

Minutes of the Coaching Development Group Meeting

13th April 2021



Present:

- Annie Davis, John Simmonds, Anj Hill, Mike Lambourne, Mark Corti, Lee Horton, Mat Simmonds, Mark Harris, Wally Shave, Jacob Baisley

Apologies

- Steve Chinn, Rob Davis, Richard Clarke, Bryn Price

Minutes of the Meeting

1 Beginner Course Feedback

Bookings have been steady rather than frantic, attributed to the recent cold spell. All courses are now full until June. We're expecting record demand, as well as continuing interest from current members. **John Simmonds** reports that membership renewals are at record levels for the time of year.

- **Mark Harris** can offer courses once he's updated his coaching, CPD etc
- **Wally Shave** can offer course dates but needs to finalise other commitments first
- **Mike Lambourne** can offer course dates but needs to finalise other commitments first

2 Explore Course Feedback

Demand was expected to be high, but bookings have been erratic with some courses filling up almost immediately and others staying empty. FSRT courses the same. There's no obvious reason for the disparity - courses are broadly equivalent in terms of dates and times - and it's not clear what the reason is. Several possibilities were advanced:

- a lack of understanding what the Explore Award is
- a lack of understanding of the benefits of it for personal paddling
- a lack of awareness of the recent rule change requiring boatshed key holders to hold the award
- a feeling of intimidation that the Explore Award is a big step up

These are all broadly failures of communication, and the proposed solutions reflect that. Proposed solutions include:

- personal invites to people who are moving on with their paddling and would benefit. **ALL**
- better information on the Club website. **Mike Lambourne** and **Mark Corti** to update calendar event pages and advertising for future courses

- an awareness that the training is useful even if the participant won't be ready for assessment; again, personal contact key. **ALL** / to include on Club advertising
- More communication from the committee regarding key holder requirements and PAA program. **John Simmonds**. (This will happen naturally to some extent as these initiatives become more embedded in Club culture.)
- also encourage paddlers whose experience may be deep in some areas but perhaps not well-rounded in others to have some specific mentoring to fill out the gaps, and then undertake Explore Award assessment.

Annie Davis, Lee Horton, Mark Corti have collaborated to create an MCC syllabus for the Explore Award which is in the Coaching Resources area of the website. Mark Corti to also share his personal session plans in case these are useful; the eventual aim is to have a set of sessions similar to the Beginner Courses that all coaches – regardless of level – are able to deliver.

3 Paddlesport Activity Assistant

Following on from the discussion at the CDG meeting last year, the Committee decided to adopt British Canoeing's Paddlesport Activity Assistant as a required qualification for people leading short local trips for new club members. The PAA syllabus isn't mandated by BC and requires the Club to come up with its own standards. Interested coaches met last week to discuss this. **Mark Corti, Lee Horton** and others relayed that the standards adopted were:

- personal paddling ability to be Explore Award standard
- rescue ability to be Explore Award standard (i.e. no FSRT requirement)
- first aid ability to be Explore Award standard (i.e. no formal first aid requirement)
- trip planning ability to be Explore Award standard
- DBS required
- familiarity with relevant Club risk assessments, incident report forms, and other docs
- environmental limits to be Very Sheltered Water *which the PAA is already familiar with*. Ensure they know what Very Sheltered Water means.
- Max numbers: 5 paddlers + PAA
- Ensure the PAA is confident in saying "no" if conditions or paddlers aren't suitable, and who to contact at the Club in case of difficulties
- Ensure they ask if anyone has any issues, illnesses or medication *before* they get on the water.
- PAA assessment (assuming they have Explore Award and have read any required docs etc.) to be a 1-hour paddle with a couple of fixed, easy questions.

Jacob Baisley & Lee Horton are hoping to finalise this later this week, and launch fully after a test assessment with **Anj Hill** possibly this weekend. PAA program to be advertised and added to website where appropriate (**Mark Corti**)

Mark Corti to add text to all trips & tours calendar events reminding all paddlers that they need to mention any relevant medical issues to whoever is leading the trip.

