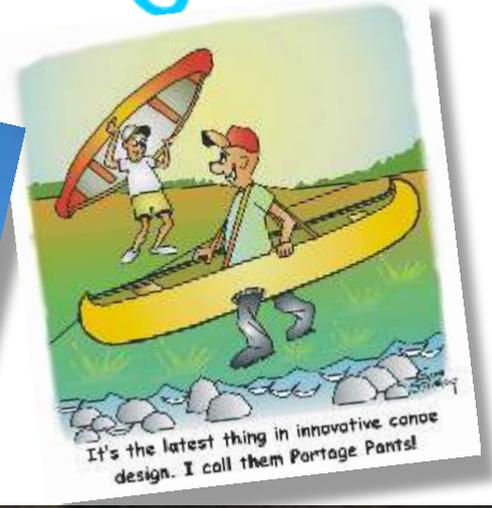
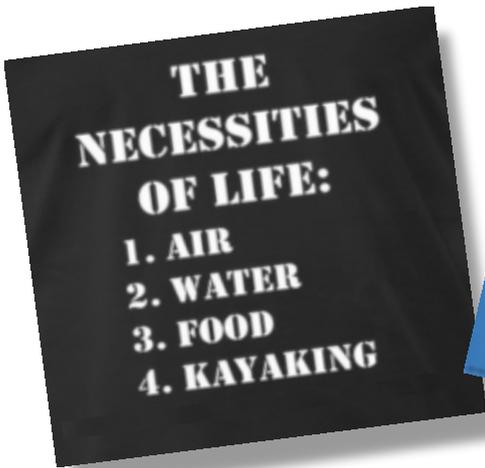


Halifax Canoe Club Spring Newsletter

Creating a splash in 2017

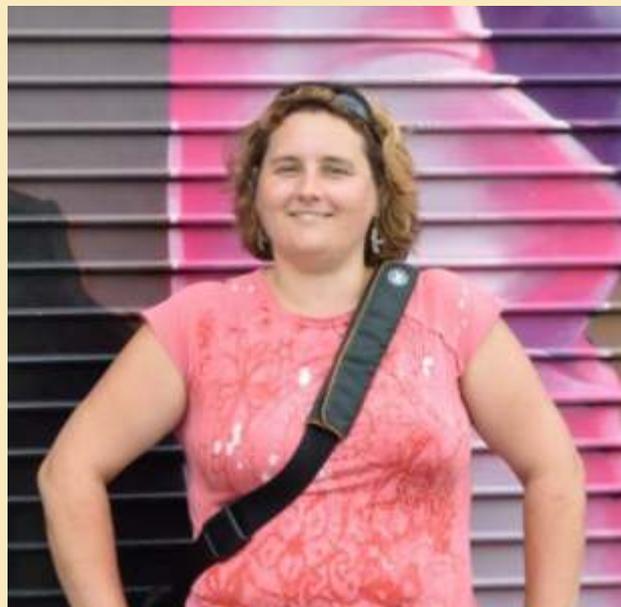


If life puts an obstacle in your way

Just boof it!



Hello and welcome to the new look Halifax Canoe Club Newsletter, we hope you enjoy this bumper edition full of new features, trip reports, information about upcoming events, latest news and even your favourite paddling recipes. You'll also find a gallery of trip pictures and some short films made over the winter. We welcome contributions from all members so get thinking, what you could showcase next time? If you haven't already, the lighter nights and warmer weather are a great chance to get out on the river. It is an opportunity to practice your river skills and maybe even show off some of your winter training. There are loads of opportunities, with classes on most night of the week. As well as getting into a boat and getting outdoors, the club sessions are a great excuse to catch up with your mates and see people you might not have seen for a while.



This summer also sees a return of the popular Paddlefit fitness training sessions. Or if you prefer something a little more informal we have our Wednesday night club session, open to any club member who has completed a beginners course on the river. This is a chance to get informal coaching from senior coaches, test yourself against the river features and practice your white water moves. There's also a bit of informal fitness training for those that want to join in. Watch this space for new Club Sunday dates too starting with our Calder Paddle Fest on the 4th June.

Halifax Canoe Club prides itself on being welcoming and friendly Club. We hope that is your experience but to help enhance this even further we have planned a number of social events over the next few months. See the events calendar for more information. This months event is an Escape Room Challenge and curry in Bradford.

Although we were recently awarded Club of the Year award by British Canoeing, over the next year or so we hope to develop the club to make it even better, So please have a think about what the club does and how it is run, in order to to tell us how we could be better or what more we can do to get you and others out enjoying paddlesport. We are also going to focus on developing our coaches and you our volunteers. Our coaches, as with all our volunteers, are what makes this club so how can we help you to improve what you do?

Finally, I hope you like the photos and trip reports. We all love reading about your paddling antics so don't forget to share with us your write ups and pictures for the gallery!

Enjoy and see you on the river soon, **Victoria**



Send us your pictures and videos with a short write up in an email Paul Wood using the following address: marketing@halifaxcanoe.org.uk





You may not realise it but HXCC is active on Facebook and if you haven't already joined us, you should consider checking out the HXCC page and the HXCC group.

HXCC Facebook Page -

<https://www.facebook.com/halifaxcc/>

If HXCC were a person then the HXCC Facebook page is where you would see us posting kitten videos and sharing selfies of us pouting at the camera. However, we're a canoe club and not a person so all we ever talk about on the internet is canoeing and kayaking which means that we would be your most interesting friend. Our Facebook page allows us to be a bit more informal than we are on the HXCC website so as well as posting news and updates about club matters we can share videos, photos, updates and content from ourselves, other people, clubs and commercial sites that we think will be of interest to our members.

