

Annual Report

2020



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Chair's Report

Professor John Coyne CBE



To say that 2020 has been an extraordinary and challenging year is a massive understatement. Yet it has also been a year of great progress for your organisation which required extraordinary commitment from so many parts of our community. It was going to be the capstone year of our Strategic Plan: Stronger Together - and the year in which we set new aspirations, new targets and produced our new plan. We had expected to be hosting two major championships in Slalom and Freestyle at Lee Valley and Nottingham respectively. We also had exciting development plans to support our recreational paddlers and to drive forward our work on access and the environment. Your board was satisfied with the progress we had made in 2019 and was looking forward confidently, optimistically and enthusiastically to 2020.

The year began well with ambitious targets in place for trails, Go Paddling, our digital transformation agenda, our member services, our coaching qualifications and the general effectiveness of the organisation. Our first board meeting in January reflected the ambition but the first hints of trouble had begun to emerge and by the time we held our AGM in March we had had to put pandemic contingency plans in place. It was a wonderful AGM weekend with a significant member turnout despite the gathering clouds of Covid-19. It was probably one of the final, in person, events of its kind that could be held as the country quickly moved into lockdown. That we were able to celebrate together, the contribution and achievements of our fantastic volunteers within our paddling community and celebrate the progress of British Canoeing took on an added significance as the year unfolded. The qualities that we recognised in our volunteers at that event are the very qualities that have seen us thrive as a community through the lockdowns and restrictions over the course of this last year.

You will be well aware that our staff have been 'home working', we have had to unpick our event hosting and had to cancel participation of our many teams in all disciplines in international competition. It is massively to the credit of athletes, coaches and volunteers across all disciplines that they have put in as much effort and commitment to help manage disappointment as they do to ensure our competitors always have the best support.

We also recognise that it was a particularly challenging year for clubs, with club houses being closed for much of the year and club activity significantly reduced. The same was true for commercial providers who were particularly disadvantaged by the restrictions and we saw this nationally with a significant decrease in the number of qualification courses being run in 2020.

The challenges were many, complex and demanding but we have collectively worked our way through them, made huge progress in so many domains and closed the year in a strong position to raise our momentum and our ambition in 2021. During 2021 we shall be engaging with our membership to create our next development plan.

During the year we welcomed record numbers of new members and achieved our best ever retention rates. We finished the year with almost 63,000 members. We were also on the front foot in keeping our members safe and well and ensuring that our guidance was always timely and appropriate. We have benefitted enormously from the clarity of guidance given by our staff and the encouragement to paddle that remained in England. Different regimes in the home nations were a source of confusion at times but staff sought always to be clear. The Go Paddling website really came into its own during the year, with around 415,000 unique visitors in 2020, up from 117,000 in 2019. The website in place was one of the keys to the membership growth and a huge asset to assist those new to paddling or returning to it.

Our investment in digital capability set us up well for the context we faced. It enabled home working seamlessly, it supported members, it kept information flows active, it enabled podcasts and engagement and our committee business continued unabated. We also launched a staff intranet, an athletes' intranet, Paddles up Training (as a new resource for learners and providers within England) and the Clubhouse (a resource for club administrators in England). Each should have a very positive impact for our members over the next few years. Your organisation has not stood still – indeed it has driven forward purposefully to serve our members and our clubs better.

We progressed our Clear Access, Clear Waters campaign through our work to influence both the Agriculture and Environmental Bills as we know that easy and uncontested access to rivers and lakes is a top priority for our recreational and challenge community. We surpassed 10,000 signatures to our petition and now set our sights on furthering that target before submitting it to the Government.

Paddlers' work across the country in 'clean ups' and to eradicate invasive non-native species was again inspiring. Our volunteer clean up community has been sensational this year whilst always respecting the rules and restrictions in place.

In a normal year I would be able to share with you the performances and achievements of our talented athlete community but this will have to wait until next year. I am confident that I shall have some fabulous stories to share. Nonetheless, we have received recognition within our broader community. Craig Morris was recognised within the UK Sport Awards for his outstanding coaching and the Coach Analysis Tool won an award for e-learning excellence at the Association Awards. We were shortlisted for Individual Member Organisation of the year at the Association Awards and shortlisted within European Sport for European Rights Holder of the Year (alongside Paris St Germain FC and others!) External validation of the quality of your organisation and how it strives to serve you, its members, is vital to us. We want to be best in class in how we run our organisation and serve you and our wider stakeholders.

During the year we were pleased to retain the highest level of recognition by the Child Protection in Sport Unit and also to remain fully compliant with the UK Code of Sports Governance.

In March we released the findings and recommendations from an investigation into a number of historic concerns raised in April 2017, which reported in late 2019. It was clear from the findings of the Report, that there were serious organisational deficiencies in the past. We deeply regret that the lack of appropriate processes created an environment where some unacceptable behaviour was not suitably addressed. The Report recognised that British Canoeing has taken significant steps since 2016 to address these recommendations, but that there is still more work to be done. An action plan in response to this report was created in April 2020 and the Board has reviewed progress towards these actions at each of its meetings and we expect this to be completed during 2021.

It really was a very different and difficult year, but we have come through it strongly, worked hard and collectively, never let Covid-19 be an excuse and have put some very important developments in place. Our community of staff, our committees and volunteers - centrally and in all parts of our paddling community - have served us extraordinarily well this year. Partnership working, collaboration, mutual respect and living the values of the organisation has been pivotal to our continued success.

We also finished the financial year in robust health. The financial results are presented separately within this Report, but I am pleased to confirm that the consolidated results for the financial year ended 31 October 2020 was a surplus of £528,000. This surplus was largely generated from the growth in membership income, which more than offset losses in income within other areas including coaching, competition and events.

The consolidated reserves now stand at £1,458,790, with £556,000 of this ring fenced within various committees. The 'centrally held' unrestricted reserve of £850,000, is now only £75,000 short of the 'investment level' of the reserves that is the target within the British Canoeing Reserve Policy.

Your board has worked imaginatively and with commitment and I would like to say a huge thank you on your behalf to them, to the staff, to our committee members and the many stakeholders, funders and supporters and to the thousands of volunteers in clubs and committees who are the beating heart of our organisation. I wish to extend our appreciation to our Chief Executive, David Joy, for his tireless endeavour and clear insight. His leadership has ensured that we can report so positively in this document.

This is also the final year for our President Ivan Lawler MBE who is stepping down after four years in post. He has been an animated, active and engaged President and one from whom we have all learned a great deal. He deserves our sincere vote of thanks for his contribution and I know that he will remain an active voice in our community.

It has been a pleasure to work for you and with you in this extraordinary year. We hope 2021 is a much better year for all of us where we can meet together, work together and chart the next steps of our development.

Best wishes

Professor John Coyne CBE



Chair, British Canoeing

President's Report

Ivan Lawler MBE



“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times”

2020! There is no need to reiterate what the background to the last 12 months has been. But for many thousands of people 2020 has seen them introduced to watersports for the first time, an abundance of free time and a summer of fine weather, with most exercise facilities restricted, the result, a windfall of new paddlers for British Canoeing. This in itself was not of our making, but the work that has gone on over the past four years within the organisation meant we were ready and able to capture this flood of new members and offer them a product worthy of their attention.

This influx of numbers, not just to our organisation but onto the waterways, has made the drive for access to waterways even more relevant. There has never been a time when being able to get onto a piece of water near your home has been more important. Also at a time when

trespass laws are set to be tightened it is vital that we add to the voices that preserve our rights of navigation. As members, whether affected directly or not, we need to contribute to this cause. The Clear Access Clear Waters campaign needs you to give it the push to get over the line.

On the downside, the competition community has suffered greatly, from athletes to organisers. Disappointment and frustration have been constant companions this year. It has however been inspirational to see how many have persevered with virtual events, seminars and other internet related offerings, to keep the fire burning. Hopefully, by the time this report is published we will have some light at the end of the tunnel and some real life events on the horizon.

Ultimately the year has shown that both the organisation and its members are robust and resilient and we are well placed for the future.

With regard to the future, this will be my last President's report as I step down from the role. Currently I do not feel that I can dedicate the time to the role that the members deserve. I am ever grateful to all who gave me this opportunity and am proud that there are now four candidates standing to fill the role, a huge step in members feeling they are integral to our future. I very much hope that whoever is elected will continue to be member facing and provide the route for the members' voices to be heard.

The role has allowed me to meet some incredible people, and taught me much. There have been frustrations alongside good times, but being part of a sport I love has made it all worthwhile.

I hope we can all be more active in whatever aspect of paddlesport we enjoy this year, and that the organisation comes out of this very strange period stronger. Many thanks again for the opportunity you all gave to me.

Ivan Lawler MBE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ivan Lawler'.

President, British Canoeing

British Canoeing Board Report

Composition of the Board

Professor John Coyne CBE	Chair and Independent Director
Mark Bache	Independent Director
Richard Boreham	Vice Chair and Senior Independent Director
Stephen Craig	Director nominated by Canoe Association of Northern Ireland
Clare Dallaway	Director nominated by English Forum
James Fry	Independent Director (retired 14 March 2020)
Bronagh Kennedy	Independent Director
Martine Kushner	Independent Director (from 14 March 2020)
Alexandra Lane	Director nominated by English Forum (from 14 March 2020)
Steve Linksted	Director nominated by Scottish Canoe Association
Dee Paterson	Director nominated by English Forum (retired 14 March 2020)
Greg Smale	Director nominated by English Forum
David Wakeling	Director nominated by Canoe Wales
David Joy	British Canoeing Chief Executive Officer

Ivan Lawler MBE as President attended the Board Meetings as an observer in a non-voting capacity.

The Board met five times in 2020

26 January 2020, Nottingham

Attendance 100%

Summary of Board considerations and decisions:

Presentations were given by the Business Development Manager and the Places to Paddle Manager to provide updates relating to the commercial strategy and the Access Charter.

The Board approved the Annual Report and statutory accounts for 2019.

The Board noted the nomination by the English Forum of Alexandra Lane to be appointed as a Director and the Board nominated Bronagh Kennedy to serve a second four year term as Independent Director.

The Board approved the recommendation for Vice President as put forward by the British Canoeing National Honours and Awards Panel (NHAP).

Progress reports were given on British Canoeing Events (BCE) Ltd and AGM planning.

The Board discussed the Investigation into Historical Concerns in a closed session prior to the meeting.

15 March 2020, Nottingham

Attendance 100%

Summary of Board considerations and decisions:

The Chair of the Sprint Review Panel presented the Sprint Situational Analysis Review. It was agreed to share the report and to develop a Sprint Action Plan with strong stakeholder engagement and establish a group to manage the development of a sprint performance strategy.

The Board discussed the impact of Covid-19 on both office and World Class operations and empowered the CEO to react quickly and consistently within government guidelines.

The Head of Coaching & Qualifications presented an update on key areas of coaching activity.

The Board received an update on risk management.

The Board agreed for the Governance & Risk Committee to scrutinise and manage the action plan in response to the historical allegations report.

The Board approved the composition of the Committees of the Board and noted the vacancy on the HR and Remuneration Committee.

Further reports were provided on the World Class Performance Programme, Finance, the 2020 Annual Plan and progress towards the 2021-25 Strategy

28 June 2020, Remote meeting

Attendance 100%

Summary of Board considerations and decisions:

The Head of Membership presented a report on the significant developments within membership activity between March and May 2020.

The Head of Digital presented a progress report on the digital strategy.

The Board discussed the ongoing impact and response to Covid-19.

The Board noted and approved the contents of British Canoeing's Environment and Sustainability Plan including the recruitment of expertise within the membership to form an Advisory Group to inform and drive the plan.

The Board noted the progress against the Sports Resolutions Report action plan.

The Board received a World Class Performance update and approved recommendations to retain all current programme athletes for the 2021 season and to extend the current term of those athletes on the England Talent Programme until June 2021.

The Board received a revised 2020 Annual Plan as a direct result of the impact of Covid-19 and noted the progress towards delivery of the Plan at the half year stage.

The Board received an updated risk register and Finance report.

The Board considered and approved the revised timeline for the introduction of the next strategic plan for British Canoeing for 2022-25.

The Board endorsed and approved the ICF Board and Committee nominations.

20 September 2020, Remote meeting

Attendance 100%

Summary of Board considerations and decisions:

The Board approved several proposals for new club developments, including the introduction of the coach competency assessment process as presented by the Head of Participation and Club Services.

The Performance Director provided an update on progress made within the Sprint Performance Strategy Review and the Board recommended several points for inclusion in the draft strategy.

The Board noted and approved the UK Sport Phase 3 funding proposal for the Paris 2024 cycle.

The Board approved the proposal to create a World Class Programme Selection Policy Advisory Group.

The Board noted the progress against the Action Plan following the Sports Resolutions Report and invited the Governance & Risk Committee to continue to provide scrutiny on these matters until actions had been satisfactorily completed.

The Board received an update on the work around Equality & Diversity and welcomed the decision to appoint a full time Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer.

Further progress reports were presented on the 2020 Annual Plan, Finance, Risk Management and the response to Covid-19.

29 November 2020, Remote meeting

Attendance 100%

Summary of Board considerations and decisions:

The Head of Communications & Business Development and Membership Marketing Manager presented a Communications and Membership update highlighting the significant progress made in 2020.

The Head of Governance attended to present progress reports on the Action Plan following the Sport Resolutions Report.

The Board noted and approved the proposals to host a virtual AGM on Saturday 13 March 2021 and empowered the Governance & Risk Committee to oversee the arrangements.

The Board received the annual safeguarding report detailing statistics of cases and DBS checks carried out over the year.

The Performance Director presented a progress update on the World Class Programme and the latest ICF developments in relation to the Paris Olympic Programme.

The Board approved the revised policy and the proposals of the International and Domestic Events Covid policy position.

The Board approved the budget for 2020/2021 and the Funding Agreement between British Canoeing and British Canoeing Events.

The Board noted the updated Risk Management Register.

The Board noted the progress made in 2020 against the Annual Plan (66% completed) and also approved the 2021 Annual Plan.

[The summary notes of all Board Meetings can be found on the British Canoeing website within the Governance/Board pages.](#)

Governance & Risk Committee Report

Committee Members

Martine Kushner	Chair and Independent Director
Richard Boreham	Independent Director
Stephen Craig	Director nominated by Canoe Association Northern Ireland

In attendance:

David Joy	CEO
Nancy Squires	Head of Governance and Compliance

The Committee met five times in 2020: in February, April, July, October and November.

Attendance 100%

The key areas of work completed by the Committee during 2020 included approving and overseeing progress against the Action Plan, committed to following the completion of the Sport Resolutions report as well as noting and approving British Canoeing's response to the outbreak of Covid 19 in March 2020. The Committee also approved revised selection policies and updated Terms of Reference for the Safeguarding Case Management Group, Performance Wellbeing Group and Athlete Rep Group. The Committee is responsible for oversight and scrutiny of the management of legal, safeguarding, disputes and disciplinary cases and complaints. The Committee noted the outcome of the 2020 AGM and approved proposals for a virtual AGM in 2021.

