us off the rocks!

You may notice one thing missing this week: new members to introduce. Not one! Either

we're so slick in our launches that nobody noticed us, or we've all been too busy actually paddling to recruit. (Or, perish the thought, too scary for new members to want to introduce themselves here). Anyway, the publicity material for next year's introductory courses has started to appear and we could all share that with friends, neighbours or even that curious onlooker who always asks, "Isn't it cold?" (Answer: only until you fall in.) Clubs, like kayaks, move best with a bit of forward momentum, so here's to a buoyant season ahead; steady strokes, good company, and just enough wind to keep things interesting.

As always, comments, questions, material to include in future editions:  
[newsletter@ppca.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@ppca.org.uk).





## PPCA Summer Programme

*Adam Coulson, Club Leader*

It's February at the time of writing and another stormy weekend with the Saturday Sea Kayak paddle cancelled as a result. What better time to think forward to the summer with expectation of sunshine and fair winds and take a look at what is planned for PPCA.

The usual Saturday recreational (rec) paddle will continue as per the winter, and is open to most craft, mainly sea kayaks and GP kayaks with the odd S-O-T. On the first Saturday of each month we will continue to run a Sea Kayak only trip which may go a little further than the standard "rec", and at a faster pace. At the same time we will continue to offer a short trip for those not wishing to venture further in sea kayaks. The short option on a Saturday morning is proving quite popular and so we will offer more of these on other Saturdays also as leaders are available. These may also be more suitable for those early on in their kayaking journey.



To get people on that journey we are running 6 Introductory Courses which you will see advertised on our Website and Facebook page. This year we are running these on Sundays so as not to clash with other club activity. As

part of the Intro package you will see some of those graduating from their Intro day to the Intro Plus sessions on Tuesday evenings (2 per course). If you fancy helping out on the Intro course please chat with any of the leaders – Al, Clive, Jane, and Andy. Assistance is always appreciated and it is very rewarding seeing some of those "wobblers" then join the club and progress. Our club night is Tuesday and activity on the water will commence at 18:00 as of April 7th, when sunset is at 19:58.



We run a rec paddle on Tuesday, usually a couple of hours of fun, chat and relaxation within a radius of Mountbatten. Most of our coaching is also done on Tuesday evenings when Intro Course clients can progress to Intro Plus and other early paddlers can take part in the British Canoeing Discover and Explore level training. Do click on the link to find out



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more about this. Students (of all levels of maturity) will be issued with a "passport" in which their knowledge and skills in various topics can be signed off until the coach assesses that they have reached the required standard for the Paddle Awards. These are the most basic skills required in a kayak and are a step on the way to the Personal Performance Awards, which are discipline specific. I appreciate that not everybody is keen to achieve awards of any kind but as Julian with all of his wisdom quoted in his article in the January Newsletter "assessment drives performance". We will be running this level of training **every** Tuesday evening during the summer.



Also, on Tuesday evenings Nigel is running sessions on subjects such as tides, buoyage, weather and sea conditions and equipment design. Adam will help you develop your Sea Kayak Safety and Rescue Skills during the hot spell that is due to arrive in July. Both of these courses may simply be a refresher, a chance to brush up on your skills and knowledge or an opportunity to develop further, and try new things. If there is something that you want to work towards and are not seeing here please do discuss it with me, or any of the coaches and leaders. For example you may wish to work towards your Sea Kayak Award and we have

previously run an introduction to White Water late in the summer in anticipation of the winter WW season. Speaking of introductions, Terry has promised to run a day or two titled "Introduction to Sea Kayaking" for those who have started in short boats and looking to progress to longer, pointier ones.



Allen has also suggested running some surf sessions from a local surf beach to either get you to enjoy the surf zone or at least execute a safe launching and landing through it! The bottom line is that if you want help with something ASK – don't be shy! We will try to help or point you in the right direction. Looking for something to do on a Friday evening? Join us on a gentle paddle out from Mountbatten for a chat and using almost any craft – these paddles are open to open boats too (also known as canoes - the ones without a top).

Meet at the sheds and depart at 18:00. Perhaps you wish to go a little further afield? Clive is running some Estuary Escapades on Sundays over the summer – around one a month. Please see article in the February Newsletter for more detail.