We would love for you to visit our page and "like" us so we can keep in touch. We would also really appreciate it if you would interact with us on Facebook by liking, sharing or commenting on our posts and events because it helps us reach a much wider audience. A good example of this was when we won the British Canoeing Club of the Year Award (which we may have mentioned once or twice recently!) we had posted earlier in the afternoon that we were going to the event later that night and 143 people saw that on our Facebook page, when we posted later in the evening that we had won the award we received quite a few "likes" and comments from our friends and members which resulted in a staggering 4,500 people seeing our page and learning that we were officially the best club in the country. We get a lot of prospective new members contacting us through Facebook, as well as local businesses, groups and sports clubs who want to work with us and every time you like/comment/share one of our posts it is a huge help to us by helping to raise the profile of the club (a single "like" will add at least 20-30 new views to our page.)



HXCC Facebook Group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Halifaxcc/>

The HXCC Facebook Group is an online forum for all members and friends of HXCC to come together and chat with each other. Think of it as an online version of the club house after a Sunday paddle, you can talk to the same people but it will be warmer and not as smelly and there will be people there 24/7.

The group has only been active for a month or so but there are already 60 members which is fantastic but we want all of our club members to come and join. The HXCC group is a "closed group" which means that only members can see what is being talked about within the group so you can chat away about kayaking all day long and you won't annoy all of your everyday friends and family who don't get what all the fuss is about. If you are not already a member, come to the group site, click the "+ Join Group" button and if you're cool enough someone will add you to the group (only kidding - of course someone will let you in, all HXCC members are welcome to join, no matter how boring or weird you are!)

Being a member of the group will enable you to interact with other club members online. The HXCC Facebook group is not only a great place to share kayaking videos, photos and articles but a great place to share videos and photos of recent club trips and activities. If you are thinking of buying a new piece of kit then the group site is a great place to ask for advice or recommendations, if you're thinking of selling some kit then it's a great place to advertise. However, the best thing about the HXCC Facebook group is the ability for members to arrange to go paddling on an informal basis, it doesn't matter how good/confident/experienced you are, if you want to spend a week in Scotland and run some grade 4 rivers or if you're free for an hour after work on a Wednesday and want to go for a paddle on the canal, if you post in the group you will probably find some like minded people who are interested in joining you. **Nic Wilson**

As you may have noticed over the last few weeks some building work has been carried out at the club to improve and repair the facilities. The wet rot caused by the floods has been treated and the changing rooms are back to normal and are looking great once again. As part of our commitment to make the club spaces more friendly the kitchen has been refurbished and redecorated. There is still some more work to do here but we are on the track to getting it finished. New racking has been constructed to store more playboats and there are plans to build more racking to store the Karnali's and free up some space in the kitchen area when the trailer moves. The doors are in the process of being redecorated with a coat of new blue paint and we hope to get this finished this summer.

Jose Leite



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**



*Helpers from the
last clean up*

Help needed.

River clean up Saturday 3 June

Fancy spending a couple of hours cleaning up the river banks or maintaining the club house? It's great fun and makes a huge contribution to everyone's safety and enjoyment. If you'd like to join us please note the date in your diary now (Saturday 3rd June 10 am) and we'll send you more details in an email nearer the time. More info can be found [here](#)

Christine Brown

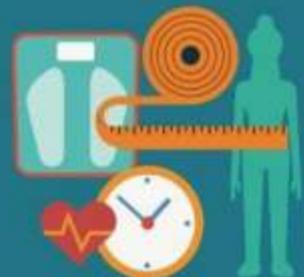
99 REASONS TO EXERCISE

 @BelievePHQ

IMPROVES MOOD IMPROVES SLEEP REDUCES STRESS REDUCES ANXIETY
REDUCES DEPRESSION BOOSTS ENERGY INCREASES CONFIDENCE
IMPROVES POSTURE REDUCES FATIGUE REDUCES ILLNESS IMPROVES FLEXIBILITY
IMPROVES FITNESS BUILDS STRENGTH DECREASES BODY FAT
IMPROVES BREATHING EFFICIENCY IMPROVES IMMUNE SYSTEM
IMPROVES LEARNING IMPROVES COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING
STIMULATES GROWTH OF BRAIN CELLS RELEASES ENDORPHINS
CONTROLS YOUR WEIGHT STRENGTHENS BONES STRENGTHENS MUSCLES
REDUCES RISK OF TYPE 2 DIABETES REDUCES RISK OF OBESITY
HELPS TO MAINTAIN WEIGHT LOWER RISKS OF DEMENTIA
LOWERS RESTING HEART RATE LOWERS RISK OF EARLY DEATH
IMPROVES BLOOD FLOW TO THE BRAIN IMPROVES COPING SKILLS



IMPROVES BODY IMAGE IMPROVES BODY SHAPE INCREASES SPEED
INCREASES AGILITY MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER IMPROVES WELL BEING
REDUCES BOREDOM IMPROVES LEARNING IMPROVES PERFORMANCE
IMPROVES DIGESTION REDUCES CHOLESTEROL IMPROVED SELF IMAGE
IMPROVES BLOOD FLOW LOWERS RISK OF CANCER
LOWERS RISK OF HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
REDUCES RISK OF HEART DISEASE
INCREASES STAMINA
INCREASES LEAN MUSCLE
INCREASES FOCUS
INCREASES ATTENTION
INCREASES CONCENTRATION
REDUCES RISK OF ASTHMA
INCREASES SOCIAL SKILLS INCREASES QUALITY OF LIFE
IMPROVES PERFORMANCE AT WORK AND SCHOOL
REDUCES CHRONIC ILLNESS REDUCED FEELINGS OF FATIGUE