HR & Remunerations Committee Report

Committee Members

Bronagh Kennedy	Chair and Independent Director
Clare Dallaway	Independent Director, Director nominated by English Forum

In attendance:

David Joy	CEO
Lisa Bryant	Head of HR

The Committee has met three times in 2020, February, August and October.

Attendance 100%.

The key areas of work completed by the Committee during 2020 included the following: people strategy implementation, embedding the values, working from home policy, staff survey, staff wellbeing and HR policy reviews.

Finance & Audit Committee Report

Mark Bache	Chair and Independent Director
Steve Linksted	Director nominated by the Scottish Canoe Association
Alexandra Lane	Director nominated by English Forum – appointed to the committee on 14th March 2020
Craig Wagstaff	Independent co-opted Member

In attendance:

David Joy	CEO
Susan Hicks	Finance Director

The committee has met five times in 2020: January, March, June, September and November.

Attendance 100%

The key areas of work completed by the Committee during 2020 included a VAT review of British Canoeing and British Canoeing Events Limited and monitoring the impacts of Coronavirus on the international events programme of British Canoeing Events Limited, the impact on the income, cashflow and expenditure levels of both companies.

Nominations Committee Report

Professor John Coyne CBE	Chair and Independent Director
Richard Boreham	Independent Director
Clare Dallaway	Director nominated by English Forum
Martine Kushner	Independent Director

In attendance

David Joy	CEO
Nancy Squires	Head of Governance and Compliance

The Committee met once in 2020 in November.

Attendance is 100%

The key areas of work completed by the Committee during 2020 included the update and approval of the Board Skills Matrix and Succession Plan, Diversity Statement and Diversity Action Plan. The Committee also considered and noted Board vacancies, Board Training Plan, Board Self Evaluation, Report against Diversity Action Plan 2018/19. Conflicts of interest of Directors was noted and made available to all Directors. Annual Governance Statement approved. Appraisals of all Board Directors noted.

Financial Report

Despite the challenges faced by the organisation, due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, 2019/2020 has seen British Canoeing record a healthy financial surplus and continue to make significant progress across several of the 11 ambitions within Stronger Together.

Much of the financial surplus recorded was due to the growth in British Canoeing membership for the fifth successive year.

Starting the financial year with 38,549 members, when lockdown measures were first introduced in March 2020 the organisation quickly reacted to the situation and developed an emergency budget to manage the forecast decline in membership, coaching and events income.

Despite great loyalty shown by our members during this difficult time, by April 2020 membership had dropped to 35,975. But a breakthrough came in May 2020 through a limited return to paddling and increased interest in outdoor and water-based activities.

This led to unprecedented membership growth, and through the Go Paddling This Summer campaign increased visibility and profile for paddlesport, which led to British Canoeing having a record-breaking 62,044 members by the end of the financial year, a growth of 61%.

As well as the big growth in membership, new and existing commercial partnerships with Jaffa, Igloo Energy and Caravan and Motorhome Club have contributed to the consolidated surplus.

Naturally the pandemic has affected key areas of the business, particularly within coaching and awards income declining by 51%. The cancellation of two major international events - European Canoe Slalom Championships and Freestyle World Cup - due to be hosted by British Canoeing Events in 2020 impacted events income, although early cancellation minimised the financial impact on the organisation.

Much of the growth in membership and increased engagement was created through the development of British Canoeing's products and services.

The Go Paddling website became the place to go to find out further information on places to paddle, licencing and membership. Over 415,000 unique visitors accessed the Go Paddling website in 2020, compared to 117,000 in 2019.

Further digital products created in 2020 included Paddles up Training as the new resource for learners and providers within England and the Clubhouse, a new intranet for club administrators.

We were able to build on the Clear Access, Clear Waters campaign with political attention drawn onto paddling through our work to influence the Agriculture Bill. By the end of 2020 the target of over 10,000 signatures on our online petition to extend access was achieved.

Grant income from funding partners has reduced in the year in line with lower operating costs, which were heavily impacted by travel restrictions limiting domestic competition, international training and competition and the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Any grants received but not yet expensed are held as deferred creditors on the balance sheet and these funds have heavily contributed to the increase in cash holdings.

Any additional costs to the organisation from salary and cost inflation has been absorbed during the year and for the third consecutive year membership fees have remained static. All expenditure was carefully managed and remained within budget and aligned to the delivery of Stronger Together.

The group surplus for the year after taxation amounted to £528,037, this is made up of a surplus from British Canoeing of £511,047 and a surplus for British Canoeing Events Limited of £16,990.

The surplus generated this year enabled the consolidation of the organisation's reserves to the sustainable level as defined in the revised reserve policy agreed last year. The consolidated reserves of £1,458,790 (2019 £930,753) enable British Canoeing to manage and withstand any future impacts of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, whilst still taking advantage of change and opportunity to secure the financial viability beyond the immediate future and provide reliable services over the longer term.

Annual Accounts 2019/2020

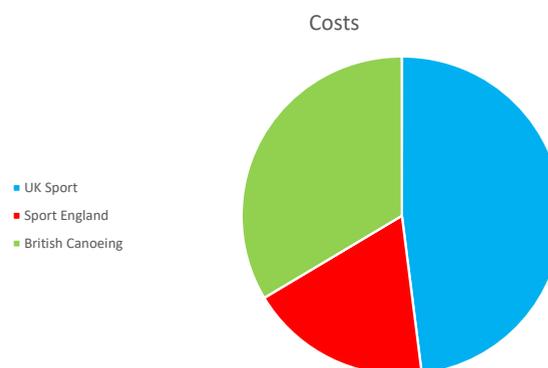
Profit & Loss Account

	2020	2019
Income	8,797,154	9,693,871
Expenditure	(8,274,728)	(9,574,153)
Operating Profit / (Loss)	522,426	119,718
Interest Receivable & similar income	10,677	19,541
Taxation on ordinary activities	(5,066)	(8,815)
Profit / (Loss) on activities after interest and tax	528,037	130,444

Balance Sheet

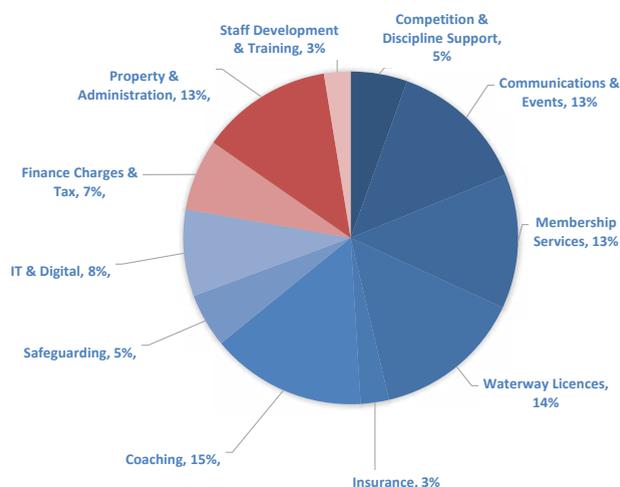
	2020	2019
Fixed Assets	861,651	1,028,119
Current Assets	6,808,174	4,754,774
Current Liabilities	(5,734,620)	(4,299,328)
Long-term Liabilities	(476,415)	(552,812)
Net Assets	1,458,790	930,753
Profit & Loss Account	1,427,963	899,926
Other Reserves	30,827	30,827
Capital and Reserves	1,458,790	930,753

Income	2020	2019
UK Sport	47%	51%
Sport England	18%	21%
Membership, Clubs, Coaching & Commercial	35%	28%



Running Costs

	2020	2019
Competition & Discipline Support	5%	5%
Communications & Events	13%	12%
Membership Services	13%	10%
Waterway Licences	14%	10%
Insurance	3%	3%
Coaching	15%	19%
Safeguarding	5%	6%
IT & Digital	8%	10%
Finance Charges & Tax	7%	6%
Property & Administration	13%	17%
Staff Development & Training	3%	3%



Annual Governance Statement

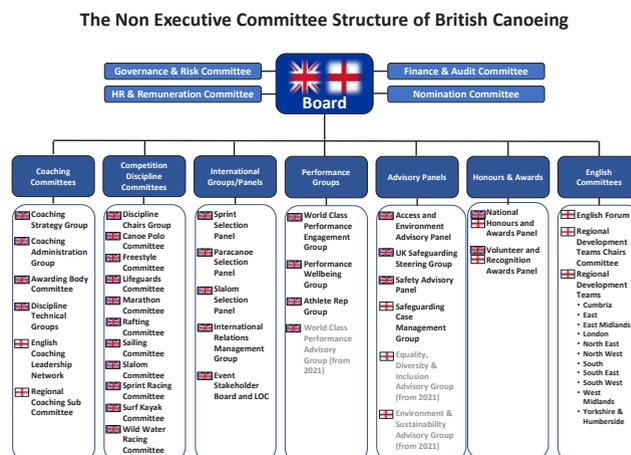
Introduction

The statement reports publicly on the extent to which British Canoeing is in compliance with Tier 3 of A Code for Sports Governance “Code”. This annual governance statement is prepared as part of the Code requirements and outlines our progress to date.

British Canoeing is fully committed to ensuring good governance throughout the organisation. The Board acknowledges that it has a responsibility to ensure there are sound systems in place, not just because it is a mandatory requirement of our funders UK Sport and Sport England but because it is in perfect accord with our strategic plan – Stronger Together.

Structure

Organisations shall have a clear and appropriate governance structure, led by a Board which is collectively responsible for the long- term success of the organisation and exclusively vested with power to lead it. The Board shall be properly constituted and shall operate effectively.



Full details of the Board members including a profile and confirmation of their current term of office is available on our website. <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/about/governance/british-canoeing-board-member>

Full details of the Committees of the Board, their composition and their terms of reference is available on our website <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/about/governance/committees-of-the-board>

The Governance Policy is available on our website: <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/Governance-Policy-revised-March-2019.pdf>. This policy sets out the relationship between the Board and other key constituents within British Canoeing. The policy was reviewed and updated in April 2019 to ensure it was reflected that the Board is comprised of nominated and appointed directors (rather than elected).

During the course of 2019, British Canoeing established a wholly owned subsidiary company, British Canoeing Events Limited, whose purpose is to run British Canoeing’s international events. Throughout 2020 work has been ongoing to finalise policies and procedures required to ensure British Canoeing Event Limited’s compliance with Tier 2 of the Code. This work is anticipated to conclude in early 2021.

People

Organisations shall recruit and engage people with appropriate diversity, independence, skills, experience and knowledge to take effective decisions that further the organisation's goals.

Bronagh Kennedy, Independent Director, was re-appointed to the Board for a second term at the AGM in March 2020.

Alexandra Lane and Martine Kushner were appointed to the Board at the AGM in March 2020. Alexandra Lane is nominated by her National Council, the English Forum. Martine Kushner is an Independent Director, replacing James Fry who retired from the Board in March 2020. Both appointments were made following a robust recruitment process.

The target of a minimum 30% of each gender on the Board was met in 2020.

The Board Skills Matrix was updated in November 2020.

Communication

Organisations shall be transparent and accountable engaging effectively with stakeholders and nurturing internal democracy.

Further and fuller information regarding the work of the organisation is contained in our annual report 2019 <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/British-Canoeing-Annual-Report-2019-Final.pdf> and our annual review 2019-20, a progress report on our strategic plan 'Stronger Together' <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/commonUploads/Annual-Review-2019-20-A-Progress-Report-on-Stronger-Together.pdf>

The annual report contains statutory information such as the annual accounts, it also provides details of the work of the Board and the Committees and attendance of Directors.

In accordance with the Code and in order to ensure engagement with our stakeholders the following surveys were carried out in 2019 and 2020:

- Staff Survey
- Key Volunteer Survey
- Member Survey
- Board Evaluation Survey

In the interests of transparency summaries of the Board meetings are made available on the website.

British Canoeing remains compliant with the Code. The commitment to excellent governance is ongoing and British Canoeing commit to working with our Governance Manager at UK Sport to ensure we are constantly updating and improving in accordance with best practice.

The Governance Action Plan agreed with UK Sport is available on our website - <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/commonUploads/British-Canoeing-Action-Plan-2018.pdf>

Standards and Conduct

Organisations shall uphold high standards of integrity and engage in regular and effective evaluation to drive continuous improvement.

British Canoeing remains committed to its values of

**Every Person Matters
Striving for Excellence
Always with Integrity
Enjoying the Journey
Individually Committed
Stronger Together**

British Canoeing has continued to work collaboratively with the Scottish Canoe Association, Canoe Wales and Canoe Association Northern Ireland in line with the principles set out in the UK Agreement, entered into in January 2019.

In keeping with “Stronger Together” British Canoeing have in place consistent Terms of Reference for each national and regional committee. The national and regional committee structure can be found on pages 20 and 21 of the Annual Report.

Terms of Reference for British Canoeing’s Safeguarding Case Management Group, Performance Wellbeing Group and Athlete Rep Group were also updated in November 2020.

The Board is committed to self-evaluation and continued training during 2020/2021.

The Board conducted an annual review of its performance and its own effectiveness in October/November 2020. The findings were reported to and discussed at the Nominations Committee and full Board meetings in November 2020. In 2020, UK Sport attended and evaluated the Board meeting.

In accordance with the requirements of the Code, Board appraisals were conducted in October/November with the Chair appraising the Board members and the Vice Chair appraising the Chair.

In accordance with the requirements of the Code a register of conflicts of interest is maintained, a register of gifts is maintained and all Board members complete a fit and proper persons declaration upon appointment.

Policies and Processes

Organisations shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations, undertake responsible financial strategic planning and have appropriate controls and risk management procedures.

The Governance and Risk Committee have approved a policy and procedure checklist which is available on the British Canoeing website: <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/British-Canoeing-Policy-and-Procedure-Review-Schedule.pdf>. British Canoeing have committed to a wholesale review of all key policies in procedures. Some policies and procedures were highlighted for review in 2020. This work is ongoing and due for completion in early 2021.

Financial control, financial strategy and internal control is overseen by the Finance and Audit Committee which reports into the Board. Annual accounts are audited by external auditors who presents to the whole Board the outcome of the audit. An external audit by BDO, commissioned by UK Sport, was undertaken in November 2019. All recommendations made as a result of this audit were actioned during 2020.

British Canoeing revised its risk management procedures in 2020, ensuring a consistent assessment of risk, risk management and mitigation across the organisation is continually undertaken and the Senior Management Team and Board are fully briefed on ongoing and emerging risks.