4 Female-only paddles

Annie Davis relayed that there had been a couple of occasions where female paddlers had been left behind on paddles. These paddlers have consequently requested female-only paddles to be organised. It was unknown whether these were peer paddles or "led" trips.

A wide-ranging discussion, summarised as follows:

- paddlers shouldn't be left behind regardless of gender. **Annie Davis** to investigate

- whether these were led or peer paddles. If led, CDG to speak to leaders concerned.
- it was felt that female-only paddles were not the appropriate solution to this problem
- that being said, there's no reason these paddlers could not organise female-only paddles and put them on the calendar. The PAA program will assist with this.

5 SUP Beginner course syllabus input

Steve Chinn has been working on a syllabus for SUP-specific beginner course which he is planning to run. He's basing it closely on the existing beginner course syllabus, but he requested input on whether a session 3 (trying other boats) was required for these courses. A range of views put forward, and the benefits of giving new paddlers a broad view of paddlesport in general was felt beneficial.

That being said, it was felt that SUP Beginners have a more specific aim in mind than the majority of beginner course participants; and there are practical difficulties in running a session 3 with a small group (we only have 3 SUPs). On balance it was felt that **Steve Chinn** was correct and a "trying other boats" session wasn't required.

It was felt that the four-session (8 hour) format was worthwhile and that the SUP course should stick to that, using the extra time to add some polish and finesse to technique.

Other SUP-related things:

- **Lee Horton** reports he will fix the fin on the new SUP shortly
- It was agreed to request that the committee purchase new coiled leashes for the Club (**John Simmonds** to action)
- **Anj Hill** pointed out that ankle straps for leashes were now considered unsafe, and quick-release waist belts were preferable. **John Simmonds** to request that the committee purchase these also
- **Steve Chinn** requested a spare SUP paddle for the Club; **John Simmonds** to request this, plus a spare leash, from the committee.

6 Coach Updates

Several coaches require CPD; most require safeguarding training; and a few require first aid.

- **Lee Horton** reported that there are free online CPD courses available from British Canoeing - <https://www.britishcanoeingawarding.org.uk/digital-library/> - **Mark Corti** to put on the website.
- **Mark Corti** reminded coaches that CDG meetings and Peer Paddles count as CPD; attendance certificates available on request.
- **John Simmonds** reported there is live online Safeguarding Training available from U.K. Coaching, as well as the BC online refresher course - he will send the link to **Mark Corti** to put on the website.
- **Mat Simmonds** to contact BC and find out what old L2 Coaches must do to regain currency, and share that with the group.
- **Lee Horton** will run a first aid course for those who need it; currently **Mark Harris**, **Jacob Baisley**, **Norman Brooks**, **Geoff Orford**
- **Mark Corti** to contact non-current coaches individually and encourage them

7 Paddlesport Instructor Course

Lee Horton has organised a PI course on June 5/6 which is full (6 participants). It was agreed we should run a second one possibly in July. **Anj Hill** is interested, so we should

arrange a date she can make. We hope to fill the remaining spaces with Club members; failing that with non-members; and failing that, we can cancel. Financial risk to the Club should therefore be minimal. **John Simmonds** and **Lee Horton** to request committee agreement for this. **Lee Horton** to then arrange the course.

8 Core Coaching Course

There are several L1 Coaches / Paddlesport Instructors who are interested in becoming Coaches (old L2). There are 3 stages to this:

- Core Coach training (2 days)
- Discipline Specific training – possibly sheltered water, but no limitations from other disciplines e.g. white water, racing (2 days)
- Discipline Specific assessment (2 days)

It was therefore thought worthwhile for the Club to run a Core Coach training weekend; coaches can then do whatever discipline-specific training appeals to them elsewhere, or the Club can run a sheltered water (Canoe & Kayak Coach) session if there is demand. Again, spaces to be filled by Club members; failing that non-members; and failing that we can cancel. **John Simmonds** to approach the committee and request agreement for this; **Mark Corti** to then arrange the course.

9 Next meeting

Monday May 10th (note alteration)