SUPPORTS WEIGHT MANAGEMENT IMPROVES BALANCE IMPROVES MOTOR SKILLS
REDUCES RISK OF BREAST CANCER STRENGTHENS YOUR HEART
STRENGTHENS YOUR BODY REDUCES TENSION REDUCES ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
IMPROVES SPORT PERFORMANCE IT IS CHALLENGING HELPS YOU TO MEET FRIENDS
IMPROVES ENDURANCE MAKES YOU SMILE IMPROVES HAPPINESS
EASES BACK PAIN IMPROVES EATING HABITS INCREASES PAIN RESISTANCE
MAKES YOU FEEL INDEPENDENT CHALLENGES YOU BOOSTS PRODUCTIVITY
BOOSTS CREATIVITY PREVENTS MUSCLE LOSS IMPROVES OXYGEN SUPPLY TO CELLS
PREVENTS COLDS IMPROVES MENTAL ALERTNESS KEEPS YOU MOTIVATED
CREATES FRIENDSHIPS TEACHES YOU LIFE LESSONS TEACHES YOU LIFE LESSONS
STRENGTHENS YOUR SPINE IMPROVES AWARENESS MAKES YOU FEEL PROUD
CREATES OPPORUNTIES HELPS TO BURN FAT KEEPS YOUR BODY IN GOOD SHAPE
IMPROVED JOINT FUCNTION HELPS TO PREVENT INJURIES IMPROVES APETITE
IT IS ENJOYABLE IT ALLOWS YOU TO SOCIALISE MAKES YOU FEEL AMAZING

White Water Safety & Rescue Course

10 June & 11 June, 9:30 - 5:00 pm

We still have a couple of spaces available on our White Water Safety & Rescue Course next month. This is a 2 day course covering safety and rescue skills on grade 2 (using throw lines, defensive and aggressive swimming, paddler rescues and more) essential skills for any white water paddler! And great fun!!

We have run this course for club members a number of times. This year we are using Ty Nant Outdoors to deliver the course. The first day of the course will be at the Tryweryn in Bala. The second day will be flexible so could be at the Tryweryn, Mile End Mill, or using another local river.

You need to be:

over 16

Happy paddling grade 2

Prepared to get wet – all weekend!

Cost £100 per person for the course, plus you will also need to pay:

water access fees (max £12 per day)

BC course fee (£5 members, £10 non members)

Plus you'll need to sort camping or B&B for the weekend – there is a campsite at the Tryweryn and lots of other options nearby.

Also if you need one, dry suits are available to hire (£45 for the weekend).

Full details of the course are [here](#)

Interested or to book a place contact Les Ford, coaching@halifaxcanoe.org.uk or **07786525912** - please let me know asap as I will be offering any unfilled spaces to other clubs



Paddlefit is back

Our regular weekly fitness session is back.

Quite simply it is fitness training in a boat! We do a variety of exercises, sprints, longer distances, resistance training etc - think circuit training in your boat.

We follow a session plan each week designed to work on various aspects of fitness, allowing you to push yourself as hard as you want to.

Its open to pretty much any paddler in the club who wants to build their paddling and general fitness. The only requirement is that you can paddle in a straight line, and turn your boat.

Meet at the club on Tuesday's so we can be on the water for a 7:30pm start. Sessions last approx 1 hour session on the flat water, most people go for a quick paddle on the white water afterwards, but it's up to you. You need your usual paddling kit (but remember you will be working out!), and a sling and carabineer if you have one.

This year I'll be running the first few sessions (but can't commit to every week due to work) so I'll be looking to others to run session on a rota basis - simply getting the kit out and following the session plans.



Les Ford

Paddlepower Awards and Apps

These are paddling skills awards especially designed for those 16 or under. They provide a way to develop your paddling skills, log your progress while having fun on the water.



You can work your way through the different levels one after the other, or start at the level you or your coach feel suits you best. Either way, you get a certificate when you've finished each one.

During each level you will get to learn a variety of canoeing skills and challenges and improve your knowledge – all in a fun and flexible way, and in different types of canoe (this depends on what equipment is available at your club/centre).

There are five different levels:

Paddlepower Start

This level can often be achieved after your first taste of canoeing.

Paddlepower Passport

Gradually moving you on from your initial taste of the sport, through various skills and knowledge, giving you a really good base from which you could choose to set off onto the next level. (Paddlepower Passport is recognised as an equivalent award to British Canoeing 1 Star)

Paddlepower Discover

Focusing on developing your technique, skills and knowledge further, all in a fun and flexible way. (Paddlepower Discover is recognised as an equivalent award to British Canoeing 2 Star)

Paddlepower Explore

Using the skills you developed during Passport and Discover to take part in a variety of canoeing events and journeys, exploring the great variety of opportunities in competitive and non-competitive disciplines.

Paddlepower Excel

Recognising and celebrating the fact you are becoming a competent, experienced paddler. By now you will be able to show a broad knowledge of the sport including nutrition, environment and goal setting, as well as how to be responsible for yourself and others.

How to get started

You can download the Paddlepower App from the App Store or Google Play, there is more information here <http://paddlepower.org.uk/>



Start Slalom this summer



We are looking for more paddlers to join our slalom squad. With existing paddlers moving on up into the higher divisions, we want more young and not so young paddlers to come and get involved in the challenge of slalom.

