



Up the Creek August 2026

Editorial

Paul Hewson

The latest edition of the newsletter looks ahead to the new whitewater season (page 2), bringing with it fast-moving rivers, winter temperatures, and what can only be described as a torrent of enthusiasm. Prospective participants were reminded that “cold” is not merely a theoretical concept and that turning up without a helmet may result in a rapid descent into spectator status. We can also announce the return of pool sessions at Ivybridge which offers the chance to practise skills while remaining conveniently surrounded by walls (page 3). Away from the water, the committee has been navigating rather choppy regulatory seas (page 4). New standards from Paddle UK mean that leaders and coaches may soon face additional requirements, forms, credentials, approvals and, quite possibly, a stronger appreciation for paperwork. The club’s approach appears sensible: keep paddling, stay safe, and avoid being swept away by the current of administrative detail.

As usual, the Creek Chronicle (page 7) revealed another remarkably busy month. Members paddled to beaches, around

headlands, through caves, across the Sound, and occasionally into the water itself. Training sessions covered charts, weather, tides and buoyage, while recreational paddlers enjoyed excellent conditions, good company and the opportunity to discover that “looking at things from a different perspective” is not always intentional. Rescues were performed, teamwork was demonstrated, and several paddlers successfully converted previous instruction into practical action when required. Not every expedition went entirely according to chart. Across the month there were enough training sessions, recreational paddles and extra outings to make even the most dedicated kayak slightly seasick from overwork. Numerous leaders stepped forward, distances were logged, caves were explored and lunch stops were thoroughly field-tested.

As ever, members are encouraged to contribute future stories. After all, a newsletter without submissions is a bit like a kayak without a paddle: technically possible, but progress may be somewhat limited newsletter@ppca.org.uk.





Whitewater anyone?

Clive Ashford



Photo: Tom Kilpatrick, Pexels.com

The PPCA whitewater season starts on the first Sunday in October and end on the last Sunday in March. All trips being dependent on water levels. Whitewater? Well, it's super dooper exciting, it happens on fresh water and participants are in danger of suffering from uncontrollable smiling. 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. If you have a dry suit, then that would be your best option, but a wet suit and a good cag (and maybe dry trousers) work well enough.

Whitewater paddlers need to have a few skills in their arsenal, in particular 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. And whilst we are talking about equipment, it goes without saying (but I'm saying it anyway) that river paddling is a small boat activity.

As a rule of thumb, river trips generally meet at the car park near the Co-op in the Ridgeway, Plympton. (What3words give this location as crazy.stir.body) We do not go to Mount Batten first to collect equipment, but club equipment is available to hire for the season for a small charge. If you wish to use club equipment please contact the club equipment officer, Pete Anderson, on 07958 694434 or equipment@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk Trip details, including where and when to meet, will appear on the club forum (and probably on facebook) a few days in advance.

Let's have fun. Clive A.



Rapid Reads

Mark Perry (Chairman)

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We have been able to secure Tuesday nights again this Autumn / Winter for pool sessions at Ivybridge, starting 29th Sept. This year we will be trialling a different method of booking and paying when sea kayaks are used - the nett cost will be the same as last year but should allow the full choice of dates for their use. More details to follow via FB & Forum when booking & payment is made available via our website.

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ALL CHANGE AT PPCA? Part 1

Adam Coulson (Club Leader)

Paddle UK (PUK) is the new name for British Canoeing (BC), previously the British Canoe Union (BCU). The change may simply reflect the fact that canoeing is now just one part of a much wider paddlesport community. In January 2026, PUK published a new Standards for Deployment Policy (SfDP), which will become mandatory for affiliated clubs from the start of 2027. That may not sound like thrilling reading, but it matters to PPCA. The policy could have a major impact on how many clubs operate, including ours, and it may require some changes to the paddles and courses we can offer. I have included links (Ctrl+Click) to the relevant documents for anyone who would like to look at the detail. The subject is technical in places, but I have tried to keep this summary as clear and relevant as possible. PPCA depends on the time, enthusiasm and expertise of a small group of experienced leaders and coaches. Under the new SfDP, some may not meet the requirements for particular activities, which could limit what the club is able to run. Even so, the committee believes that PPCA should remain affiliated with PUK. Affiliation helps represent our sport, allows us to offer PUK courses for newer paddlers, and provides insurance for club activities.