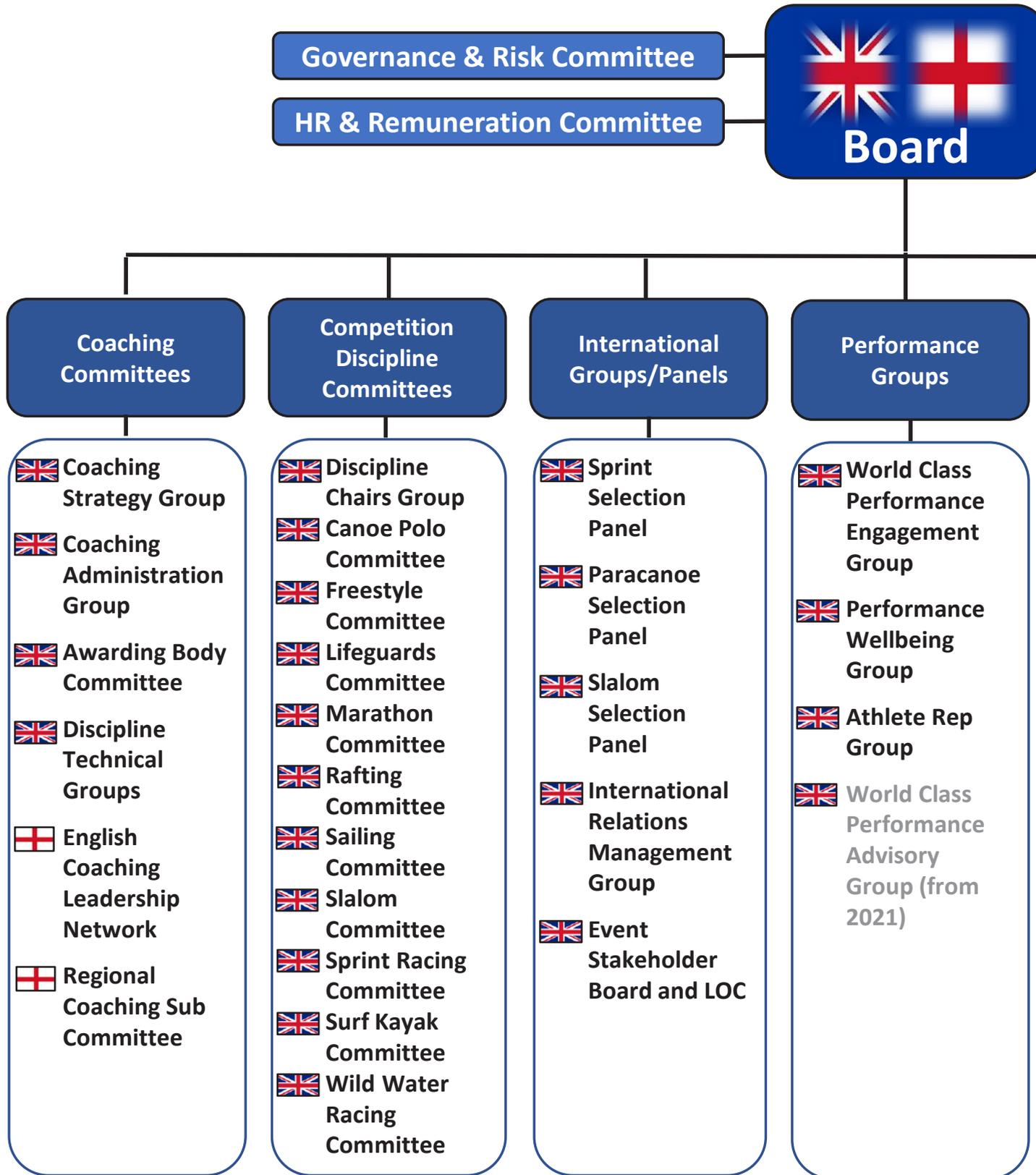
Conclusion

Governance arrangements have been monitored and evaluated during the year by the Governance and Risk Committee which reports into the Board. The Governance and Risk Committee has had reference to and has been involved in assessing the effectiveness of key elements of the Code as outlined above. The Head of Governance and Compliance has responsibility for development and maintenance of Code compliance and good governance overall.

In 2021, besides maintaining Code compliance, the organisation will continue to develop and improve policy and practice, in particular, finalising a review of its dispute resolution and other key policies, increasing governance support for clubs and discipline committees and undertaking a review of the UK Agreement.

The Board has agreed this annual governance statement and is satisfied that the governance arrangements in place are not only sufficient to ensure Tier 3 Code compliance but are also meeting best practice across the sports sector.

British Canoeing Committee Structure



Finance & Audit Committee

Nomination Committee

Advisory Panels

-  **Access and Environment Advisory Panel**
-  **UK Safeguarding Steering Group**
-  **Safety Advisory Panel**
-  **Safeguarding Case Management Group**
-  **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Group (from 2021)**
-  **Environment & Sustainability Advisory Group (from 2021)**

Honours & Awards

-  **National Honours and Awards Panel**
-  **Volunteer and Recognition Awards Panel**

English Committees

-  **English Forum**
-  **Regional Development Teams Chairs Committee**
-  **Regional Development Teams**
 - Cumbria
 - East
 - East Midlands
 - London
 - North East
 - North West
 - South
 - South East
 - South West
 - West Midlands
 - Yorkshire & Humberside

British Canoeing Freestyle Committee Report

Jon Best - Vice Chair

From the launch of the Freestyle Academy to an exciting new partnership, the challenges we all faced in 2020 hasn't stopped Freestyle from continuing to achieve excellence within paddlesport.

2020 Highlights

- The launch of the GB Freestyle Academy
- New partnership formed with University of Lincoln
- The creation of a world class Freestyle feature in Nottingham in preparation for the World Championships
- The Development Pathway continued to progress ready to engage in 2021

The GB Freestyle Academy

The Academy programme was launched this year.

We had an amazing response from the community, and selected 25 candidates from a broad range of clubs across England and Wales to attend the Academy programmes. Those who applied received a letter acknowledging their commitment to personal growth and contribution to their clubs, centre or social group. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, and associated difficulties in arranging small group sessions, the Academy weekends have been postponed until 2021.

New Partnership

This year we formalised a partnership with the University of Lincoln for Sport Science support. We had our first visit to the Human Performance Centre, providing the opportunity for athletes to meet the staff and postgraduates supporting the programme; and allowing the Sports Science personnel to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of freestyle athletes. The visit was successful and the staff and athletes are looking forward to further visits (post Covid-19 restrictions) to test their fitness, anaerobic capacity, speed and power.



World Championships Feature Developed

The creation of the new World Championships feature at Holme Pierrepont White Water Course has been completed. The feature is set to hold the 2021 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Championships in July. This unique opportunity to showcase Freestyle at its best is now supported by a “home” feature that will not only provide the basis for an excellent event but will also support a legacy for Freestyle and paddling in the UK.

The Development Pathway

Although 2020 offered limited opportunities to deliver our performance and recreational programmes, we have been able to further strengthen our governance strategy and work towards delivering an effective Development Pathway and sustainable voluntary workforce. Those programmes delivered have been highly successful with valuable lessons learned to shape programmes moving forward.

GB freestyles athletes and team volunteers rose to the challenge and made great performance gains through the summer period. Our community outreach programmes, although severely restricted by the pandemic, have been greatly welcomed and supported; and there’s a real buzz amongst those fortunate to attend these programmes or waiting for the opportunity to join us.



British Canoeing Lifeguards Committee Report

David Rider - Lifeguarding Officer

Andy Barras - First Aid Officer

Covid-19 brought several challenges. Being a discipline that is very reliant of physical contact, social distancing has put a stop to most of our activities. But amid the challenges, we have managed to keep key awards such as the Aquatic First aid courses running and support the paddling community.

2020 Highlights

- In May 2020 Andrew Barras was elected as First Aid Officer following the stepping down of Phil Driver. We would like to thank Phil for all his hard work over many years
- Supporting and enabling Aquatic First aid courses to be run in a Covid secure way
- The introduction of quarterly webinars which have been well received and kept our coaches engaged
- Continuing our social media growth and improving communication to the wider membership with the swap to a new website

I think it is fair to say 2020 did not exactly go to plan. The planned focus for the year was the roll out of the newly launched Paddle Craft Search Technicians Award. This award is aimed at supporting the use of paddle craft in UK search and rescue activities, namely in high risk missing persons searches. Unfortunately, all events had to be mothballed due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, the interest in the award is still strong with teams from Lowland Rescue, Mountain Rescue England and Wales and Surf lifesaving GB teams all keen to be involved. There is a strong base of trainers to roll out the award when restrictions ease. We have seen the need for these skills grow massively with most Lowland Rescue teams seeing a significant increase in call outs. To our knowledge, paddle craft have been involved with 30+ Searches in 2020 with most of the paddlers being involved with the new award.

Andrew Barras was elected as First Aid Officer in May 2020. Although lockdown has had a big impact on first aid training, some Covid secure courses were able to go ahead in the summer. A new initiative from BC Lifeguards has been the introduction of quarterly webinars which have been well received and kept our coaches engaged. We continue to grow our Aquatic First Aid coach base with two coaches progressing from level 1 to level 2 status.

With the fantastic weather over the summer of 2020, we have seen unprecedented demand for our skills. From the explosion of open water venues, the increase in paddle craft use in Search and Rescue. This enforced lull has led to opportunities to plan and come back stronger in 2021 with a focus ensuring growth and quality of our skill sets to those that need it.



British Canoeing Marathon Committee Report

Stan Missen - Chair

Despite losing virtually all of the racing year to Covid-19, the MRC has continued to meet regularly online.

2020 Highlights

- Successful re-introduction of National Talent Squad and training days
- Formation of a joint sub-committee with the SRC to develop a new “Speed Series” of local and regional sprint and middle-distance hybrid events from 2021
- Agreement to run junior training in conjunction with the SRC and BC’s Talent Department
- New rules for U12 racing and new U14 introductory race for 2021
- Community surveyed for views on major events and gender equality

Domestic Racing

Standing at Richmond Canoe Club in January, watching six of our best male paddlers battling out a sprint finish – it all looked so promising for 2020. After the 13 miles and 3 portages between Elmbridge CC and Richmond CC, it came down to just three seconds between the top 3 K2s in the men’s race, with Tom Lusty (Solihull) and Tim Pendle (Norwich) holding on for the win.

There were rather more comfortable margins for the winners of the womens’ K2 and the Open C2 races. Again, international paddlers dominated, with Alex Lane (Reading) and Sam Rees-Clark (Basingstoke) taking the womens title, and Beth Gill (Chelmsford) with Arthur Leech (Nottingham) the mixed C2.

The junior classes were relatively small, but three of last year’s U16 winners took the U18 races – the Norwich pair of Toby Booth and Ben Want taking the boys’ race and Jessie Urquhart (Banbury) this year with a last-minute replacement partner of the still under 16, Hannah Pemble (Addlestone) the girls’ class. The U16 boys winners, Dom Stanley (Falcon) and Luca Ferri (Elmbridge) were the fastest juniors of all, finishing in a time that would have put them comfortably in the top 20 of the men’s class, while the Wey crew of Honor Lewis and Isabella Jones won the U16 girls. Richmond made the most of home water in the Junior/Vet race, with a win for James Rushby and Brett Irvine, while the young crew of junior internationals, Amber Cox (Elmbridge) and Philip Miles (RLSCC) took the mixed race.

The weather forced a cancellation of Waterside A, but Newbury CC successfully ran the B and C legs, Reading CC were able to host Thameside 1 and Royal Leamington Spa CC managed to run their Hasler race. And then – like everything else in 2020 – we watched the season collapse like a set of dominoes.

International Racing

The MRC took an early decision that it would be impractical to attempt to send teams to the international races. This was quickly vindicated as the races each fell foul of the ongoing pandemic, and it had at least taken the pressure of those trying to juggle training and possible selection around the differing lockdown restrictions around the country.

Training

The MRC re-established the National Training Squad in 2020. There was a named squad of 84 athletes, with their selection based on performances at the 2019 assessment events and National Championships.

The first training day was held in March for those on the squad, and an open invitation to anyone hoping to compete at the first assessment race. The 35 athletes who attended had two on-water sessions and one on land, all with marathon specific skills content. The feedback was very positive, and a K2 day was planned for later in the spring. Plans for 2021 are, like everything, Covid dependent, but it is hoped to run further training events and, if there is a 2021 season, to name an updated squad later in the year.

The second year of the Junior Development Squad was also lost to the pandemic, but there has been work behind the scenes. Starting (hopefully) in 2021, junior skills training will now be offered as a joint programme, with the MRC joining forces with the SRC and BC's Talent Department. It is hoped this will provide the best opportunities for our progressive younger paddlers, whilst also reducing the pressures of time and possible discipline specialisation on them and their parents.

Administration

The committee have continued to meet all year through the joys of Zoom, including a well-attended ACM.

New classes are due to be introduced in 2021 for under 14 racing. This will allow for the use of any boat – not just Lightnings – for the under 12s except in class C, which will still be Lightnings only, and will also allow for those between 12 and 14 who are new to the sport to have a 2-mile introduction to the sport if they are not ready for a 4-mile race. Hasler points will now be awarded from 50 down for a win rather than the previous 20 points. This will ensure that, where there are large fields, paddlers finishing down the order will still be rewarded with points for them and their club.

In conjunction with the SRC's desire to see more regional regattas, clubs are being encouraged to run new speed-based race events - ideally two a year in each region, culminating in a national final. This will include the opportunity for sprint length races and short-course marathon racing.

There is a disparity in participation between males and females – an imbalance which is mirrored across canoeing generally. During the autumn, a survey was undertaken as part of a school project, but with the support of the MRC to identify if there were barriers to women and girls in marathon racing. The results overall were positive in support of the sport, but the MRC is continuing to look at what can be done to improve opportunities and facilities for all. Surveys have also been carried out by BC with MRC involvement on both major events and equipment, and these will also be reviewed by the committee.

The decision to not run a 2021 Hasler Finals was taken at the end of 2020, with the view that the autumn season had already been lost. It is very much hoped that there will be some marathon racing during 2021, and that we will all be able to come together again to celebrate our sport.

British Canoeing Polo Committee Report

David McBay - Publicity Officer

As a team sport, for Canoe Polo 2020 was an extremely challenging year. National Division 1 for both the Open and Women's leagues were completed at the beginning of the year with FoA victorious in both leagues. Across the rest of the national league, the first lockdown brought an end to competition and the pandemic circumstances never improved sufficiently to safely bring a full scale return to the team sport we love.



In the better times, clubs managed to resume competitive training, with a number of small friendly competitions taking place. These pockets of normality were a welcome respite.

In the hardest of times, players across the country turned to individual or household training sessions, enjoying the simplicity of paddling to free the mind.

A slim silver lining to the pandemic, clubs across the country were forced to re-evaluate their outdoor training facilities. Many clubs, some supported by the national committee, identified and set up or substantially improved their outdoor pitches. Further, youth players in particular embraced outdoor training, learning that - with the right equipment - outdoor training could be just as valuable and fun.

We hope for a return to full national and international competition in 2021: we miss our polo family.



British Canoeing Rafting Committee Report

Sean Clarke - Chair

From a year full of plans to a year of planning, support and networking.

