

## Stirling and Trossachs Scout District



# Water Activities

WATNEWS issue 1 - 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018

This is the first of what I would hope will be a bi-annual update of developments at Inverrossachs. Recipients will be all those who hold a water-related activity permit and others associated with the Water Activity Team.

You, as Activity Permit holders, have responsibility for the running of water activities at Inverrossachs, and the safety of the group in your charge is paramount. It may involve making difficult decisions, particularly when gauging the weather conditions and whether an activity should go ahead or be cancelled. There are many variables to be taken into account. But **if in doubt – don't go out.**

A lot of our current Bell Boat Helms will not have much experience on the water and the effect of the wind, so we are offering some opportunities to go out on the water with some more experienced leaders to help develop your own skills.

The first is on April 28<sup>th</sup> when you can also help us (see below).

Then on 19<sup>th</sup> May we are holding 'SPLOSH', a cub water activity day at which we will be seeking some help with Kayaking, Canoeing and Bell boating.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> September an Explorer Scout Event, 'DRENCH' is being held, and it is likely that help on the water will be required. We'll let you know more details near the time.

With 2 bookings already for the bell boats in April, it looks like an early start to, what promises to be, a good season.

### Improvements afoot

Over the next year we intend to make changes to the provision of paddle sports at Inverrossachs. Whilst some ambitious plans have been tabled, funding and grants are getting more difficult to access, so we are considering how we can best adapt the existing facilities. We are looking at ways to extend the existing timber boatshed and improve canoe and kayak storage. We intend separating the maintenance store from the boating facility, by either erecting a separate maintenance store, or by forming a self-contained part of the boatshed with it's own access. There is a need to increase the changing facilities, and if space permits, create a briefing/social area. So we may be calling on your help once things starts moving.

### Paddlesport season

It has been decided to set the Water Activity season as **1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September.** This falls in line with the ruling by Gilwell that the new B1 limit only applies during this period, reverting back to B2 water from October to March. Requests for water activities out with this period will be considered on an individual basis but, as a minimum requirement, a B2 permit holder for kayaking or canoeing will be required to be present for all forms of paddle sport.

### Personal Flotation Devices (Buoyancy Aids)

We are investing in 10 PFDs to meet the needs of our younger members as the existing PFDs are not as snug a fit as we would like, even when fully tightened. The new PFDs will be bright yellow and will fit, according to the manufacturers, most 6 – 10 year olds. They are fitted with crotch straps, which will stop the PFD riding up and possibly over the head of the wearer if immersed, so please ensure that smaller cubs wear these PFDs and are snug fitting.

This will now mean that **most** beavers will also be able to take part in a bell boating activity, provided the buoyancy aid fits properly. Unfortunately this will not be the case for all, and the onus will be on Bell Boat Helms to enforce this. Please note below the local rules that will apply when taking beavers bell boating.



### Bell Boating – Beavers

#### Rules

1. A 1 : 1 adult / beaver ratio (not including the helm) is to be maintained at all times. Each adult should be able to swim and has sole responsibility for the beaver in his/her charge. A Young Leader is not classed as an adult.
2. A minimum of 5 adults, plus helm, must be in the boat.
3. Beavers must wear an approved scout PFD with crotch straps. It must be snug fitting. Small beavers will not be allowed to go out if the PFD does not fit properly.
4. A bell boat containing **any** beavers must remain within the B1 limit.
5. The Bell Boat helm is to ensure that conditions are suitable – Wind speed no stronger than Force 2 i.e. light winds with the surface of the loch rippled with small wavelets.
6. No-one on the boat is to change seats during the activity.

### Get Ready – 28<sup>th</sup> April

There are a number of tasks that we, the Inverrossachs Water Activity Team, have to do at the start of the season; checking boats, buoyancy aids and other equipment. These safety procedures are everyone's concern and responsibility. We are going up on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> of April at 10.00 am to do this and could do with some help. If sufficient people are there we could complete the checks in the morning and then shake off those cobwebs in the afternoon with some practice time out on the water. If you are interested let me, Colin Smith, know. I'll organise burgers for lunch (but only if you let me know you're coming!)

The Inverrossachs Water Activity Core Team comprises Charlie Rowley, Ben Rowley, Mark Wright, Niall Williamson, Colin Smith and David Wilson.

If you want to raise any issues or problems, put forward suggestions or proposals, then just drop any or all of us an email.

### Summer Programme 2018

Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> April	Kayak Training, Inverrossachs	T.B.A. / Charlie
Sat 28 <sup>th</sup> April*	<b>SPLISH</b> – Annual check all water activity equipment (Burgers provided at lunchtime)	10.00 – 15.00
Sat 5 <sup>th</sup> May	Kayak Training, Inverrossachs	T.B.A. / Mark
Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> May*	<b>SPLOSH</b> – District Cub Water Activity Day	9.30 – 17.00
Sat 26 <sup>th</sup> May	B1 Assessments	10.00 – 14.00 / Mark
Sunday 3 June	B1 Assessments	10.00 – 14.00 / Mark
Sat 1/Sun 2 Sept*	<b>DRENCH</b> – Regional Explorer weekend	T.B.A.