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All of the dates, together with all other events,

can be found in the Club Calendar where the programme is laid out through to September. As you can see there's a lot happening in your club. I noticed whilst completing the calendar that on some Tuesday evenings there are 4 sessions, running simultaneously. Of course none of this would be possible without our enthusiastic team of coaches and leaders. As Club Leader, my job would be completely impossible if it were not for their willingness to give of their time, share their experience and infect others with their enthusiasm for the sport. Thank you guys! I look forward to seeing you on the water



## Rapid Reads

### New Sea Paddle Registration Sheets

*Adam Coulson, Club Leader*

Not the most exciting news, I know, but we have new registration forms for sea paddles starting as of now. For members there are two significant differences:

1. The recreational paddle sheets are printed on white paper and should be completed as previously with the extra detail as below.

Skills session sheets, by contrast, are printed on yellow paper.

This is to help members to complete the correct sheet for the group that they are joining. This has been an issue previously on Tuesday evenings when several sessions may be running concurrently.

2. To help establish which of the club boats are popular there is an extra column on both of the registration sheets for the boat number. If you are using a club kayak please enter the number that is stencilled on the boat in this column. If you are using your own kayak, leave it blank.

Many thanks, in anticipation, Adam (Club Leader)

### Introduction to Sea Kayaking

*Terry Calcott*

An early heads up about some Intro to Sea Kayaking sessions being run in the spring. Details will be posted nearer the time once the dates are decided. They will probably be run on a Saturday. If you have wanted to try sea kayaks out but never had the opportunity now is your chance. The sessions are aimed at those club members who already have some paddling skills but are novice sea kayakers. The sessions are also suitable for club members who have been in sea kayaks but want to brush up on the basic skills and learn something new. Due to limited time the sessions are about transferring the paddling skills you already have and using them in sea kayaks. We will cover some theory and a lot of practical aspects of sea paddling. Club sea kayaks are available to use or bring along your own if you have one.



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### Estuary paddles anyone?

*Clive Ashford*



Here in Plymouth, we know all about the salty stuff that washes around Plymouth Sound, and our river paddlers are equally familiar with the fresh and frothy stuff that rushes down our stepper valleys. But there is another place, a place where the water maybe a bit brackish and is rarely clear, a place where the bank is never very far away, but where one needs to pick a landing place with care in order to avoid some spectacularly gloopy mud. These places are our estuaries. There are plenty of them, and they are well worth a look. I am going to explore some of them over the summer and invite you to join me. You can use the paddle craft of your choice. Short kayak, sea kayak, canoe, sit on top or paddle board. It's up to you. Dates have been chosen to co-inside with

the tide. They are all Sundays. We will paddle on:

- 12 April.
- 10 May.
- 28 June. (Exe Canal.)
- 23 August.
- 20 Sept.

We have a choice of paddling on the Dart, Lynher, Tamar and Tavy estuaries. They are all beautiful and each has its own character. I have picked estuaries that are free to paddle. I will decide where and when we paddle closer to the date, and will post details on the club forum. I feel sure that someone will re-post this on the clubs Facebook page. Due to inconvenient tide times, we will paddle the Exe canal on 28 June, (See Paul's article in the October 2025 edition of the verry excellent Up the Creek publication) and there will be no estuary paddle in July. Hopefully see you on one or more of these for some gentle, stress-free paddling.



## Creek Chronicle

Adam Coulson

### Warm Wet Training Events

- Tuesday 6th January Pool Session
- Tuesday 20th January Pool Session

### Wet Recreational Events

- Saturday 3rd January The Sea Kayak Paddle as summed up by Dave W: thanks to Gavin for leading the 1st club sea kayak session of 2026 (cheers all) I can add that 5 went out and their route is shown here:

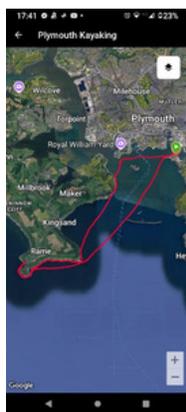


Figure 1: Enter Caption

to Millbay Docks. With around one hour to LW the spring tide is exposing depths that are not normally visible. We ferry glide across the Narrows with hardly any current and land at Barn Pool for lunch. Again, sheltered from the wind its like a summer's day. All too soon we are heading for home using port hand buoys as our guiding course.