2020 Highlights

- All national raft racing events cancelled
- No UK based teams racing at any European or International events
- Focus on the health and wellbeing of all rafters
- Planning for the future with administrative and events reviews

Like all other disciplines, rafting was not exempt from the Covid-19 pandemic. A year full of promise with two IRF Euro Cups planned along with three other domestic races and two development weekends. All plans were put on hold and no events were hosted. Unfortunately because of travel restrictions this also meant teams were unable to compete in some of the smaller European based events either.

As such, work to support teams to be able to train was arduously followed with the “Return to Competitive Rafting” guidance developed and approved in conjunction with British Canoeing and Sport England. This document has held up through the various lockdowns and restrictions across the UK.

Selections for 2021 is still being planned with contingencies for how to undertake selections within the context of the global pandemic. It is hoped that the selections and World level competitions are able to proceed in 2021 with vigorous planning in place to mitigate as many risks as possible.

Due to national lockdowns and restrictions on movement, plans for asset purchases were adjusted. We were still able to secure an additional five rafts for use by teams in training and in our nationally hosted events. However, improvements to race administrative equipment such as radios, slalom spacers and buoys have been placed on hold until 2021 when we hope to be racing again.

We are looking forward to racing again with plans to develop Raft Race Coach Awards and continued growth in our development weekends. As with all plans in this pandemic, we will adjust as necessary.



British Canoeing Sailing Committee Report

Steve Clarke - Chair

British Canoe Sailing is a discipline which has been in existence since the 1870's and has always been at the cutting edge of technology to make a canoe go as fast as possible using sails rather than paddle power. The sailing canoe class is referred to as the International Canoe (IC).

Latest canoes are made of carbon fibre with the most efficient boat design and sail plan using new techniques to get the best of the power available and the rules allow for design improvements within strictly controlled limits on sail sizes and hull length and width.

2020 Highlights

- Innovative new British boat and rig designs and foils increase boat speeds by up to 10%
- Preparation for World Championships In Australia postponed until December 2021
- Current World and European Champion Robin Wood from Newport, South Wales



Over the last decade British designs have lead the way on the World stage improving boat speed and handling, drawing in sailors from other International classes with a bid to dominate the next World Championships in Port Macquarie in Australia.

With the championships postponed until December 2021, the focus has been on developing new rigs to improve aerodynamic performance and lifting foils on the rudders to reduce drag.

The introduction of new designs has increased the numbers of boats in the class and drawn in other sailors with exciting developments making the International Canoe again the world's fastest nonfoiling sailing mono-hull and certainly the fastest canoe of any discipline.

A team of up to 10 boats will be competing and with the current World Champion and several other national and international champions from other classes involved, the expectation for several medals from the British Team is high.

Though always pushing the performance boundaries canoe sailing draws sailors with older design sailing canoes into the competition envelope both nationally and internationally. This inclusive policy means there is constant availability of lower cost canoes for beginners and those working on a modest budget to enable them to compete at national level.

British Canoeing Slalom Committee Report

Dave Spencer - Chair



2020 promised to be an excellent year for Canoe Slalom. Slalom European Championships being held at the Lee Valley White Water centre, our Olympic team already selected and looking forward to competing in Tokyo and, once again, a full domestic racing calendar suitable for all ages and abilities.

Sadly, none of the above came to pass once the Covid pandemic reached our shores. The domestic racing events were postponed and then abandoned altogether when it became impossible to run national competitions that ensured the safety of competitors and volunteers alike.

The annual selection series for GB representative teams was due to take place in the Spring and that also fell victim to the emerging pandemic with the consequence that paddlers across all the age categories were unable to race to achieve places on GB Junior, Under 23 and Senior teams.

Although some International and Championship races did go ahead, GB declined to send teams given the lack of opportunity for athletes to properly prepare for competitive racing.

It has not been all doom and gloom and Slalom paddlers have proved to be a resilient bunch, finding ways to get on the water whenever they can (whilst following Government advice and observing social distancing).

The following example from Wydean Canoe Club typifies the approach of many canoe clubs.

Wydean Canoe Club paddle at Symonds Yat on the River Wye which sits on the border between England and Wales.

During the winter of 2019/20 the club spent time and money on 22 new, fully adjustable, Slalom gates only to have half of these washed away by the February floods. Luckily, a flood relief fund helped fund repairs which finished just as Covid restrictions started in March.

As Wydean's Mike Mitchell lamented:

"For weeks the river was empty, and I would bike past, admiring the work and longing to paddle."

With the exit from the first wave of restrictions and the arrival of beautiful summer weather, everyone in the club was keen to train although Covid restrictions necessitated a change of approach. To manage sessions under social distancing, paddlers were split into groups. Training courses were set and the course plan emailed so everyone could paddle the same course, record their times and compare their results alongside that of their peers.

It was also important for the club to keep younger paddlers interested. As Mike recalled:

***“I also made contact with my beginners’ group from the year before and created a Wydean B team. They have progressed so much, paddling around five times a week. I even managed to get the nine-year-old brother of one of the B team started. He had three sessions on the flat and then, not to hold the others back, progressed to the rapids.*”**

“Teaching a youngster to eskimo roll from 2 metres away was challenging, however two weeks later we succeeded. A week later she asked to learn to hand roll without a paddle, and after some support from her peers succeeded on her second attempt, a week later she was hand rolling in the rapids. Kids learn so fast!”

Slalom is all about racing and in late summer the club decided to hold both a Club Championship and the South West Championships. Unfortunately, a week before the South West Championships race, further restrictions were imposed in Wales, which meant no travel to England and no kayaking for half the Wydean club paddlers who lived in Wales!

The events were successful and demonstrated that racing under Covid restrictions was possible with some tweaks to the format. Limits were placed on the numbers on the water at any one time and all paddlers were placed, and raced, in a group of no more than six individuals. Each group completed their racing before moving off the water for the next group to race.

With growing confidence plans were set for a training weekend and another race weekend but further restrictions in England put an end to that plan, and it was back to paddling in small groups. With the further relaxation/tightening of restrictions any structured training together became increasingly difficult and paddling is restricted to local groups training in ones and twos.

During the winter the club have set up a “Google Meet Gym” workout to keep some working together and hopefully everyone can get back to some sort of normality before long.

Nationally, 2021 has started where 2020 left off and domestic racing is facing further cancellation of competitions. However, the committee continues to work hard behind the scenes to be ready for when competitive paddling can resume later in the year.



British Canoeing Sprint Committee Report

Tim Scott - Chair

Covid-19 has caused upset and sometimes sadness for people both on a personal and professional level. With the postponement of the 2020 Tokyo Games, and the cancellation of all international and domestic racing we hope that paddling (when it has been possible) has helped many with their general health and mental wellbeing enabling them to cope with whatever challenges were before them.

2020 Highlights

- Online communities of coaches, athletes and volunteers sprang up and gave support across the community during lockdowns
- A Sprint Situational Analysis Review examined in depth why the sport has underperformed over the past generation and kick started a new era of collaboration
- Sprint canoe athletes for both paracanoe and non paracanoe continued to train with focus in new imaginative ways that ensured they stayed safe

Elite paracanoeists and non para-athletes were faced with unprecedented challenges for much of the year. The 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as all domestic and international racing were cancelled. The British Canoeing staff team moved quickly to source and supply ergos, gym equipment, re-write training blocks and repurpose goals for the back garden, front rooms and gazebos. Sessions were taken online and virtual coaching developed before the athletes returned initially to water training in July and the gym in August.

Club level activity reflected this same level of ingenuity as online communities sprang up to deliver sessions and connect club members. Athletes trained on the water when restrictions permitted, making the best of opportunities when they arose.



The 2020 [Sprint Situational Analysis](#) review examined in depth the current position of canoe sprint racing. Its report aimed to identify a strategy that will maximise the passion and talents of our athletes and our community. It concluded that long term success can come most effectively through all racing disciplines supporting and collaborating with each other in the development of junior and under 23 athletes. More local racing, increased participation and inclusivity, prioritising long term development through stimulating and supportive environments were all conclusions that had wide support. The report also challenged the national programmes to deliver outstanding experiences, and to ensure that our community of clubs have a clear role to play in the development of our elite athletes.

Many lessons have been learned during 2020 in both canoeing and life. For canoeing, new training methodology, recovery methods and stimulus have all been explored. Additionally, there were great examples of the sports strong sense of identity and purpose drawing the racing community together.

We wish all British Canoeing members a happy, safe and healthy 2021.



British Canoeing Wild Water Racing Committee Report

Simon Wright - Chair

After 20 years as Chair, Peter Schofield stood down at the ACM in January 2020 and under revised Terms of Reference the new WWRC has spent the Covid year primarily following the below activities.

2020 Highlights

- Communicating and overseeing the ever changing Covid situation
- Selecting teams for the Senior World events & Junior/ under 23 European Championships
- Consulting with the WWR community for a rules review
- Developing digital enhancements for the web

A new treasurer was elected to the Committee in January, Ian Tomlinson taking up the financial reigns from Simon Wright who was elected Chair. Julie Lewis continued as secretary (not up for re-election), Jamie Christie the English rep. James Wingfield the Welsh rep. and after further discussions with the SCA WWRC Carl Foody was nominated to join the WWRC as the Scottish rep. Through the year Julie Lewis decided to step away from the group after a promotion and under growing professional pressure from the requirements of Covid. Julie's commitment to the administration of the sport over recent years has kept the sport going so she is to be thanked. The WWRC has met at least monthly over video link and set up smaller sub-groups to follow activities in bite sized chunks.

The senior selection races were completed by mid February and Mark Burton chaired the selection committee to select teams for the rest of the season, the first planned event being the World Championships in the USA due to take place in April. All events were of course ultimately cancelled. It is noteworthy that the selection process was seamless and the WWRC will continue to fine tune the Selection Policy documents going forwards.

The last ranking race took place on March 14th and 60 days notice will be given ahead of ranking races starting again. The WWRC was very keen to run events where possible and in September held the Junior and U23 selection races at Ironbridge to select teams for the postponed Junior/U23 European Championships due to run in early November. However, within one week of the team being due to travel the rapid rise of cases in Slovenia led to this event also being cancelled. For the juniors in their last year of an age group in particular this event gave a focus and at least some sense of achievement and success from an otherwise decimated season.

For the future the WWRC will be looking to complete and publish the rules reviews, consult with the WWR community on the next year's plans, work towards improving our digital tools, increase and develop the WWR presence on social media and ultimately get back to racing as soon as possible.



Coaching Strategy Group Report

Composition of the Coaching Strategy Group:

David Joy	Chair
Lee Pooley	Head of Coaching and Qualifications
Dan Golder	Canoe Wales
Ed Christian	British Canoeing (England)
Doug Cooper	Scottish Canoe Association
Peter Mulhall	Canoe Association of Northern Ireland
Sid Sinfield	World Class Programme Coach Developer
Graham Lyon	Awarding Body Representative

The Coaching Strategy Group (CSG) is responsible for ensuring that the British Canoeing Coaching and Qualification system considers and meets the needs of the members across the UK. It does so by determining and being responsible for the strategy of British Canoeing coaching activities in the UK, managing external relationships on coaching matters and reporting to the British Canoeing Board in relation to these activities and matters.

In 2020, CSG continued its focus on providing appropriate support for coaches and leaders, ensuring the delivery of the four year coaching and leadership plan, as well as consideration of the impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic. CSG has recognised the significance and engagement from the paddlesport community with the digital support systems and resources.

- 129,967 engagements with the coaching digital resources
- 60,000 individuals accessing 20 eLearning packages
- 3500 coaches have completed the self-analysis tool
- 5786 individuals have listened to the coaching podcasts

*Statistics up to December 2020



This successful approach in supporting coaches and leaders has been recognised by external agencies, being shortlisted for the UK Coaching and the Learning Technologies Awards, as well as award winners from the Association Awards.



CSG have overseen several significant projects including the Leadership and Raft Guide Award review, ensuring alignment with our Educational Philosophy, direct access and resources in supporting leaders to run safe, quality, enjoyable trips, based on the group's needs and aspirations. Early 2020, the Performance Coach was approved and launched in June, with coaches able to start their unique journey in developing their coaching craft through support with a mentor, considering current practice and enabling them to steer the direction and focus of their learning.

As part of the four year plan, the Continual Professional Development (CPD) and Safeguarding Training for coaches and leaders requirements were reviewed with CSG approving a new individualised CPD approach that was launched and made available in September 2020 as well as the requirement for coaches and leaders to have appropriate and accessible safeguarding training on a three year basis.

The Coaching Administration Group (CAG) has continued to support coaches and leaders through 2020, providing extensions to learner registrations, facilitating virtual classroom learning for 3269 delegates since March 2020 as well as recruiting and training for providers for new and existing qualifications and awards.

CSG are already considering the next strategic plan for 2022-2025, as well as acknowledging the requirement in 2021 to support and help rebuild, as well as providing further online support and distance learning opportunities.



Performance Wellbeing Group Report

Composition of the Performance Wellbeing Group:

Zofia Campbell	Performance Wellbeing Coach British Canoeing
Emma Groome	Performance Lifestyle Advisor
Jonathan Smith	Performance Psychologist
Danielle Adams-Norenberg	Performance Psychologist
Sid Sinfield	Coach Developer
Hannah Dean	BAC Representative
Stuart Jolly	Independent Member
Teresa Gregory	Independent Member
Jon Schofield	Independent Member
Afton Fitzhenry	Athlete Attendee
Ben Haylett	Athlete Attendee
Bradley Forbes-Cryans	Athlete Attendee
Chelsey Dixon	Athlete Attendee
Hope Gordon	Athlete Attendee
Katie Reid	Athlete Attendee
Kimberley Woods	Athlete Attendee
Phillip Miles	Athlete Attendee
Etienne Stott	Retired Athlete Attendee

Athlete Representatives are invited and we request up to two Athlete Attendees per WCP.

Introduction

2020 presented an exceptional number of challenges for athletes and staff operating within the high performance environment. Lockdown, restrictions on training, competition cancellations, illness, and personal loss or grief have unfortunately affected everyone to some extent this year.

2020 has highlighted the need for preserving wellbeing, more so than ever. British Canoeing is well placed to ensure that the wellbeing of our people is consistently taken into account at all levels, with much thanks to the work of the Performance Wellbeing Group since 2017 in raising the profile of this important topic, not only in ensuring people are cared for but that they are able to thrive. Wellbeing is everyone's responsibility, and must be prioritised by all for us to collectively thrive.

Various additional mechanisms have been put in place throughout the year with the aim of supporting each other to cope with the challenges that we have all faced. Whilst we cannot always mitigate the personal or organisational challenges that arise, we must be cognisant of the many difficult circumstances, and help and support each other as much as possible at these times. Difficulties associated with our ability to achieve our goals are likely to continue throughout 2021, and so we must remain vigilant to the risks to individuals and our collective wellbeing, and to keep prioritising wellbeing as we put policies and procedures in place which will inevitably impact our members, athletes, staff and volunteers.

