

Chairperson's Report for Year ending 31st Dec 2021

Developments during 2021

A More Varied Use of Zoom Meetings beyond Committee and AGM meetings

- **Navigation classes via Zoom**

Greg delivered a number of blocks of on-line navigation lessons via Zoom, having gone to the trouble of posting out training maps etc. We are close to the final approval of an Ards Council Equipment Grant Application for Navigation equipment for live teaching. The grant could only be for non-essential equipment.

- **EP Group .**

An Experienced Paddler includes members with British Canoeing Coaching and or Leadership Awards and also experienced paddlers who have applied to the programme and have been given a remit to assist or lead on BKC paddles by a club sub Committee and this remit is then formally agreed by the full Committee.

The group of EPs has met several times by Zoom and Carl somehow creates a scenario where the EPs almost compete for dates in a programme of Beginner and Improver Sea Paddles.

If a club paddle doesn't have enough Experienced Paddlers to satisfy the ratios set out by BC, and therefore our Insurers, a paddle leader can ask the EP group if anyone is able to assist.

Ashley Hunter instigated and chaired two excellent zoom sessions on **Leadership** in the context of Club Paddles

Malcolm organised two paddles for the EPs when the restrictions were easing so that we could consider Covid protocols and leadership in a practical setting.

Club River trips outside Ireland

On top of the multiple river paddles during the year there was a very successful trip in November to the rivers of the Lake District with all the planning involved that entailed.

Training to achieve BC Awards

This has developed in the last couple of years after a bit of a lapse. The club coaches have been providing training for the BC paddle Sport Explore Award and Kayak Awards- very roughly equivalent to 2* and 3* awards in the old system.

The delivery of an FSRT Foundation Safety and Rescue Training course to members.

Thank-you to Caoimhe for delivering this very wet course.

Killyleagh as an additional focus for club paddling

Malcolm will bring the meeting up to date with this project in addition to delivering his report as Club Training Officer

Other Club Activities during the Year

I've looked through the Events Calendar of 2021 and even in the winter months there has been something of interest on the calendar. However from May to September 2021 there was an explosion of paddles posted- often with two, three or four paddles posted on Saturdays especially.

I would like to say that we are indebted to Malcolm, Jordan, Olly and Simon for delivering blocks of whitewater kayak training sessions and also many whitewater paddles with a range of difficulty. Thank-you also to John Cunningham, Malcolm, Jordan, Caoimhe and Mark for coaching Open Boat skills. The delivery of the blocks of Sea Skill Sessions for Beginners and Improvers requires quite a big group of EPs- thank-you also to all of those people for their time. It is important to provide paddles suitable for the on-going development of all our new folk and again our EPs are essential.

Club Finances

Carl will present his Treasurer's report for 2020 shortly. Two summary spreadsheets for the year ending 2021 have been added to the Documents folder in the Resources section of the club's website. I would like to express our appreciation for Carl's meticulous and relentless work in looking after the club funds. We wish him well for his spell coaching kayaking in the Greece. It is typical of Carl that he has arranged for an excellent substitute treasurer whilst he is away. Carl is a VIP member of the club. He is the driving force behind the programme of Beginner and Improver paddles, he liaises with prospective and new members via the club's public Facebook page and has identified second hand sea boats for sale for numerous new members.

As BKC is a registered charity we are required to have the accounts audited by an Independent Examiner. Rebecca Hutchinson has kindly taken on this role and signed off the 2020 Financial Report.

As I did at the last AGM I want to make it clear that, as a Committee, we have taken the decision that if a member is willing to give their time and expertise to leading and coaching that we don't believe he/she should be out of pocket. Coaches, Leaders and EPs are required to have Full membership of CANI and so the club offers to pay the difference between Affiliate CANI membership and Full membership. Similarly the club will financially support the training and assessment for BC Coaching and Leadership Awards. A big majority of Coaches, Leaders and EPs have needed to re-validate their Rec2 certificate in 2020,

(which has a shelf life of three years), and again the club reimbursed the expense incurred. The caveat is that we will do this only whilst the club can afford it.

Looking Forward

At the end of 2021 we had 186 members, compared to 152 at the end of 2020. The club is growing apace and it is becoming more challenging to get to know all the members. It is also challenging to put on enough Improver and above paddles whilst also offering Beginner paddles. It is a balancing act and potentially we could become a victim of our success- if success is measured in the number of members alone.

There are several small groups of friends who paddle on peer paddles. The organisers of these are developing their leadership skills and providing good paddling opportunities but please be aware that these paddles are not part of the club committee's considerable responsibility.

There is a need for more folk to apply for and be signed off by the Committee with an Experienced paddler/EP remit to assist or lead on club paddles as relatively big numbers are signing up for the Beginner and Improver paddles.

It is all a balancing act and potentially we could become a victim of our success- if success is measured in the number of members alone.

Please bring your suggestions re developing/ improving the club to the meeting or to the Committee.

Patricia Scovell

Chairperson