What is it? A time trial down a section of river passing through a number of downstream and upstream gates on the way, with penalties added for touching or missing gates.

While it is a race, don't worry about that just come and have a go and see if you can master the challenge of manoeuvring your boat through the gates! Once you manage that see if you can do it faster on your next run. As you get better, you progress to racing on increasingly difficult white water - right up to the Lee Valley Olympic course!

Why do it? You will dramatically improve your boat handling, river reading and white water skills. Every race provides a different course and a new challenge to master. Also its very social meeting up with other paddlers at different race venues, and excuse to paddle pretty much every weekend you want to, and you might get a bit fitter too.

Beginners level events coming up near the Club:

Sun 14th May - Manvers Div 4 slalom, nr Barnsley (flat water event)

Sat 20th & Sun 21st May - Wagon Lane Div 3/4 slalom, Bingley

Sat 3rd 7 Sun 4th June - Stone Div 3/4 slalom, Stafford

Sat 8th 7 Sun 9th June - Howsham Weir Div 2/3/4 slalom, near York

Club coaches and members will be at all of these to help you enter, coach you and cheer you on. All are on easy white water (easier than the drops at the club).

If you are interested speak to Les or Sarah on lesford@ntlworld.com or 07786525912. And if you want to take it up, we run slalom training on a Thursday evening at the club.

FSRT Course interest

Over the spring we have run 3 Foundation Safety & Rescue Training Courses at the club, and are looking to run some more over the summer months (while it is a bit warmer!).

This is a one day course (8 hrs) covering how to keep yourself and others safe while paddling. So it is a very important course for any paddler looking to head out with a group of friends so you have the skills to manage safety while paddling and respond to simple incidents you are likely to encounter while paddling on easy water. It is also a pre-requisite for anyone doing coaching or Club Activity Assistant training.

You need to be 14 or over to do the course. We are looking at running courses both as a full day and for younger paddlers running the course over two days in the school holidays. Cost: the only cost for club members is the certificate fee of £5 for BC member or £10 for non BC members. (If you go on this course elsewhere it will cost you £60-80 for the same course!)

I have a handful of people interested already, but so I can organise enough courses please drop me an email, text or speak to me if you would be interested in attending a course - Les Ford, coaching@halifaxcanoe.org.uk, 07786525912.

Click here to see some FSRT videos from the British Canoeing website.



THE RULES OF KAYAKING

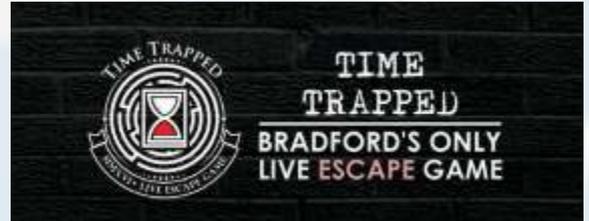
- 1. DO NOT DIE!**
- 2. IF IN DOUBT SEE RULE 1.**
- 3. PEOPLE ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN BOATS.**
- 4. WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T.**
- 5. STOPPERS ARE NOT YOUR FRIENDS.**
- 6. UNDERCUTS ARE BAD.**
- 7. ALWAYS SMILE FOR THE CAMERA.**
- 8. THE RIVER IS STRONGER THAN YOU.**
- 9. BRING A HOT THERMOS BETWEEN MAY AND EASTER.**
- 10. IF YOU SCOUT A RIVER, BRING A THROW LINE AND A CAMERA.**
- 11. DON'T PADDLE WITH PEOPLE THAT DON'T CARRY THROW LINES.**
- 12. HAVE YOUR KEYS AT THE TAKEOUT.**
- 13. IF IT'S NOT FUN DON'T DO IT!**
- 14. HAND ROLLS ARE A LAST RESORT, NOT THE FIRST.**
- 15. MAKE SURE SOMEONE HAS A WATCH.**
- 16. NEVER LET A NEW PADDLER GO FIRST OR LAST.**
- 17. NO RIVER IS "TOO EASY" UNLESS YOU CATCH EVERY EDDY AND SURF EVERY WAVE.**
- 18. CHERISH EACH RIVER TRIP, NO TWO ARE EVER THE SAME.**
- 19. SAVE THE PERSON WITH LUNCH FIRST.**
- 20. SCREAMING IN TERROR IS A WASTE OF GOOD OXYGEN.**
- 21. NO MATTER HOW FRIENDLY THE RIVER IS, YOU ARE NOT THE RIVER'S FRIEND**
- 22. RIVERS DON'T CARE!**
- 23. ALWAYS HAVE AIRBAGS.**
- 24. WHEN IN DOUBT, PADDLE, PADDLE, PADDLE!**
- 25. THANK THE PERSON THAT SAVES ALL YOUR LOST GEAR.**
- 26. IF MOST OF ABOVE FAIL THEN ALWAYS REMEMBER TO LAUGH AT THE OTHER PADDLER'S EXPENSE.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 19th, Time Trapped game and Curry in Bradford booking essential - *only 1 spot left for the game.*

The premise is very simple – You get locked in a room and have an hour to figure out the clues to open the door. We did it last week and it really was fabulous fun its just a shame its limited to ten people. However, the delights of Bradford`s curry district then befall us.

For more information click [here](#)



Calder White Water Festival Sunday 4th June at the Club House



We will be inviting other local clubs to come and join us on the river along with demo fleets from RoHo and Greg Spencer for fun and games.