Terms of Reference

Towards the end of 2019, the Group identified that there has been a positive organisational shift in the awareness of and intentions around supporting and preserving wellbeing. However, the policies and procedures developed for the World Class and Talent programmes continue to have a significant impact on many athletes, their coaches and supporters. Therefore the group has refined their terms of reference to ensure that advising on policies and procedures that impact our people is its primary purpose, and that such policies and procedures reflect our commitment to wellbeing.

The Group's membership has also been refined so that it's made up primarily of athletes and independent volunteers, with selected staff members in attendance to add appropriate insight and perspectives. The Group will feed in to work on policies and procedures by submitting meeting minutes and recommendations directly to the Performance Leadership Team. To read the terms of reference, please [click here](#).

Mental Health

Mental health continues to be a focus for British Canoeing and the High Performance System. In 2020, a number of athletes and staff completed Mental Health Champions training facilitated by UK Sport, which gives them the tools to help to support individuals struggling with mental health difficulties. More Mental Health Champion training is planned for early 2021 to give a selection of coaches, support staff and athletes the skills to promote positive mental health and to support others in what will be another year of challenges impacting the high performance environment.

A number of Performance Wellbeing Group members are part of our internal Mental Health Team which has this year increased the frequency of its meetings due to concerns around the impact of the pandemic on our mental health. The team is made up of WCP support staff and now meet bi-weekly to: discuss any concerns (if appropriate), to progress our mental health strategy, and to collaborate on supporting our people (e.g. coordinating our support to individuals and promoting relevant information and services).

The Team, with support from athletes and staff, have advocated a number of awareness campaigns throughout the year such as Mental Health Awareness Week. Content released throughout the week on British Canoeing social media channels received thousands of views and lots of positive engagement. Mental health awareness and support will continue to be a priority for 2021.

Culture Health Check

The Culture Health Check is an annual survey facilitated by UK Sport (coordinated by an independent third party) which aims to provide a safe space for athletes, staff and stakeholders to submit their views on various measures of culture (what we 'see', 'hear' and 'feel' on a daily basis). In 2020 response rates remained relatively high with ranges between 76-80% in Sprint, 73-86% in Slalom, and in 56-100% Paracanoe (lower response rates tend to come from the 'Stakeholders' group as opposed to the 'Athletes' or 'Staff' groups).

Within Canoe Sprint, the most commonly referenced words to describe the culture were: hard work, commitment, passion, motivation, professional, change and uncertainty. Themes emerged from the results which have been identified as requiring further exploration, relating to: consistency, clarity of expectations, leadership, and working together effectively as a team. An action plan led by the WCP performance psychologist is underway to develop meaningful and sustained improvements in these areas whilst also adapting to changes in the WCP and the evolution of the Canoe Sprint landscape (as set out in the Sprint Strategy) throughout the next cycle.

The most common words used to describe the culture within Slalom were: professional, team, performance, excellence and support. Responses to the survey questions were vastly positive, for example 100% of athlete respondents agreed that the WCP supports them to be the best they can be. Some themes were noted that may provide valuable insight if explored, which related to: consistency, consequences, leadership, and working together as a team. Focus groups are ongoing to discuss these themes and to inform a longer term action plan to develop and sustain our culture.

The words most commonly used to describe the culture in Paracanoe were: support, positive, committed, encouragement and professionalism. Results demonstrated continued high levels of positive agreement to the various measures. Results were discussed amongst the team and all agreed they were representative of their experience. The team agreed to lightly explore the concept of consequences for inappropriate behaviours further, whilst recognising that athletes felt it was not a high priority for the year.

Policies and Procedures

A number of policies and procedures have been highlighted as relevant and appropriate for the Performance Wellbeing Group to review and advise on in 2021, including but not limited to: 2022 WCP qualification policy, the athlete review process, our transitions philosophy, and the athlete agreement. The Group will continue to collaborate with staff to advocate that the wellbeing of our people is considered and protected in our policies and procedures, and ultimately in our environment and our culture.

Athlete Representative Group Report

British Canoeing would like to say a huge thank you to the first cohort of athletes who have just completed their tenure as part of the inaugural Athlete Rep Group.

In 2018, the first Athlete Rep Group was launched with the support of the British Athletes Commission and brings together a group of volunteer World Class Programme athletes aiming to represent the voice of athletes across the World Class and Talent Programmes within our Olympic and Paralympic disciplines.

The British Athletes Commission (BAC) is an independent membership association representing the interests of athletes in elite performance sport, who play a pivotal role in training and supporting Athlete Reps in their voluntary roles.

Throughout their term, the Athlete Reps have sought out and delivered the opinions and feedback of our athletes to senior staff including the Performance Leadership Team and the British Canoeing Board. Athlete Reps have also acted as advisors to support the queries or concerns of fellow athletes; this peer-to-peer scheme has provided an alternative route for athletes to be heard when they may be unsure to whom or how their comments should be delivered.

The outgoing Reps of 2018-2020 were instrumental in setting up this new forum at British Canoeing, and have raised the profile of the Athlete Rep Group and the athlete voice both within British Canoeing and across the UK High Performance System.

Our Athlete Reps were invited to the UK Sport annual PLx Conference in 2019 to present on the group's operations which were extremely well received by the attendee performance directors, leaders, and athlete reps within other sports.

This year they were also invited back to the PLx event in which they benefited from access to various developmental sessions. This year, our Athlete Rep Chair Emilia McAllister Jepps joined Sprint athlete Noah Dembele to present their innovative work aiming to break down barriers around issues of diversity to the PLx attendees.

The Athlete Reps have carried out their roles alongside their busy training schedules and other commitments, which is a testament to their commitment to 'give back' to the sport and to provide invaluable support to the athletes around them.

Emilia McAllister Jepps, Chair of the Athlete Rep Group, said:

"I would like to thank the outgoing Athlete Reps for their commitment and willingness to engage in the inauguration of the ARG at British Canoeing over the past three years.

“The prefatory meetings shaped the way that we approached the roles, and from the outset, it was clear that their passion for paddlesport and empathy for all matters ‘elite athlete’ would provide a valuable link between the athletes and the performance leadership team.

“There have been opportunities for our cohort to develop transferable skills, and I hope that every rep has felt some merit to being a part of the pioneering group.

“I would also like to thank the leadership at British Canoeing for being open-minded and embracing the opportunity to have the Athlete Voice purposefully represented within the performance programmes.

“My thanks must also be expressed to those at UK Sport and The BAC who have contributed to the development of our group, and who will continue to help our future reps.”

Paul Ratcliffe, Performance Director for British Canoeing, said: “I’m proud of the way our ARG began its journey in our sport and I wanted to pay tribute to the inaugural group for all the work they have done and the role models they have been for all athletes.

“They have built a legacy that I hope will now stand the test of time and I would like to take this opportunity to say thank and well done for all the work, passion and thought they have put into it for all athletes.”

A huge thank you to the Athletes that participated in the Athlete Rep Group 2018-2020:

Emilia McAllister Jepps	Chair (WCP alumni, Sprint)
Rachel Cawthorn	Vice Chair - Sprint (WCP athlete, Sprint)
Jonny Young	Vice Chair - Paracanoe (WCP athlete, Paracanoe)
Kimberley Woods	Vice Chair - Slalom (WCP athlete, Slalom)
Deborah Kerr	(WCP athlete, Sprint)
Jess Walker	(WCP athlete, Sprint)
Charlotte Henshaw	(WCP athlete, Paracanoe)
Mallory Franklin	(WCP athlete, Slalom)



Congratulations to the newly elected Athlete Reps for 2021-2022:

Canoe Sprint:	Katie Reid, Afton Fitzhenry, Philip Miles
Canoe Slalom:	Kimberley Woods, Ben Haylett
Paracanoe:	Chelsea Dixon, Stewart Clark

British Canoeing Safety Advisory Panel Report

Composition of the Safety Advisory Panel:

John Hatton	British Canoeing Safety Officer
Craig Duff	Secretariat
Lee Pooley	Head of Coaching and Qualifications
Mike Devlin	Independent
Martin Suzan	Independent
Jim Taylor-Ross	Independent
David Tidball	Independent
Alice Beetlestone	RNLI
Nancy Squires	Head of Governance and Compliance
Andy Maddock	Head of Performance - Operations
Paul Marshall	National Association Representative Canoe Wales
Rodger Hamilton	National Association Representative Canoe Association of Northern Ireland
Stuart Smith	National Association Representative Scottish Canoe Association

Overview

The restrictions imposed by Covid-19 reduced paddling activity and organised events over the whole year. This in turn has led to fewer incidents being reported directly to British Canoeing. Generally paddlers followed Government advice, to stay at home and to paddle within their capabilities to protect the emergency services from unnecessary call outs.

The restrictions gave rise to the “staycation” and led people to seek activities they could do in the UK and in their locality. It promoted the increased ownership of personal paddle craft, accelerating existing trends, particularly in the ownership and use of SUPs. This, to some extent compensated for this loss in established paddling activity. It also moved the balance of paddling activity towards those who have little experience on the water.

As a consequence these changes were reflected in the annual returns from partner organisations with the RNLI recording an 82% increase in lifeboat launches and assistance to SUPs over the year.

Tragically we also saw six fatalities in 2020 with three in canoes/kayaks and three paddling SUPs.

These figures and the nature of the incidents highlight the need to keep pace with the rapidly developing ownership in personal paddle craft in providing:

- Training and qualifications programmes
- Safety information and guidance
- Guidance on equipment choice and usage
- Where to paddle safely
- Coordination of information, messaging and practice across agencies

Work carried out in 2020

During the year the safety function of British Canoeing has adapted its role in line with the contrasts and developments that 2020 has produced. In lockdown the service maintained:

- An “on call” service by phone and email
- Responded to reported incidents or those notified to us by third parties
- Liaison and coordination with external partner agencies
- Contribution to paddler information, guidance and safety training.

In the year 2020 the following work has been carried out:

a. Safety Advisory Panel

Strengthened the British Canoeing Safety Advisory Panel by appointment of two new members bringing expertise in stand up paddle boarding, ocean racing and competition paddling.

b. Event Safety Management Training

Since January, a total of five Event Safety Workshops have been run in England, with 37 Safety Officers being trained. During the lockdown British Canoeing ran its first online Event Safety Management workshop. Given the success of this initiative, these courses can now be delivered online where there is a need and in the current Covid climate.

c. Boat/craft labelling campaign

In partnership with The Maritime Coastguard Agency and RNLI, a UK wide campaign to promote the practice of putting your name and contact number in your boat or on your craft was run. Approximately 30% of all call outs to the Coastguards are false alarms to craft that appear to be abandoned or are adrift, but where the paddler is safe.

This received positive feedback from the paddling community, with members receiving campaign information and a boat label, courtesy of the RNLI, with their membership renewal.

d. Safety Information and Guidance

- SUP safety information sheet on which type of leash to wear for different environments. This followed the reporting of many incidents where entrapment had occurred through wearing ankle leashes in flowing water, both river and tidal. The guidance has been widely shared with partner agencies and across all media networks
- Co-production of a paddling guidance leaflet with the RNLI aimed at those new to paddling and for people who are gaining experience. It covers a wide variety of craft where there has been recent growth in ownership
- Videos on staying safe and getting started on the water were updated and promoted on the Go Paddling website, along with a range of articles from; choosing the right boat, cold water shock, winter paddling, best kayaks for beginners
- Campaigns and trails information published as the Go Paddling brand, to guide those new to paddling, on places to go that are safe and enjoyable
- Buildings that were closed or have reduced occupancy during the Covid-19 pandemic, are likely to suffer water system stagnation due to lack of use. This increases the risks of Legionnaires’ disease which can prove fatal. A safety alert and information sheet was produced for all premises managers/owners on how to manage the Legionella risk correctly when reopening your building

- Two safety newsletters were produced for all of British Canoeing’s recognised safety officers to ensure information and practices were shared appropriately
- Paddlesafer, British Canoeing’s online safety directory, received its annual update including new information on personal locator beacons, powerboat qualifications and minibus driver requirements.

Incident reporting annual review

The restrictions on paddling activity resulted in fewer safety and injury incidents being reported. A total of 108 incidents were reported of which 50 were safety related, down from 76 in 2019.

British Canoeing collects its own incident data, largely submitted by established paddlers. But to give a fuller picture of what’s happening across all sectors, British Canoeing works with partner agencies and navigation authorities to achieve the most comprehensive overview of incidents and safety.

The 2020 RNLI returns have been invaluable in providing hard data that both illustrates and quantifies the challenges caused by the growth in ownership of personal paddle craft. The national Water Incident Database (WAID) collated by RoSPA has also provided the detail where serious water sports incidents occur, some of which have not been reported directly to British Canoeing.

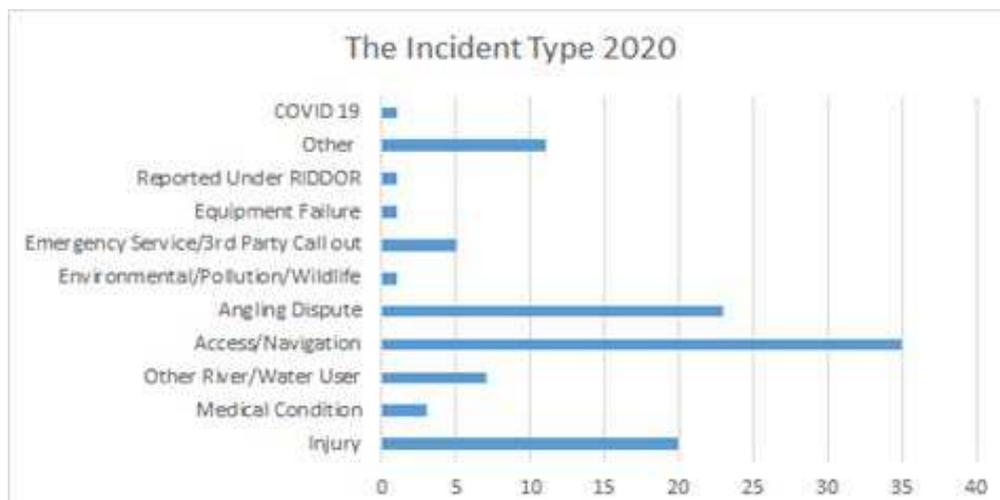
The data below illustrates the incident information submitted directly to British Canoeing through the incident report system.

Table 1: Comparison of safety and injury related incidents reported

*One incident has been reported informally through a third party

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Fatality	1	5	2	3*
Incidents resulting in a visit to the hospital	14	16	20	16
Minor Incidents (non hospital)	14	46	46	30
Other	1	5	8	1
Total	30	72	76	50

Figure 1. Shows the overall breakdown of incident type





Access and Environment Advisory Group Report

Richard Atkinson - Chair
Places to Paddle Policy Officer

Composition of the Access and Environment Advisory Group:

Richard Atkinson	British Canoeing, Policy Officer & Chair
Ben Seal	British Canoeing, Places to Paddle Manager
Chantelle Grundy	British Canoeing, Access and Environment Officer
Keith Day	River Access For All (RAFA)
Pam Bell	Waters of Wales
Douglas Caffyn	Independent
Bruce Buckland	Independent
Phil Stone	Canoe Wales, Places to Paddle Manager
Regional Waterways Advisors (when required)	

2020 saw very challenging but productive year for the Access Advisory Group. Covid-19 limited the group from gathering together however the use of video conferencing became invaluable, not only for the group, but also for the Places to Paddle Team to keep a working relationship with our established partners as well as forming new partnerships.