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The Standards for Deployment refer to Environmental Definitions and Deployment Guidance for Instructors, Coaches and Leaders. This covers things such as geography, sea conditions, weather, river levels and leader-to-paddler ratios. At the moment, PPCA does not operate entirely within that guidance. The key word here is “guidance”: it is not mandatory, but clubs must be able to explain and justify any decisions to work outside it. Helpfully, PUK recognises a degree of club discretion in its FAQs on deployment. The following section is particularly relevant:

Q. I am a certificated coach or leader. Can I operate outside of the recommended ratios and remits?

A. As a BCU/BC/BCAB Coach or Leader you have been assessed that you are able to make appropriate professional judgement, and use informed decisions on the suitable environment and craft taking into account your own skills, experience and knowledge as well as those you are coaching/leading. Working outside of your formal qualification remit, would require a robust and detailed risk assessment to be carried out, a recorded and current skills verification approved by the committee gaining assurances from experienced coaches or leaders holding an appropriate qualification within the discipline and environment.

For that reason, the club intends to use this discretion to approve leaders for the activities we currently offer, including some that may sit outside a leader’s formal qualification remit.

Leaders, including coaches, will need to apply for approval from the club committee and meet the following requirements:

1. Hold the required formal qualification for the activity, location and conditions from BCAB, BC or BCU. See also point 11.
2. Have On The Water membership of PUK, with Qualifications & Credentials kept up to date where required (<https://paddleuk.justgo.com/>).
3. Hold a current First Aid Credential, normally a two-day outdoor course.
4. Have current appropriate safeguarding training.
5. Keep Continuing Professional Development up to date, currently 20 points every three years.
6. Complete the Code of Conduct E-Learning, which takes about 15 minutes and is free.
7. Work within the Club Risk Assessment, which will be updated and made easier to find on the website.
8. Carry out a dynamic risk assessment before launch and throughout the activity.



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9. Be aged 18 or over.
10. Follow PPCA standards for leader-to-paddler ratios and operating areas, as set out below.
11. Anyone who does not hold the required formal qualification for the activity, location and conditions must also have:
 - (a) A formal qualification at any level from BCAB, BC or BCU, recorded on <https://paddleuk.justgo.com/>.
 - (b) Annual club committee approval to lead or coach outside PUK recommendations.

Some of these requirements are already familiar to PPCA leaders; others are new. The links are there for anyone who wants more detail, but the main message is that the club is working through the implications now so we can keep paddling safely and confidently. The committee and our leaders have been working through these issues so that PPCA can continue to offer both led and coached paddles in 2027. There will be some changes, and I will explain these in Part 2.



Thank you for reading this far, especially through the policy detail. If you have questions, please do get in touch. I will answer as clearly as I can and may include some of the questions and answers in the next edition.

Adam (leader@ppca.org.uk)



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Creek Chronicle

Adam Coulson

Wet Training Events



- Tuesday 4th August Those who didn't want to join the recreational paddle could have joined Nigel for a session on buoyage and charts.
- Tuesday 4th August However, lots of people joined Andy for a combined Intro+, Discover & Explore group who did some fun stuff around Mountbatten by the look of it.



- Tuesday 11th August Nigel discussed the weather and it's effects on the kayaker with 5 others.
- Tuesday 11th August. Andy stepped in again to make sure that there was something for Intro+, Discover & Explore level paddlers and got 11 people out.
- Together with the recreational paddle PPCA put on three options and 29 took part.



- Tuesday 18th August: and Andy had another fair sized group out for training.
- Sunday 23rd August: Jane ran an intro course with the help of Lee and Gillian.