For more information click [here](#)

June 30th Greek Night in Halifax



Our June social event is an evening of Mediterranean cuisine at Theo's Greek Restaurant in Halifax. I've booked a table and they have asked if we can kindly confirm our orders in advance.

For more information click [here](#)

July 21st to 23rd Sleningford weekend

Back by popular demand, we are proud to announce "The Sleningford Weekend". Come and spend a couple of nights Camping and Paddling . The Campsite is now open for booking- you will need to book, please specify Halifax CC as group reference and " the Island" as preferred booking location.

For more information click [here](#)



September 16th Snowdon Hit and Run, now with added camping



Subject to the Weather on the day, I'm proposing to run a hiking trip up Snowdon. This will be very beneficial to those who are not used to ascending mountains and are looking to gain some experience in this field. Using the tourist track up we will then descend on either the Pyg track or (depending on weather) Miners track into Pen y Pas, then decide whether to wait for the Lazy Bus- not its real name ! or walk the last couple of miles back into Llanberis

For more information click [here](#)

GO Canoeing!



Looking for a challenge? Something to plan and prepare for? Perhaps you'd like to raise money for charity, or simply try something new and different?

Go Canoeing have launched their new Go Canoeing Challenge Routes, which are bound to inspire your imagination and bring out the adventurer in you!

What are Challenge Routes?

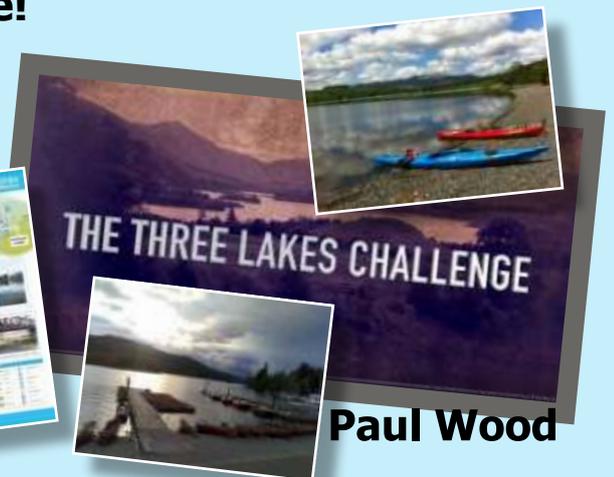
The Challenge Routes are nationally recognised journeys on waterways that have been carefully selected to provide you with unique challenges. They are designed for you to plan and complete in your own time, in the boat of your choice and at your own pace. The routes are aimed at those who have existing canoeing experience; however some of the shorter Challenge Routes could be an ideal goal for someone new to the sport to train and prepare for.

There are currently have three individual Challenge Routes: **Llyn Tegid (Bala Lake)** in **Wales**, **Windermere** in **England** and **Loch Awe** in **Scotland**. Or if you want to take on a bigger challenge, you can combine the three routes and take on the ultimate **Three Lakes Challenge**. This truly unique challenge will take you on an adventure to some of the most beautiful and scenic inland paddling locations in the UK. The combination of travelling over 380 miles on land and 43 miles on the water will put even the most experienced paddler to the test.

So what are you waiting for? Take a look at the routes, decide which one is appropriate for your ability and inspires you the most; then **start planning your adventure and take on the challenge!**

Three Lakes Challenge Documentary

Click [here](#) to watch Olympic Slalom gold medal winner, Tim Baillie, take on the Three Lakes Challenge.



Paul Wood



paddleadvisor

Trip reports

New Year's Day Paddle – River Calder

Some of us foolishly decided to get up on New Year's Day morning and head to the club for a bit of a paddle to shake off the cobwebs from the night before and tick off the "do exercise" resolution as early as possible. We arrived in a cold and damp Sowerby Bridge and as we all struggled to get in to our paddling gear (which had somehow managed to shrink since it was last



used – just before Christmas) we were gently serenaded by the warped ambient sounds of the new electronic church bells which appear to have been installed by someone with more than a passing admiration of Aphex Twin. Eventually, we were ready and Andrew, Julie, Vics B-K, Judith, Nic, Marcus, Vicky M, and Andy L meandered down to the river and got in our boats.

There had been a bit of rain overnight so there was plenty of water about but the pong coming down from the Ryburn meant that the nice looking wave on the first drop was not as appealing as it would ordinarily have been so without too much fuss we headed straight down river without a great deal of playing. That is until we got to the third drop on the course... at first glance the increased water flow appeared to have widened and straightened the path down the drop but on closer inspection there was a submerged rock that needed to be avoided in the centre of the flow which most people spotted but let's just say that one sleepy paddler (who shall remain nameless) quickly experienced a rapid change in their vertical orientation and bagged the prestigious "first swim of the year" 2017 medal.

Aside from that early excitement it was a fairly uneventful paddle with only the occasional weir and small play wave to keep you on your toes. There was a bit of wildlife to be seen with kingfishers and herons making appearances but the most striking visual accompaniment to the trip was the amount of damage from the Boxing Day 2015 floods that was still visible. The bridge by the church in Copley looked particularly precarious and I don't think it would need too much encouragement to give up the ghost and collapse in to the river. The scars of the floods were also apparent through the ongoing rebuilding of some of the buildings near the river and the volume of rubbish that is still lodged in the tree branches high above the river. We paddled down the Calder almost as far as West Vale before getting out of our boats and clambering up the muddy bank to the canal tow path under the railway viaduct just before the confluence with Black Brook. From there it was all up hill as we paddled back to Sowerby Bridge on the canal and then popped to the pub for a well deserved reward. **Nic Wison**



1. Briefly tell us about your background: where did you grow up and how did you get into canoeing?

I grew up in Hertfordshire, just north of London. It's pretty flat not really known for its wilderness but I was very lucky to live just a mile down the road from a large outdoor centre. Where I learnt to sail, kayak, windsurf and climb. That's also where I first started coaching other people.