The summer lockdown brought restrictions that inhibited our freedom to participate in many of the activities that we normally take for granted. With opportunities to exercise limited, the pandemic brought into sharp focus just how important it is for the public to have easy access to green and blue space. The public began to explore their local area in new ways, which led to tens of thousands of people taking to the waterways for the first time.

With more people participating in paddlesport, our calls for Government to address the inequity in access to water in England have been significantly strengthened.

Since Clear Access Clear Waters was launched in Parliament in November 2018, working with the Access Advisory Group, has assisted the Places to Paddle team have made huge strides, and 2020 has been no exception.

Political Wins

The pandemic had a huge impact on our plans for 2020, it affected not only the way we work, but also our political ambitions, including a newly launched petition. However, while the pandemic created challenges, it also opened up opportunities and work continued behind the scenes on influencing new post Brexit legislation.

- Working closely with other partners in the sector, including colleagues at the Ramblers and the British Mountaineering Council, we undertook a huge amount of work on the Agriculture Bill
- The Bill will redefine how landowners will be financially supported once the UK exits the European Union, essentially seeing payment for providing 'public goods', including the potential for greater access for the public to enjoy the countryside

- This ultimately led to Lord Addington and Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson supporting 13 amendments to the Bill at the 'Committee Stage' which pleasingly led to two hours devoted entirely to addressing the access related amendments that had been prepared. A landmark for British Canoeing's Clear Access, Clear Waters Campaign
- British Canoeing has also worked with a coalition of other outdoor recreation partners on the Environment Bill, supporting proposed amendments to improve access to the natural environment
- Autumn 2020 saw British Canoeing become part of a coalition, led by Surfers Against Sewage to campaign for an end to sewage pollution; the #EndSewagePollution Coalition. In November, British Canoeing and a selection of the coalition members handed over a petition to the Secretary of State, which calls for much tighter controls on the discharge of sewage into our waterways
- In Wales, there have been challenges during Covid in identifying what waters and access points were open or closed, lots of background activity going on with discussions with Canoe Wales, Sport Wales, Outdoor Alliance and Welsh Government in trying to get paddlesport accepted as an allowable form of exercise during lockdown
- Talks have been held online for the Access to Water subgroup of the Welsh National Access Forum. The group has been asked to present a report to Welsh ministers by March 2021 outlining its findings and make proposals for a pilot that increases opportunities paddlesports. Opinions are still divided within the group but for the first time that any of us has seen we are all able to meet and discuss the issues amicably
- We have been working with Dwr Cymru to look at more reservoirs being made available for paddlesports
- Canoe Wales, on the back of the Access to water subgroup, has been awarded a grant to facilitate disabled access to a number of locations and put in some biosecurity washdown stations

Environmental Wins

The Group also provided guidance and advice on subjects related to environmental matters throughout England and Wales which assisted the team to formulation of partnerships with others to develop environmental projects and events.

- British Canoeing continues to take a lead strategic role alongside key stakeholders such as the Angling Trust and Environment Agency to combat invasive species. This has led to the production of a national Floating Pennywort Strategy which will provide guidance to enable volunteers and organisations to develop Catchment Action Groups to combat invasive species
- British Canoeing is working on a pilot project on the Thames engaging canoe and angling clubs; along with other pilot projects led by volunteers on the River Stort, Kennet and Medway, all of whom play a key role in the surveillance and management of floating pennywort. The strategy will deliver the recommendations following the Environmental Audit Committees findings in 2018 and is fully supported by Lord Gardiner of Kimble (Biosecurity Minister and Under Secretary of State for Defra)
- The group advised on the content of two new guidance documents regarding nesting birds and spawning fish
- Canoe Wales is now a member of the Wales Biodiversity Partnership

Focus areas for 2021

Even with the ongoing pandemic, there is plenty of important work the group can continue to carry out into 2021. The group will continue to focus on the aims of the Clear Access, Clear Waters Campaign and ensure that new and ongoing challenges to access and environment matters managed appropriately:

- Work with the Environment Agency, Defra and the Angling Trust to recruit two Environmental Project Officers to lead the Floating Pennywort Strategy
- Plan and prepare for the new British Canoeing Strategic Plan
- Work with others to champion the case for fair shared sustainable open access for all

International Relations Update

British Canoeing continues to play an active role in the international arena. With the support of UK Sport through their international relations strategy, we have supported British ICF Board and Committee members in their roles through attendance at meetings and events.

In February, British Canoeing hosted the ICF Paracanoe Committee and Classification Sub-Committee for their meetings in London.

Due to Covid-19 the ICF Congress was postponed from December 2020 to October 2021.

British Canoeing continues to develop relationships with other National Federations to share views, knowledge and resources.

In partnership with the ICF and UK Sport, British Canoeing have initiated an International Partnership Programme which aims “to inspire and support National Canoeing Federations around the world to improve their governance, strategic planning and sport delivery.” The programme will initially focus on National Federations that are in the development stage. With a small number of nations identified in Asia and the Americas, the programme will see the development of resources, workshops and training.

In addition British Canoeing continues its work to support the Uganda Canoe Federation. With the support of the IOC Solidarity Fund and the ICF, British Canoeing have supported the delivery of coaching and officiating courses to 20 Ugandan coaches.

Anti-Doping

The Paddle Clean education programme, launched in 2017, continues to deliver clean sport education to all national team and talent programmes. British Canoeing once again engaged with Clean Sport Week in 2020 with the launch of new Paddle Clean club resources, a Talent Parents podcast and hosted Clean Coach webinars. 2020 also saw the launch of Clean Sport Tuesday, a weekly social media campaign aimed to educate and highlight the importance of paddling clean across the spectrum of the sport.

Clean Sport workshops were delivered to the sprint, slalom and paracanoe programmes as part of the Clean Games Policy requirements for the Tokyo Games.

With the WADA 2021 Code coming into effect 1 January 2021, British Canoeing needed to ensure compliance with the Code and UK Anti-Doping rules, through the publication of updated British Canoeing Anti-Doping Rules which are available on the British Canoeing website.

British Canoeing Events Limited

British Canoeing Events Limited was incorporated in November 2018 as a wholly owned subsidiary of British Canoeing. It was established specifically to deliver current and future international events held in the UK that are awarded to British Canoeing by the International Canoe Federation, European Canoe Association and the International Rafting Federation.

Composition of the Board

Jonathan Long	Independent Chair
David Joy	Vice-Chair, British Canoeing Nominated
Rosie Williams	Senior Independent Director
Vivien Blacker	Independent Director
Phelan Hill	Independent Director
Mark Bache	British Canoeing Nominated
Susan Hicks	British Canoeing Nominated

British Canoeing Events Limited is in receipt of UK Sport Major Events funding and abides by the principles of the UK Code of Sports Governance.

It has yet to be awarded a compliance status, delayed this year due to Covid-19, but it is expected that British Canoeing Events Limited will be fully compliant by the end of 2021.

The Board met on two occasions during 2020 with most of the agenda focused on the cancellation of the 2020 ECA Canoe Slalom European Championships and 2020 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Cup, due to the impact Covid-19. The Board has also focused on the forthcoming 2021 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Championships, due to take place in Nottingham in July 2021.

2020 ECA Canoe Slalom European Championships

In conjunction with the ECA and event partners, British Canoeing had to take the difficult decision to cancel the May 2020 ECA Canoe Slalom European Championships due to Covid-19. Planning for the event was in a very good position with all parties excited at the opportunity to host the final qualification event for Tokyo 2020.

2020 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Cup

The 2020 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Cup, scheduled to take place in July 2020, was cancelled in early March in collaboration with the ICF due to Covid-19. Planning moved on to focus on the 2021 World Championships.

2021 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Championships

Planning for the 2021 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Championships has progressed well.

A new world class feature has been developed and installed on the course, a new legacy timing and scoring system is in its final stages of development and permanent seating has been installed along the top half of the white water course at Holme Pierrepont.

British Canoeing hosted ICF representatives for an inspection visit in February 2020, with positive discussion, and continue to liaise closely to ensure planning continues on schedule, and various scenarios are worked through to mitigate, where possible, the impact of Covid.

2023 ICF Canoe Slalom World Championships

The end of 2020 saw the Stakeholder Board come together for the first time with discussions to date focused on contracts, governance and reviewing the objectives of the event.

Future Events

In line with the Major Events Strategy, work continues with other disciplines to shape future hosting ambitions. Discussions and feasibility continue around both Olympic/Paralympic and non-Olympic events from 2024 onwards.

British Canoeing Events Annual Accounts 2019/2020

Profit & Loss Account	2020	2019
Income	168,594	361,812
Expenditure	(151,604)	(356,117)
Operating Profit / (Loss)	16,990	5,695
Taxation on ordinary activities	0	(709)
Profit / (Loss) on activities after interest an tax	16,990	4,986
Current Assets	64,203	356,220
Current Liabilities	(42,227)	(351,233)
Net Assets	21,976	4,987
Share Capital	1	1
Profit & Loss Account	21,975	4,986
Capital and Reserves	21,976	4,987



The English Forum

Chair	Dave Spencer
Vice Chair	Greg Spencer
Voting Members	Chairs of Regional Development Committees, Chairs of Discipline Committees and a representative from the English Coaching Structure

English Council Nominations that are currently on the Board:
Clare Dallaway, Alexandra Lane & Greg Smale

In 2020, Clare Dallaway's first term of office came to an end. In the ensuing election, Clare was re-elected as the English Forum nominee for a second term and her appointment is to be ratified at the 2021 British Canoeing AGM.

Without question 2020 has been a very difficult year for all sports, with canoeing being no exception. Stringent rules around social distancing and repeated "lockdowns" have imposed severe restrictions on competition and recreational activities alike. Activities organised through British Canoeing regional and competition committees have been severely curtailed although many canoe clubs have continued to engage their members both on and off the water.

The terms of reference of the English Forum aims to "consider matters that will improve the development and delivery of paddlesport in England." "Paddlesport" covers a very wide number of activities carried out by a significant number of individuals. Statistically, 2.1 million people paddle at least once a year and the challenge is to engage and enthuse more of those individuals to paddle regularly. The foundations are already established through our competition structures and club networks which offers a wide range of activities and challenges.

Surprisingly, British Canoeing membership has increased significantly during this difficult year, now with numbers more than 60,000. The challenge is to reach out to our many new members and show that canoeing offers experiences for all tastes, whether it is exploring through river trails, engaging in exhilarating competition or just seeing the world from a different perspective. Presenting our sport in its many diverse forms shows that no matter where and when you start to paddle there are many interesting and exciting paths on a canoeing journey that can become a lifetime's passion. Our concern must be with the "paddler journey" that starts with learning skills in the comfort of the local swimming pool and leads to a future that may embrace navigating extreme fast flowing rivers in all part of the globe or to the stillness and serenity of paddling through the English countryside on a warm summer's day.

The English Forum is the meeting of two major committees: The Discipline Chairs Committee and the Regional Development Chairs. As their names suggests one is tasked with fostering the development of competitive canoeing (such as Sprint, Marathon, Slalom etc) and the other with broader canoeing activities across England (such as recreational paddling, developing canoe trails, campaigning for access rights etc). Many of these activities overlap and it is by increasing the depth of interworking within and between these groups that we can achieve a "more joined up" approach to the benefit of all paddlers. As we embark of the development of the 2022-2025 British Canoeing strategic plan, within the English Forum we will look to continue to embed close cooperation across all our canoeing activities and then we can honestly say we are "Stronger Together".

Dave Spencer - Chair of English Forum



Cumbria Regional Development Team Report

Mike Sunderland - Chair

The Cumbria region is privileged to have so many volunteers, organisers, coach/leaders and high calibre people who are passionate about developing and supporting paddling and paddlers and sharing time with others on the water. A GREAT THANK YOU to you all and thanks for supporting your regional umbrella body, the British Canoeing Cumbria RD Team, better known as “Cumbria Canoeists”.

2020 Highlights

- Safe delivery of the July-October sea kayak and open boat events, despite Covid restrictions
- Safely delivering an autumn “Youth River Running Programme” despite the Covid restrictions
- A record breaking RDT AGM/ACM, via Zoom – nearly 45 participants – where we bade farewell and best wishes to Alan Ashby, as he sets up his new guiding business and welcomed onto the team a new Sea Kayak Rep, a new Treasurer and a new Web-Master – strengthening our dynamic RDT, with fresh faces, ideas and energy
- Welcoming and supporting “The Outdoor Partnership” (TOP) in West Cumbria. A support group and charity, funding training developments in three of our clubs
- Introduction of monthly CPD Training presentations for Coach/Leaders in Cumbria, inviting our Northern Region neighbours from Yorkshire, North East and North West – experiencing record breaking numbers – 55 coach/leaders in December, 140 in January
- Formation of a NEW Coach/Leader Delivery Team and a NEW Open Boat event/training Team, sharing expertise and workload – moving away from formal BC roles and developing active and engaged regional volunteer teams
- Planning with the NEW RDT Team for the 2021 season – with NEW ways of offering NEW opportunities to more paddlers of Cumbria



Congratulations to all our Discipline Reps, Coach/Leader Delivery Team and Access and Waterways Team, for their levels of commitment in their fields of expertise and to the Senior RDT Management Team. They have worked tirelessly behind the scenes, discussing, sharing, actioning and planning the necessary developments, of so many paddling opportunities we are delivering within the Cumbria Region.

Talking and listening to Cumbrian Canoe Clubs, Centres, Voluntary Organisations, Coach/Leaders - who are establishing paddling developments in all corners of Cumbria - and getting involved with initiatives such as mid-week paddling, taster sessions, guided river runs, coaching workshops, gives me confidence that the Cumbria RDT ("Cumbria Canoeists") is respected, valued and needed. We are most definitely "Stronger Together" thanks to the time we have been given by the fatal and tragic Covid Pandemic situation. So, as the grass has NOT grown under our feet, the NEW "2021 Cumbria Paddling Programmes" will be different, better, re-focused and delivered to more paddlers.



East Regional Development Team Report

Paul Younger - Chair

I was delighted to be elected as the current Chair of the ERDT at the 2019 ACM and would like to thank everyone for their help, support and guidance over the past year and what a challenging year Covid-19 has been for individuals, clubs and the sport in general. When the pandemic first started a Community Emergency Fund (CEF) was made available for organisations by Sport England to help cover base costs, many clubs generate their income from membership which helps pay running costs. The CEF contribution to clubs helped cover rent and insurances which was a lifeline for many clubs to survive the year. British Canoeing (BC) ran webinars and provided support to help clubs apply for this funding. Like many organisations BC staff had to work from home, despite the organisational challenges this caused, clubs and individuals still had access to BC staff and the organisation managed to provide new on-line training and webinars.