8 guests attended, comprising newbies and returners and were either introduced or reintroduced to the joys of kayaking by Jane and the team.



- Tuesday 25th August Calendar says Terry lead a Discover/Explore group
- Tuesday 25th August Calendar says Jane lead an intro plus session

Wet Recreational Events

- Saturday 1st August Terry led the monthly sea kayak paddle and says: with great sea conditions and a strong group of paddlers we headed direct out to Rame Head. Making good progress we paddled around Rame Head into Whitsand Bay and landed at Western Gear beach just after midday. After a leisurely lunch the return was following a similar route via Penlee Point. With the breeze on our backs and a following sea, progress was easy crossing the Sound on slack water. A good workout today paddling just under 14 miles. A great paddle and excellent company. Please note that Western Gear beach faces south- west and doesn't always look like the photo!
- Saturday 1st August Meantime, Andy led a small group of 4 on the short



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morning paddle, and I will quote Emma on facebook thus: 'Great rec paddle this morning led by Andy Kittle. Lovely tour of the Sound with some skills coaching along the way. Talked about tides, ferry drift and currents so good to apply Tuesdays information from Nigel Hingston . A little excitement provided by Carol when she decided to look under the surface for a different perspective followed by a great example of teamwork and application of prior training applied to get her back enjoying the view. Checked out some of the local neighbours too whilst passing Drake Island"



- Tuesday 4th August A choice of 3 events this evening. Clive led a group of 5 on their rec paddle.
- Friday 7th August Pete looks very pleased in the photo to be leading a group on this glorious sunny summer evening.



- Saturday 8th August Pete did a double shift at PPCA this weekend and led a group of 8 on the Saturday rec, one of whom wrote: Out from MB into an SE breeze and against the tide. Making

good time we stopped for lunch on Langdon beach just past Wembury Point. After lunch out to the Mewstone and a chance to explore the caves on a rising tide. The return to MB was easy with wind and tide assisting. Around 10 miles distance today.



- Saturday 8th August Allen put on an extra short paddle this morning and a further 6 went with him



- Tuesday 11th August Allen stood in for Adam and lead 12 on this evening's rec paddle.
- Friday 14th August Damean led
- Saturday 15th August Andy had a group of 10 for the recreational paddle today.
- Saturday 15th August Allen put on another extra short morning paddle which was also popular. Devil's Point proved to be an introduction to moving water for some. I'm not sure that they'll be off to play in Anglesey any time soon!



- Tuesday 18th August Tery led the evening recreational paddle



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- Friday 21st August Brim had a busy weekend for the club and led a group of 6 out this evening and then ...
- Saturday 22nd August ... a further 12 on a lovely sunny paddle out around the Mewstone today. With the wind behind us on the way back. Thanks to Joy for write up. It appears that there was swimming.



- Saturday 22nd August Allen kindly

offered another option this morning in the form of a short paddle which a few folks benefitted from.

- Sunday 23rd August: Sadly, an insufficient number of people wished to paddle out from Dittisham on the estuary trip and it was cancelled Do PPCA members really only want to paddle in Plymouth?



- Tuesday 25th August: Calendar says Terry lead a recreational paddle
- Friday 28th August: Calendar says Pete lead a recreational paddle
- Saturday 29th August: Calendar says Terry lead a recreational paddle



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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

Chair	Mark Perry	chair@ppca.org.uk
Vice-Chair	Anita Maidment	vchair@ppca.org.uk
Club Leader	Adam Coulson	leader@ppca.org.uk
Assistant Club Leader	Vacant	acleader@ppca.org.uk
Club Secretary	Jackie Perry	secretary@ppca.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Helga Pinn	membership@ppca.org.uk
Welfare Officer	Alan Ede	welfare@ppca.org.uk
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Health and Safety Officer	Damean Miller	safety@ppca.org.uk
Club President	Clive Ashford	president@ppca.org.uk

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

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