2. What brought you to Halifax Canoe Club?

I noticed people paddling on the river one night when I was on my way to Tesco, and thought I'd give it a go, having not paddled much for a few years. Now you can't get rid of me!

3. Describe how you are involved in the Club?

Well I'm the Chair which means I get involved in lots of different ways but the main thing is working with the rest of the committee and our brilliant volunteers to make the club run smoothly. I'm also a coach so occasionally you will also see on the river, leading groups.

4. What does "getting outside" mean to you?

An urban walk, a mountain hike, a lake paddle, having an adrenaline hit on white water or even just sitting and enjoying the view... it all counts for me.

5. What is the craziest thing you have done?

I did a parachute jump for my 19th birthday. It was awesome.

6. What are your favourite outdoors/travel destinations?

I'm very lucky to have been to some amazing places around the world: Milford Sound, New Zealand; Ayres Rock or Uluru and The Great Barrier Reef, Australia; Machu Picchu, Peru; Yosemite, California; and the French Alps. I'm not sure with could pick an absolute favourite from that list. Each one is special for its own reasons. But there's loads more places I'd like to go.

7. What is your favourite paddling snack?

Flapjack, every time!

8. Favourite Film?

Point Break or Philadelphia

9. What is your favourite paddling memory?

I can't pick between sea kayaking on Milford Sound and white water paddling in the French Alps, with the club. Both truly amazing experiences.

10. What are your paddling ambitions over the next few years?

I'd like to progress my white water paddling so I'm confidently paddling Grade 3 water and maybe some 4s and maybe even do my 4 star.

11. What is the earliest memory you have of being outside?

Walking and bird watching in the Lee Valley Country Park with my dad.

12. What boats do you paddle?

I'm lucky enough to have my own open boat - a big one that can fit my daughter and partner in too - and Dagger Mamba... but I'd always make space for more. I'd love a play boat and a sea kayak!

13. What is your favourite song (or album) right now?

Skin by Rag n Bone man but my all time favourite band is R.E.M.

14. What is your biggest challenge nowadays?

Making time for canoeing and kayaking; I've got a baby daughter and a busy job. But it helps me relax and unwind so I do try and get out regularly. This summer you'll find me at the Club Nights on a Wednesday and when possible our club Sundays.

If you would like to be interviewed email your answers to marketing@halifaxcanoe.org.uk

Impromptu trip to the River Dee (Afon Dyfrdwy) 4th December 2016

Firstly, apologies if you are reading this trip report and thinking "I'd have liked to go to the Dee but I didn't know there was a trip on" but as the title says, it was very much an impromptu last minute decision to spend the day in North Wales and it was not possible to advertise the trip as widely as is usual.

There was originally an official club trip scheduled to head North to run a section of the Tees but despite the heavy rain a couple of weeks earlier it had been very dry since then and by the preceding weekend, the water levels and the lack of rain forecast over the next week

meant that there was a good chance of the trip being cancelled so I began to scout around for potential alternatives that could be suggested. This was harder than it looked. There had been no rain anywhere for at least a week and there was none forecast to arrive before Sunday so most of the rivers were already empty and although there were a few in the lakes that were holding their water, it would be touch and go as to whether they would still be runnable in a week's time. As the week went on all the levels dropped further, potential back up rivers such as the Leven and the Eden dropped off the map and although the North Tyne was up, this was being fed by a major release from the Kielder dam that was due to finish on the Friday night which meant that the level would have dropped by the Sunday. Added to this, Tees Barrage wouldn't be open, HPP was closed for maintenance and the Tryweryn would not be releasing. I even looked further afield and got in touch with someone from Severn Trent Water to ask if there was a release planned on the Vyrnwy but no luck there either. This meant that there would realistically be only one whitewater alternative if the Tees was too low... The Dee.

As expected, an e-mail landed on Saturday evening cancelling the official trip to the Tees because it would have been a walking trip rather than a paddling trip so I quickly e-mailed everyone who had been planning to go the Tees and put a post on Facebook asking if anyone fancied heading to the Dee instead. Almost immediately James said he was in and was quickly followed by Mike, Oliver was also going to come so at least we were guaranteed to have one sensible paddler there. We then subjected Al to a barrage of name calling until he agreed to rise Lazarus like from his sick bed and join us on the river with Jonny.

No more than 12 hours after "organising" ourselves, the six of us were on our way to an icy Llangollen and amazingly all managed to arrive at the river at exactly the same time. Knowing that the lack of water anywhere else would mean that there would probably be a lot of paddlers about, we quickly got changed and headed off up to Horseshoe Falls for the put-in although we did have time to snigger at the university club who were preparing to go swimming on the 2nd day of their WWSR course (I hope that they got a healthy discount for booking a December slot).

The car park at the put-in was already starting to fill up but despite a short delay whilst we removed the 47 straps that were holding the boats on to Mike's car, another delay as we helped James get dressed and then another delay when he couldn't find his paddle, we were soon on the river. We got on just above Horseshoe Falls and had a quick warm up before bumping down the chicken chute on river left and off on our adventure. 200m downstream and it was time to get out of our boats, scramble up the steep bank and make use of the purpose built seal launch ramp to see who could propel themselves furthest across the river. The next time you're at the Dee I can thoroughly recommend having a go on this ramp, it makes the seal launches at the Tryweryn and Linton Lock seem positively sedate in comparison. From there it was a quick paddle down to Chain Bridge for a bit of a play in the waves and then quickly down to the main event.