Whilst it has been frustrating and disappointing with tours, most training, development and competitions cancelled, clubs in the region have responded magnificently to the pandemic. Committees need to be congratulated on putting in place new procedures and policies to keep their members safe when coming out of the first lockdown in June to allow some organised activities. A big thank you to all the clubs and individuals who made that happen.

There have been so many times we have heard the need to engage and about getting more people out on the water and it is ironic it has taken a pandemic to do this. It has been brilliant in seeing so much activity and new people and craft on the rivers in our region ranging from SUPs, inflatables and other craft. However, this has not been without its challenges regarding access but nevertheless it is fantastic to see new enthusiastic individuals and families out there. The East and South of England have the highest numbers of members and these areas have also seen the highest number of new members in 2020.

BC has seen an increase of 30,000 new members with nearly a third within the Eastern Region (8,939) and along with this BC are now retaining more members (65% in 2017 and 89% in 2020). It is also interesting to note which postcode areas have the highest new member numbers: (1st) Norwich 1,744, (5th) Colchester 819, (7th) Cambridge 754 (8th) Peterborough 752, (9th) Ipswich 652.

In Essex a Pilot Waterways Advisor project is underway the aim is for people who live in local areas coastal and local rivers and understand the local issues such as access and development so that we can have a voice to ensure that the waterways can be available to all. This links to the BC Clear Access, Clear Water campaign. This is not just a club programme, any individual can sign up for this campaign and I would encourage you to do so. If this is a success then we will roll this programme out to the region. The Regional Waterways Advisor, who has a wealth of knowledge and expertise is David Savage, and his support for this work has been much appreciated. Woosh Explore hosted an Environmental Care Day to help rid the River Stort of Floating Pennywort and Himalayan Balsam. This is one example of where clubs and individuals across the region have undertaken environmental action all of whom need to be thanked for their amazing efforts.

There are many instances of access issues across the region; for example, in Essex the recent implementation of double yellow lines at Paper and Hoe Mill to restrict parking (in truth the road parking was becoming unsafe), and Sandford Mill a ditch was dug to stop cars parking in a field. It is also recognised that public facilities are very much needed and discussions with Essex Waterways and other agencies are at an early stage.

Our current Regional Coaching Representative (RCR) Jeff Toser is standing down from this role. Jeff has done an amazing job over the past three years, I personally want to thank Jeff and I know the team and many individuals would like to say a big thank you to him for his enthusiasm, encouragement knowledge and skill. Whilst it is always with sadness when a valued member stands down from a committee, we are delighted that Dom Miller a highly experienced coach from Bedfordshire, has applied for and is going through the application process for the role of RCR.

To summarise what has been a challenging but amazing year in terms of all that we have been able to accomplish, the pandemic this year has meant little touring, development, training or competition has happened. Despite this we have seen our clubs being amazing in how they have supported each other and approached the challenges. Additionally, with more people engaged on our rivers and lakes than ever, we are planning on how we can engage with those 'outside' of clubs and BC membership look forward to next year. We hope that once people have had vaccinations the pandemic will dampen down sufficiently for us to organise events, competitions, develop our skills and engage with new members and get back out there as we always have.

The region currently has three vacancies:

There are currently vacancies which can be applied for on the British Canoeing website:

- [ACR: Cambridgeshire, Norfolk](#)
- [Communications Officer](#)



East Midlands Regional Development Team Report

Katrina Smith - Secretary

As with everyone else 2020 has been a very strange year for the East Midlands with the area spending most of 2020 in some sort of lockdown. On a positive note, it drove the region to adopt conference calling for its regular meetings and has allowed more club representatives from further afield to join in.

2020 Highlights

- Successful acquisition of lease for Field at Barrow-on-Soar, Leicestershire
- Well attended Regional online meetings
- Paddlers from three regional clubs selected for Under 23 Wild Water European Championships



The team started the year with enthusiasm to continue the good work already established. Key committee members attended the AGM and Stronger Clubs Conference. With Martin Aldridge (Chair) and I finding our feet in our new roles, plans were starting to come together for events and tours when Covid hit. At the start of the pandemic, we hastily set up a support network for the clubs and held several online meetings for them to network and share best practices to help support them moving forwards through the first lockdown.

The success of the emergency meetings proved that virtual conferencing could work. As a result of this, we have decided to continue with online meetings for all our meetings after Covid but with two physical meets (at a weekend allowing greater participation) to be combined with a daytime paddling event.

In the background, the opportunity came to take on the lease for the field at Barrow-on-Soar, Leicestershire. The field is in an ideal spot for respite on the Soar Tour as well as being a good access and egress point for various sections of the Soar. The Field has been available for use for paddlers for some time and was previously leased by former Chair Colin Broadway and who after quite a few years had decided to relinquish it. The EMRDT felt it was too good an asset to let this go. The Team is extremely grateful to Andy Oughton (Vice Chair) who has worked tirelessly with the Landowner and British Canoeing to secure the lease. We are super excited to report that the lease has been signed and access gained, so watch this space as we are just waiting to get started with a working party, signs and some tidying up (when Covid allows). In recognition of Colin Broadway and all his work with the EMRDT and the Region over the years, it was unanimously agreed to name the site Broadway's Meadow.

We are also really proud to report that paddlers from no less than three clubs in our region were selected for the 2020 Junior & U23 Wild Water European Championships due to be held in Slovenia. Paddlers selected were Emma and Kerry Christie from Breakout Canoe unit, James Russell, Lucy Guest, Esme Durrant & Francis Huntingford from Nottingham Kayak Club and Cameron Bannatyne from Soar Valley Canoe Club.

North East Regional Development Team Report

Linda Pooley - Chair

The North East geography provides our region with a variety of paddling experiences, diverse opportunities for coaches, leaders and paddlers in our region. The RDT supports clubs and centres to develop coaches and leaders required to inspire our paddlers to improve their skills. 2020 has been an unprecedented year, fraught with difficult decisions on how to safely go paddling with constantly changing government restrictions in place. With care and a motivation to help, some clubs found a way to stay open for parts of the year in a restructured way and were able to share their skills and resources with the wider community in a positive way. Some focused their attention on helping NHS and other Key Workers gain from the mental health benefits of paddlesports during these difficult times.

2020 Highlights

- Continuing to develop shared practices, North East clubs working together providing training for aspirant coaches and leaders
- With the onset of Covid and subsequent ever changing restrictions, using our initiative to find ways of providing a paddling experience for club members
- More people wanting to go paddling in the summer because of stay at home holidays
- Established a working relationship with the RNLI and River Safety Team led by the Fire Brigade, initially on the Tyne and Tees

Governance and Club Support

Through 2020 we have been restricted in our actions with many events cancelled, however lots of our clubs found ways to run club sessions safely with appropriate risk assessments in place. Support from British Canoeing was helpful to ensure our risk assessments included all eventualities. Our AGM this year provided some changes to the committee: Regional Coaching Officer is now Tom Thomas who has also previously held the position. There are still vacancies on our committee which can be filled during the year. Thank you to all the committee members who give their time to support our RDT.

Coach and Leadership training and assessments were few and far between because of Covid but we did manage to successfully run some with a few new coaches and leaders qualified in the region. The scholarship scheme has been updated for clubs to reimburse some of the cost of training and assessment. Our volunteer coaches and leaders are an inspiration to club members, encouraging them to develop their paddling skills, then maybe follow in their footsteps.



Communication

Updated information for Coronavirus was posted regularly in the North East RDT Facebook page, however some people don't see these posts, therefore emails are also still a regular way of communication. We are in the process of developing a new website which will be a host for all regional information and better enable the RDT to communicate its key aims. We continue to work with neighbouring regions to promoting training and events, helping



to increase participation and sharing of good practice. Regional meetings have been via Zoom which have encouraged some members to attend who wouldn't normally because of the distance to a meeting venue. On the downside though, there have been a very small number of people who don't have the technology to attend a Zoom meeting and are missing out. We work together to disseminate important communications to everyone who needs them.

Awards

Kirstie McMillan from South Shields has been chosen as an Ambassador, part of the #ShePaddles initiative to represent the North East to promote paddling and encourage more women and girls to join our paddling community.

Club Activity

The North East RDT isn't directly responsible for running events in the region but is happy to provide support to the clubs who need it.

Hexham Canoe Club – Unfortunately the Tyne Tour was cancelled due to Covid, hopefully it will be reinstated in 2021. The club managed to run some club sessions including slalom training during the summer when restrictions were relaxed.

Coquet Canoe Club – The Round the Island Race had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions, this may be able to run in 2021. Club sessions proved popular during the summer, the good weather encouraged many people to venture outdoors and on to local waterways. The club admitted new members who were new



to watersports, they may continue to paddle into 2021. There is now a strong sea kayaking group who were meeting regularly during the summer, undertaking training and local trips around Coquet Island and other venues on the Northumberland Coast.

PaddleAbility Days were sadly cancelled too, however the work of a group of North East Clubs together with Northumberland County to make this event happen will continue to provide watersports days for people with disabilities into 2021, if possible.

Durham Paddlesport Club – have recently changed their name from Durham Kayak Club in order to update their club status. Events that were planned in 2020 have been put on hold until 2021 when eased restrictions may allow them to happen again.

Wansbeck Paddlesport Club – are continuing to attract new members especially during the summer season when the weather was good. Sea kayaking continued to be popular during 2020 with more members gaining leadership and coaching awards. The club were lucky to complete a successful sea kayaking trip to Palamos, Catalonia in February just before the first lockdown. The club has many contacts in different countries that provide opportunities for adventures either on the sea, rivers or lakes.

Open canoeing and river kayaking proved popular also, the club managing to provide safe opportunities to paddle in different locations to develop members skills. Three members of the club benefitted from RDT Scholarship to gain their Sea Leader Award, which enabled them to access a place on a whale survey project in Northern Norway. Sea Kayak Leader qualification was a pre requisite to joining the project in order for them to be covered by the project insurance.



A Santa Regatta, organised by a local watersports business, in coordination with Clubs, Local Councils and Port Of Tyne authority was Covid safely run in December to cheer us up and put a smile on the faces of members of the public along the river in these difficult times. A lot of preparation went into making it safe and enjoyable, hopefully to become an annual event, although very low key this year. Lots of festively decorated sea kayaks paddled by Santa Clauses were seen paddling through the bridges on the Tyne.

Club coordination during 2020 has worked well in the North East region, providing coach and leadership training although opportunities were limited this year. Members from different clubs are very good at supporting each other to arrange trips/events and coach training opportunities.

We are always looking for opportunities to share coaching and leadership experiences, good practice and promote events for our clubs and neighbouring RDTs.



South East Regional Development Team Report

Noel Humphrey - Chair

The South East region comprises of the counties of Kent, Surrey and Sussex. With the Medway, Thames and Wey maintained navigations in the region as well as a number of other popular rivers, tidal rivers and the sea on the Kent and Sussex sides there are many opportunities for participation in paddlesports.

We held an RDT meeting in January 2020 to discuss our successful conference in November 2019 and to start making plans for the 2020 event. We also looked at developing a theme from the coaching session into a number of workshops during the year to assist coaches in the delivery of the Discover and Explore awards. Covid came along and all has been put on hold.

When lockdown one ended our Regional Waterways Advisors inbox was inundated with enquires on paddling, locations and licence requirements.

With the massive increase in participation there has also been an increase in issues around access to water, both inland and sea. Issues have included restrictions and potential closure of a footpath used by paddlers to access water, to discussions with the local RSPB around protected areas. These types of issues result in a lot of volunteer time being invested in trying to resolve these difficulties with lots of emails and telephone conversations taking place.

Floating Pennywort is becoming a problem on a number of waterways in the South East. Local clubs joined in a webinar along with the waterways team in Nottingham which was hosted by the Environment Agency. It was good to see the Angling Trust involved as well. Much discussion has taken place following this online meeting with the waterways team to look at how paddlers can get involved and what are the safety implications. Paddlers will need training so that actions taken are effective otherwise problems may occur elsewhere.

Discussions have also taken place around the delivery of first aid courses under the Covid restrictions. Once the current restrictions are eased we will be looking at running both one day and two day courses to meet the needs of coaches in the region.



South West Regional Development Team Report

Peter Thorn

River bank land at the River Dart, owned by British Canoeing for the last thirty years, has proved very popular with paddlers and with local wild swimmers. However, the Dart is prone to sudden huge run offs and significant bank erosion was happening near Holne Weir. A group of volunteers set about getting this fixed. The quote for extensive work was £15,000 but the Regional Development Team had very limited funds to give. An application to Sport England produced £5000 and the Canoe Foundation offered a loan. Happily the total was reached without the loan through a crowdfunding campaign, attracting contributions from clubs, paddlers and swimmers. The work was completed on time and on budget. The work has withstood some big floods this winter and has attracted much favourable comment.

Further down the Dart, access and egress at Staverton has become critical as local landowners have closed off access points which had been used for the last forty years. Through discussion with the Parish Council, a scheme was hatched to put in a three tier landing-stage on their land. A Service Level Agreement has been signed to authorise construction. This will be built in green oak with non-slip surfaces. Contributions from BC, the Canoe Foundation and clubs, together with individuals, has meant the total of £8000 has been reached. The staging is on order to be fitted in the spring.

The continuing proposals for hydro schemes on South West rivers can be an opportunity for collaborative work with other agencies, such as Dulverton Weir on the River Barle. However, BC is not always consulted, so we have situations such as Beasley Weir, (also on the Barle) where paddlers only find out about developments when they are too far progressed to change.

Around the clubs it is worth noting that two new clubs are functioning in North Devon. These are Exmoor Canoe Club and most recently Combe Martin Kayak Club. This last one went from scratch to 50 members in less than two years. The clubs provide supported access to the sport, training and trips, week after week, at low cost to members. At Bideford CC, sea kayaking has really blossomed with 100 members out of 170 signed up for notification on sea kayak training and trips. Through peer training and financial support the club now has two Advanced Sea Leaders and nine Sea Kayak Leaders. Membership of this active club is now drawn from South Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset.

A continuing issue is the almost impossible task of running a successful Regional Development Team. The area covers seven counties and with only voluntary membership, very little can be achieved. Discussions are needed to resolve this but an early model is to group clubs together on a county basis.



West Midlands Regional Development Team Report

Clare Dallaway - Chair



As a region our intention is to continually support events each year and grow our numbers, encouraging regular participation and developing stronger networks within our clubs and centres as a result; aligning our priorities with the British Canoeing Strategic Plan for 2017-2021 'Stronger Together.' Unfortunately 2020 saw the cancellation of the vast majority of our regional events and activities as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

What we can celebrate however is the development of the RDT committee meetings which have continued to run monthly in a virtual capacity in order to support clubs and centres through this period. Committee members have come together to share learning and explore ways in which we might support the growth of paddlesport, albeit virtually and we have seen greater number in regular attendance than ever before, something we may not have seen had we still been operating in the physical domain.