- Sunday 4th January Bright, crisp morning on the Lower Lower Dart this morning. And plenty of entertainment from the trains.



For a more interesting video of Emma surfing on a wave (but not a train) see <https://tinyurl.com/y82chrpd>



- Saturday 3rd January Nigel writes about the Short Paddle: A small group of 8 paddlers who brave the cold conditions and the arctic northerly wind. We hug the Hoe foreshore, out of the wind as the full winter sun tops up the Vitamin D. A look at the West Hoe hole and then on

- Saturday 10th January Andy led 14 members on the rec paddle in an anticlockwise tour of the sound by paddling along the Breakwater, lunching at Cawsand and returning via the North side of Cawsand Bay where there was some fun to be had on the swell. We



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completed the tour along the Hoe. Blue skies and sunshine prevailed.

- Sunday 11th January River levels were low but 8 of us managed a playful paddle down the Loop with Phil under grey skies and constant rain. Clearly rain provides the essential ingredient for white water paddling but ideally falls the night before. Instead we got cold and soggy whilst changing under the trees at Holne Weir and the levels rose to a big peak in the evening.
- Sunday 11th January Meantime, Julian put on an extra beginner paddle for 3 down the Lower Dart.



- Saturday 17th January There was a choice of two trips today as Terry offered to lead a short paddle in order to be back on land in the afternoon. He led a group of 7 on a leisurely paddle across to Mount Edgcumbe via Drakes Island. The sky was quite atmospheric and we managed to dodge the rain showers.
- Saturday 17th January At the same time Brim led a group of 9 under the same rather dramatic skies featuring dark rain clouds, some light fluffy ones, a rainbow and blue sky. Having been avoided by a fleet of racing dinghies, the whole group paddled along the outside of the breakwater from cage to light house, enjoying the 1.5 meter swell to varying degrees. After lunch at Sandways Beach we hugged the Cornish coast and crossed over to the Hoe for return.

- Sunday 18th January Sunday came without much overnight rain. Low levels on the loop meant that Phil encouraged newer paddlers to take part in today's intermediate trip on the Dart Loop. A few walked in to run the last 4 drops above Newbridge before joining up with the others for a lot of play on the way down to Holne. It was great to see Pete out in an open boat today, demonstrating his skills. There were a few who have not previously undergone the usual Loop initiation of jumping off Holne Bridge before. Phil set an excellent example by demonstrating how to do it followed by others showing varying levels of enthusiasm. Some required a little encouragement (tee hee). Well done Lisa, Emma and Ollie, especially.



- Saturday 24th January ~~Windy conditions resulted in the cancellation of the Standard paddle~~
- Saturday 24th January ~~The wind also~~



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~~cancelled the short Recreational Paddle~~

- Sunday 25th January River levels fell from the peaks of yesterday so that Jack led a group of 4 down the Walkham on what turned out to be a beautiful sunny still day. 0.67m of water is a great level for this river and we had had it to ourselves in spite of that. There's a little video footage on the club FB page: <https://tinyurl.com/yc7jnymy> and <https://tinyurl.com/2xv2n7ey> and <https://tinyurl.com/eu7k4afa>



- Saturday 31st January The wind dropped on Saturday so that two groups

of 7 went out from Mountbatten. Adam took a group out in the swell to Bovisand and then across the sound (inside the breakwater) to Cawsand for a well timed lunch. Well timed because we sheltered from a downpour and emerged to sunshine for the afternoon. Return was via Picklecombe and South Drake's Island.

- Saturday 31st January For a second paddle, Allen stuck to Devon and visited King Billy, Mutton Cove and Cremyll Beach.

### Dry Events

- 14th January Committee Meeting



## The PPCA Committee

PPCA is a friendly Club, and we'd love to hear from you! The Club is run by a committee of unpaid volunteers, most of which work full-time. Contact details are listed below. For non-urgent enquiries, please email the person you require rather than telephoning.

If you are new to paddlesport or thinking of taking it up then please contact our Intro Coordinator who can point you in the right direction. Our Intro Coordinator can also answer any questions you may have about our Club, courses on offer etc, drop them an email at [intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk](mailto:intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk)

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Club President	Clive Ashford	<a href="mailto:president@ppca.org.uk">president@ppca.org.uk</a>

Thank you to everyone who contributed material, especially the material we just stole from Facebook.

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