We got out above Serpent's Tail and shuffled our way across the slippery rocks to have a look at it and set up safety. At Serpent's Tail the usually wide and sedate river Dee constricts into a rocky channel only a few feet wide, there a few little waves and bouncy bits in the lead up to the Serpent where the gradient and the flow increase significantly as the river tumbles down in to a small channel and tries hard to push unwary kayakers in to the rock face on river right so you have to be on your



toes to quickly move left and navigate through the mess of boily water and lateral waves around a dog leg and then you can have a bit of a breather (if you can hit an eddy) before the Tail where the river narrows even further to not much wider than your average kayak in to a drop which necessitates a sharp left as you go down it otherwise the stopper lurking at the bottom will push you straight in to the rocky overhang on your right.

We scoped out the lines we were going to take and then it was back up to the boats to have some fun. First up were myself, Jonny and Al. Jonny had picked out the same line as I was planning to take and he decided that he would follow me down so, ducks in a row, we peeled out of the eddy and broke in to the flow. I forget how many times I've now run this rapid and the lead in is very familiar, there's the increased heart rate, the check to make sure that my throw-line is stowed securely, the back rest is nice and snug and a double check of my deck to make sure that it's on properly and then it's time to go, push wide out of the eddy on river left to get over to river right, keep breathing nice and slow, fight the urge to paddle too fast before the entrance to the rapid (don't want to run out of steam), keep those paddle strokes deep and deliberate, concentrate on form and trunk rotation, keep that head up, keep an eye on my entrance point, pick a path through the rocks that can knock you off course in lower levels and then you're ready, a quick check behind and Jonny is still there so it's time to get moving, three big paddle strokes, right, left and right again, keep that bow up, land the first drop pointing left and it all goes well so I know I can relax. It's amazing how familiarity has slowed this bit of water down for me in the last couple of years, whereas my internal monologue on a successful run probably went along the lines of "Aaaaaaargghh, rocks, rocks, wave, rocks, aaaaaaargghh, underwater, rocks, what's happening, ouch, please god let my roll work. Yes! The roll worked, where am I? Aaaaaaargghh, rocks, backwards, I'm alive... Nailed it." now everything is a little bit more laid back, the micro eddy on river right below the mouth of the rapid looks positively huge and there's even a 2nd eddy that I'm not sure I've noticed before that can be filed away to have a look at for next time, I know I got a good angle at the top of the rapid so I no longer need to worry about the rocks on river right so it's just a case of picking a good no-frills line around the dog leg, quickly nip in to the big eddy on river right, check behind to make sure Jonny's not chasing me down the river without his boat, straight back in to the flow and boof left (a little untidily) through the Tail and Jonny is not too far behind. It's time for paddle-fives as Jonny ticks off another bit of grade 4 from his to-do list and we wait for Al to make his run.

Al decided that he would take a relaxed approach to avoiding the rock face and dog leg on river right (i.e. by not bothering to avoid them at all) which meant that he could showcase his shiny new bombproof roll halfway down Serpent's Tail. I guess that the discussion as to which is best between rolling on Serpent's Tail and not needing to roll on Serpent's Tail will probably last for quite a while in the Benson household.



A quick change over of safety and it was time for James and Oliver to make their runs. James had a good close look at the rock on river right that did for Al but eventually decided that going around it would be a better option than trying to go through it and loitered in the eddy for Oliver who seemed to be completely oblivious that he should be even slightly concerned about the grade 4 rapid he was paddling and was so relaxed that he was probably wishing he had his phone with him so he could live blog about what he was doing. Unfortunately, by this time the banks of Serpent's Tail were crawling with other kayakers, the river was full of kayakers and paddlers (not necessarily together), throw-lines were

whizzing through the air like giant yellow party streamers and a group of open boaters decided to add to the chaos by trying to lower their boats through the rapid in amongst all of the kayakers leaving a trail of destruction in their wake. So, to avoid the carnage we decided to quit whilst we were ahead after just one run each and head down to Mile End Mill for lunch with the final score HXCC 5-0 Serpent's Tail.

The trip down to Mile End Mill was uneventful but it did transpire that Al had managed to leave his (and more importantly, Jonny's) lunch in his car at the Put-In. Al was adamant that there were many huge benefits in the rest of us delaying our lunch and jumping in to my car in our wet gear and driving back up to the Horseshoe Falls to pick up his car and lunch and although it's fair to say that the rest of us were sceptical of this logic we did eventually agree to help him out when it became clear that it

would be the quietest option. When we finally sat down to lunch in the relative warmth of the old mill building it became apparent that not only had Al forgotten to bring his lunch but had also forgotten to make it when he proceeded to unpack a bag of rolls, 2 packs of chicken pieces and a bag of salad from his dry bag. After lunch we (and by we, I mean Mike) hid Jonny's trainers half way up a very tall tree before heading off up the car park to spend the rest of the day mucking about on the water at the Factory site. Jonny had swapped his boat and was now in his playboat so we suggested that he might like to have a bit of a surf in the sticky weir because it would be fun (and by fun, we meant fun for us to watch). After he'd been in there a while we asked him if he'd worked out why it was called The Sticky Weir but he didn't answer and just continued side surfing so we figured that he must be enjoying himself. Eventually another group of kayakers came down the river and found their path blocked by Jonny sheepishly grinning at them whilst continuing to surf back and forth in the stopper at the bottom of the weir.