One trip we were fortunate to see happen was on 10th October 2020 when a small group of local paddlers and Canal and River Trust (CRT) volunteers undertook a revised and delayed version of the Stoke-on-Trent Regional Paddle.

To ensure Covid safety an updated risk assessment was put in place and we had a designated Covid Safety Officer.



Credit: Lee Woodward

The date had been set in conjunction with both the CRT and local fishing clubs to minimise interactions with others. The plan involved a “there and back” tour without locks to avoid shuttles, portages and interactions with towpath users. Paddlecraft are not normally allowed through the tunnel, however this tour was a specially organised event sanctioned by CRT and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue.

In the tunnel the extract fans were in operation, the paddlecraft spatially separated (15m) and masks were worn to aid with Covid safety. Only single household families or “working bubbles” were sharing tandem paddlecraft.

The tour started at Harecastle South and went through the 1.66-mile tunnel to exit at Harecastle North (Kidsgrove) and then returned back through the tunnel. From Harecastle South the majority of paddlers then continued on to Westport Lake and the B’Oatcake Shop for a warming snack. The weather was nicer inside the tunnel and with the commencement of rain at Westport the decision was made to paddle back to our get-in rather than continuing further. A good day was had by all.

Many thanks to the Canal and River Trust for their help in facilitating this.

We are hopeful there will be further exciting opportunities in 2021 to grow and publicise our sport, offering the right regional support to our paddlers of the region.



Credit: Nick Taylor

Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Development Team Report

Greg Spencer - Chair

For enthusiasts who love a bit of rain in their rivers, the first two months of 2020 were pretty awesome: a refreshing change from many previous years!

2020 Highlights

- Unprecedented numbers taking to the water, inland and at the coast
- Mental Health initiatives reconnecting people with the great outdoors
- Covid-secure Washburn Cruises & progress on the new facility at Linton-on-Ouse
- Remembering John Sturgess (1947-2021): a towering figure in Yorkshire Slalom

Early in the year, social media feeds were awash with photos. For a while, life was good, especially for the trio who messaged in mid-February just saying “High force to Winston. 3 hours” - a reminder of the magic which is possible when rainfall gives us a local version of the Zambezi!

Of course, the flip side of great white water kayaking conditions is often flooding, and by late February, communities across the region (including clubs such as Halifax and Pennine) were once again inundated.



As if by magic, lockdown signalled an extended season of settled weather, so by early summer, pretty much everyone with even the slightest instinct for the outdoors was up for trying something new. The weirs on the Calder became hives of activity for wild-swimming teenagers who might otherwise never have found the river, the coves on the coast filled with newbies trying Stand Up Paddleboarding and trade in old boats reached unprecedented levels!

Lynne Marie-Dale's sessions for Black Dog Outdoors captured imaginations across the region with her mental health message about reconnecting people with the great outdoors. Those clubs which could, like White Rose (Leeds), reported unprecedented uptake of socially-distanced taster sessions. Elsewhere, with other uniform groups, clubs and centres unable to meet demand, unprecedented numbers found their own ways of being on or around the water.

The Region's other highlights of the year include yet more adventures being run by Yorkshire Sea Kayakers and a series of well attended (socially distanced) Washburn Cruises: all the more precious after a difficult 18 months in which almost all releases were cancelled due to flooding, drought or ongoing works on one of the reservoirs. Work also progressed (albeit slowly) on preparing the Linton WW course for a long-overdue opening in 2021.



Caption: John Sturgess passed away at home on the 8th January 2021 after a short illness. For 45+ years, John coached and supported young paddlers through the early stages of careers in canoe slalom. He led numerous trips to the Alps for races and to experience bigger volume water and will be greatly missed by many in our sport.

Safeguarding Update

Introduction

This report provides an update on the progress, challenges and highlights in the area of safeguarding over the year 31 October 2019 – 1 November 2020.

This has led to increased efficiency and communication in progressing cases.

Covid-19 impacted on the delivery of some of the work planned to support clubs. However, this has allowed more time to focus on other safeguarding support work, such as online training courses, ahead of time.

Safeguarding Framework

The Child Protection in Sport Unit of the NSPCC (CPSU) undertook its annual audit on British Canoeing's safeguarding framework in May 2020. The organisation was rated very good, the highest possible standard attainable. A further demonstration of the CPSU's high regard to British Canoeing's safeguarding framework was the highlighting of a number of areas of good practice, including work around mental health, engagement with young people, safeguarding training delivery and plans and the British Canoeing case management structure. The CPSU also noted with high regard the structure and team work of the safeguarding team indicating positive organisational embedding of safeguarding.

A Safeguarding Action plan for 2019/2020 was agreed with the CPSU as part of the audit. Good progress has been made against this action plan with the organisation on track to achieve the CPSU rating of very good (or equivalent) in 2020/2021.

Feedback on British Canoeing's safeguarding framework and case management was sought from the Case Management Group (CMG) in November 2020 through a survey. The results of the survey indicate a positive assessment of the effectiveness of the CMG and British Canoeing's management of cases.

Safeguarding Training

A programme of face to face safeguarding training workshops designed for Club Welfare Officers, which began in Autumn 2019 concluded its first phase in December 2019. The planned Phase 2 was curtailed due to Covid-19. Feedback on delivery of these workshops was very positive, with the sessions providing valuable insight into support needs for clubs.

The launch of a new "Introduction to Safeguarding" e-learning course was completed in July 2020. This course is suitable for those who have regular contact with children. Feedback has been positive and this course is seen as a real asset to the organisation.

British Canoeing formalised the requirement for coaches and others who regularly work with children to refresh their safeguarding qualifications every three years. To facilitate this, and ensure the content included paddle specific materials, British Canoeing launched a Safeguarding Refresher course, ahead of schedule, in September 2020. This course provides a refresher/update on the core safeguarding training, as well as an additional module on safe social media use. In 2021 and beyond, further additional modules will be provided to create a comprehensive, versatile and sector leading course.

As a result of the Covid-19 situation this year, support for World Class and Talent programmes has been required to adapt and the scheduled annual bespoke safeguarding training for Performance and Talent staff was postponed. The focus of these bespoke sessions is on safety and safeguarding on trips, and so the postponement was a result of trips and events being cancelled for 2020.

Club Welfare Officers

There are a total of 422 Club Welfare Officers (CWOs) across a total of circa 336 affiliated clubs. British Canoeing recommends that each club has two appointed CWOs so there is a clear ongoing challenge to improve the number of CWOs throughout 2021. Regular CWO newsletters are distributed quarterly. A key priority for 2021 is to enhance the support for CWOs.

Mental Health

Mental health continues to be a priority within our Performance and Talent departments, particularly as mental health has been highlighted as a significant area of risk for high performance athletes during the lockdown and periods of restrictions on training activity. The launch of a WCP Hub has been vital in maintaining communication for athletes, regular virtual Athlete Forums and WCP/Talent Newsletters. Some Paracanoe athletes and staff have engaged in Mental Health Champions training virtually this year.

Collaborative Working

British Canoeing continue to work with the national associations Safeguarding Steering Group (SSG). The SSG is comprised of the designated Safeguarding Leads and Safeguarding Case Management Group Chairs for each Home Nation (where such role exists). The purpose of the SSG is to encourage aligned safeguarding frameworks across the Home Nations through positive information, policy, guidance and training sharing.

British Canoeing has committed to working with the CPSU to participate in a national survey and a Sport England funded prevalence study with Professor Hartill and Edge Hill University to better understand safeguarding in sport.

Safeguarding Case Management

The appointment of a Safeguarding Case Officer in December 2019 allowed safeguarding case management to have a dedicated function for the first time. The efficiency and communication in handling of cases has improved as a result of this change.

A log of open safeguarding cases is presented to the Governance and Risk Committee at every meeting. This allows the Board to have oversight of and scrutinise the progress of cases, provides assurance on risk management action taken (such as interim suspensions), and gives a better understanding of the reasons for some cases being open for a long time.

Case Management Group

British Canoeing benefits from a Case Management Group (CMG) which draws from a wide range of safeguarding backgrounds and experiences including social work, law enforcement, psychiatry, and education. In line with CPSU guidance and strong recommendations, the Group is also independent of the British Canoeing CEO and Board. It's members are:

- Gill Camina, Chair: experienced safeguarding and governance consultant who has worked at both national and international level within sport as well as having previous experience with NSPCC, CPSU and Ann Craft Trust
- Di Murray MBE: Triathlon Coach, Lead Welfare Officer England Golf and Former Police Officer
- Helen Murdock: Safeguarding Professional worked for CPSU, Netball, Badminton and other sports
- Martyn Burrell: Social Worker currently working part time on safeguarding for the church
- Dr George Allerton-Ross: Doctor/Psychiatrist who specialises in mental health
- Nancy Squires: British Canoeing Head of Governance

Two further members were appointed in November 2020;

- Ann Stuart: Independent safeguarding consultant and trainer. Former Detective Sergeant with the Metropolitan Police, specialising in child protection investigations and policy advisor to the Association of Chief Police Officers
- Sarah Torkington-Halstead: Head of Safeguarding with Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust and GB Snowsport Safeguarding and Welfare Officer since July 2020

It is recognised that an area of expertise missing from the Case Management Group is in paddlesport specific expertise. Efforts were made, unsuccessfully, to recruit an additional member with this expertise in 2020. Recruitment will take place again in 2021.

The Case Management Group terms of reference were revised in November 2020.

Case Management Filing and Record Keeping

British Canoeing's case management system ensures each case is stored in its own confidential electronic folder, with all key communications, records of calls/meetings added in chronological order. The record system was reviewed in 2020 and reported to the Governance and Risk Committee. The recording system was found to be clear, accurate, contemporaneous (completed at the time or as soon as possible after the event), regularly updated, comprehensive, secure and in line with Data Protection legislation.

Case Statistics Summary

In the period between 1 November 2019 and 31 October 2020 43 cases were considered, of which 29 have been closed. This is consistent with last year's figure.

Of the 29 closed cases, 21 of these resulted in unrestricted or conditional deployment with children or young people under the age of 18. Eight cases resulted in individuals being suspended from working with children and young people.

In the period 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020, 496 DBS checks were processed which is a significant reduction on last year's figure of 722. This is undoubtedly reflective of the reduction in club activity associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Membership Update

2020 saw an amazing year of growth in British Canoeing membership against a challenging backdrop of the pandemic and the impact of changes to everyone's daily life.

By October 2020 British Canoeing had 62,044 members across the On the Water and On the Bank categories: which is a 61% growth based on figures in October 2019.

An improvement in membership retention can be seen in 2020 from 75% in 2019 to 85% in 2020. This demonstrates the continued commitment to supporting members, improving services and benefits and responding to members' feedback.

British Canoeing saw an increase in the number of new paddlers joining membership. This was achieved through regular content aimed at new paddlers, the introduction of RapidJoin on the GoPaddling website, a Summer promotional campaign and partnership work. The total number of new members for the year was 29,881.

The number of female members in 2020 increased with females making up 33% of members, representing a 5% increase. There was also an increase in the number of family memberships, up 7% to 34%.

Based on feedback from members a Go Green option was introduced. This allowed members to choose a digital only membership, reducing the print materials sent out. British Canoeing ring-fencing £2 of the membership fee of each member who signs up to the Go Green option to support the work of the paddle clean ups and the British Canoeing Clear Access, Clear Waters campaign.

New membership benefits were developed, including Aquapac and Ecoworks Marine, to sit alongside existing offers from Cotswold Outdoor, Halfords and Towergate. Additionally, British Canoeing Rewards was launched to help members save money on a range of products, services and activities. Finally an exclusive birthdays email and offer were introduced this year.

The annual Membership Satisfaction Survey received 6000 responses, the largest sample to date. Despite delays with membership packs being sent out due to the pandemic, it was pleasing to see that member satisfaction remained high at 75%. The Net Promoter Score for how likely it is you would recommend British Canoeing to a friend or colleagues has improved from 23 in 2019 to 24 in 2020.

The top reasons for joining British Canoeing is for the waterways licence, insurance protection, in order to coach and to keep up to date with news and information about paddling. These are followed by more 'community' focused reasons, with being part of the paddle sport community and supporting the Clear Access, Clear Waters campaign stated as important. Member feedback has made it clear that providing more information about our campaigning would be welcomed.

Improvements in communications continue to take place, with the introduction of welcome and renewal emails that help signpost and highlight member benefits. Satisfaction with communication remained at 73%. The focus in 2021 is on providing more tailored and segmented communications with an increase in recreational and interest focused content.

British Canoeing announced the Caravan and Motorhome Club as our Official Accommodation Partner in December following on from the successful work over the summer developing and sharing exciting content. Amongst other things, members will benefit by seeing all Caravan and Motorhome sites being added to the PaddlePoints website to help paddlers to better plan their trips.

We continue to work with the Paddler, and it remains as a free digital resource to members. All affiliated clubs continue to receive one free copy per edition. Members can also subscribe to the SUP Magazine taking advantage of a 23% discount off the RRP.

British Canoeing Executive Team

During 2020 there were six leavers and five new starters.

- The number of staff employed by British Canoeing in January 2020 was 100
- The number of staff employed by British Canoeing in December 2020 was 99

Our labour turnover for the year is therefore calculated at 6%

HR Team

New Starters

Suzi Rose – L&D Advisor (Fixed-term) – 28th September 2020

Coaching Team

Leavers

Amelia Sentance – Coaching Advisor – 30th November 2020

Development Team

Internal Promotion

David Rogers – Project Support Officer (Development) – 1st February 2020

Chris Earle – Head of Recreational Paddling – 1st December 2020

Leavers

Cadi Lambert – Go Canoeing Engagement Officer – 31st December 2020

Membership Team

New Starters

Caitlin Fox – Membership Advisor – 2nd November 2020

Leavers

Will Packer – Membership Advisor – 13th March 2020

Communications Team

New Starters

Francis Twizell – Content Marketing Officer – 20th July 2020

Performance Team - Sprint programme

New Starters

Eric Farrell – Podium Coach – 1st December 2020

Performance Team – Paracanoe Programme

New Starters

Hannah Brown – Paracanoe Technical Support Coach (Fixed-term) – 1st March 2020

Internal Promotion

Scott Simon – Interim Head Coach (Flatwater) – 1st December 2020

Performance Team - Slalom Programme

Internal Promotion

Greg Hitchen – Podium Technical Coach (Slalom) – 1st November 2020

Luke Smyth – Academy Programme Technical Coach (Slalom) – 1st November 2020

Leavers

Zachary Franklin – Podium Technical Coach – 15th May 2020

English Talent Programme

Leavers

Zachary Allin – NRTA Coach (Slalom) – 12th July 2020

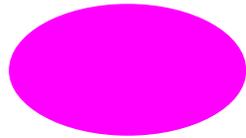
Alice Haining – RTA & SRS Coach (Slalom) – 2nd December 2020

Partners

Funding Partners



Official Partners



Official Trade Partners





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