However, our plan to leave Jonny there whilst we all went to the pub was dashed when it turned out that two of this rival group were actually very good playboaters and after they'd finished laughing at Jonny they started giving him really good advice which meant that he was soon able to get in to, move around and then get out of the stopper at will. Not only did this spoil our pub plans but it meant that we were then all essentially challenged to a "Surf Off" by Jonny seeing as it was apparently "easy" to play in the stopper. So, we bit the bullet and one after another launched our big lumbering River Runner's sideways in to the bottom of the weir to try out a bit of side surfing. For the uninitiated, getting in to the stopper is not remotely problematic, you simply paddle somewhere vaguely near it and then it helpfully grabs and embraces you. Surfing in the stopper is not particularly difficult either, providing you have enough edge, your boat remains completely stable without too much effort and slight changes in angle allow you to move forwards and backwards through the stopper with ease. The bit that gets interesting is when you've had enough of surfing and want to get out of the stopper, now, that takes a bit of practice. The usual method of getting out of the stopper is to wait for fatigue to set in, flip upside down and then succumb to a wet and bedraggled humiliation as you and your boat are flushed out (probably in different directions) but Jonny had upped the stakes so that was no longer an option so we all had to go for the much more unusual option of getting out of the stopper whilst still in our boats. Amazingly, through a mixture of skill, fluke, practice and brute strength we all managed it and no one swam. Al was so confident that he deliberately (no really – he told us in advance) showed off his bombproof roll again by ducking in to the stopper and rolling straight back out of it.

As the daylight edged towards dusk and the university WWSR group damply arrived back on site we decided to have one last run down the last bit of the Factory Site before calling it a day and go and get dry and warm. All in all, not a bad day out, lots of playing in all the features at Mile End Mill plus the run down from Horseshoe Falls and not a single swim between us. There was just enough time to pop in to the pub in Llangollen for a quick drink and a good look at Town Falls (for next time?) and then it was time to go home. **Nic Wilson**



[Click here to watch the video](#)



CANOE Tube

Click on the red icon for HXCC videos



HPP on a cold, quiet day in March



Canoe Club of the Year 2016



Sleningford. 13th Nov 2016



The River Leven adventure, 15th January 2017

Linton Locks
Carnage Reel
May 2016



Thank you to all the actors and film makers, keep the videos coming.



Kayaking Food Recipes

Carrot Cake Power Scuffins

I call these 'scuffins' because they are a hybrid between a scone, cookie, and a muffin! They are packed with nutrients, healthy fats, protein, and fibre and make an excellent power snack when you need a burst of energy.

Ingredients:

1 cup (225g) whole grain spelt flour
1/2 tsp baking power
1/4 tsp fine grain sea salt
1 tsp cinnamon, 1/4 tsp nutmeg, 1/4 tsp ginger
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup pure maple syrup* (note below)
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
1 egg
1/2 cup regular oats
1 cup shredded or grated carrots (approx 2 medium)
1/4 cup raisins
1/4 cup toasted, chopped walnuts
Coconut, for garnish



Directions: Preheat oven to 350F. In a small bowl, In a large sized bowl whisk together all of the dry ingredients. Using a food processor or grater, process/grate the carrots. In a medium sized bowl mix together the wet ingredients (carrots, vanilla, oil, maple syrup and egg). Add wet to dry and mix until just incorporated. Stir in the walnuts and raisins.

Scoop mixture onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or greased with oil. Scoop about 1/4 cup for each Scuffin to make 6 large scuffins. Wet hands and shape into a circle if desired. Sprinkle with coconut. Bake for 25 minutes at 350F. Top with coconut butter for an extra treat!

For those of you who care about these things here is the nutritional info:

(Per scuffin, Approx) 265 kcals, 9 grams fat, 1 gram sat. fat, 5 grams fibre, 4.4 grams protein, 61% vitamin A, 10% iron, 59 mg calcium, 180 mg potassium.

*Note: These are not overly sweet baked goods, so if you prefer your baked goods quite sweet, I would maybe add a couple tbsp of sugar in addition to the maple syrup. **Paul Wood**

Ullswater 23rd April 2017





Kayak Camping Gear Guide

Fancy camping and kayaking here are some ideas on what to take.



Sleep & Rest Pack:

- One person tent
- Sleeping bag
- Hammock
- Pillow

TIP: Remove tent poles from tent bag and store separately

Clothing Pack:

- Extra shirt
- Extra pants
- Warm baselayer
- Socks & underwear

TIP: Adjust accordingly based on weather, location and activities

Basecamp Pack:

- Microstove
- Water filter
- Food & snacks
- Utensils

TIP: Leave paper towels at home, bring a sponge

First-Aid Pack:

- Compass
- Emergency Blanket
- First Aid Kit
- Personal Hygiene

TIP: Use a red bag to indicate emergency kit...just in case

Electronics Pack:

- Flashlight
- Map & Launch Points
- Other electronics
- Batteries, etc.

TIP: Don't just rely on bungee, use the carabiner for a better latch

- A. Emergency Paddle
- B. Fresh Water Bag
- C. Paddle Float/Chair/Sleeping Pad Combo
- D. PFD (Lifevest), Whistle & Knife
- E. Hat, Sunglasses, Gloves

Note: We tried to cover most of the gear we think you'll need but we do encourage you to modify your setup based on your kayak, carrying capacity, environmental conditions, personal needs and of course length of time.