



Stirling and Trossachs Scout District

# Water Activities

**WATNEWS issue 4 – October 2019**

**A bi-annual newsletter for those involved with the delivery of water activities at Invertrossachs**

As the 2019 season draws to a close we can look back at a very successful six months and a number of achievements.

## **Achievements**

- 1) Five more leaders successfully completed their B1 Kayak Assessment. They are (L. to R.) John Clinkenbeard (4/85<sup>th</sup>), Christina Cairns (4/85<sup>th</sup>), Ruaridh Oliphant (Milvus ESU), Kate Kilpatrick (4/85<sup>th</sup>), Ryan Ewbank (4/6<sup>th</sup>).
- 2) Five Explorer Scouts were successful in gaining Personal Permits for kayaking.
- 3) Several of our kayaking permit holders are undergoing additional training in canoes to gain their Canoeing endorsement.



These have been largely due to the tireless efforts of Mark Wright who has run most if not all of these sessions, with support from Stuart Bland and Charlie Rowley.

In addition, Anna Semple (88<sup>th</sup>), Nick Cowie (88<sup>th</sup>) and Remco Kind (7<sup>th</sup>) have gained B2 Rafting Permits, and Alasdair Blair (7<sup>th</sup>) has been appointed a Power Boat Assessor for Forth Region.

So as you can see we are slowly but surely building up an experienced and enthusiastic team to support and run Water Activities at Invertrossachs.

## **Update on the New Lease**

These successes are slightly tempered by the fact that the new lease for Invertrossachs is still under negotiation, and that any major expenditure and new developments are on hold. All we can report is that it is "Work in Progress".

## **Visitors, SPLASH and DROOKIT**

The Water Activities Team provided instruction throughout the season for a several visiting groups who had requested water activity sessions. They also provided the expertise at two District water-based events; SPLASH, held in May, was a scout event attended by over 50 scouts, and around 15 Explorer Scouts attended DROOKIT, held in September.

Thanks to all those who assisted in providing the instruction for these visiting groups and events; Mark, Charlie, Stuart, Lynne, Remco, Ruaridh, Niven, Ben, Nick and Anna (and probably one or two others whom I have missed).

## **Renewal of Permits (2) – the Assessor’s viewpoint**

Mark writes: As a B1 Assessor I deal with B1 Permit renewals. As was mentioned in the last issue, your permits will expire after 5 years, but if you are a regular user of your permit, you can apply for a renewal. This saves having to sit another assessment.

Accompanying your renewal application, you are obliged to submit a log of your time on the water, which will contain the dates, length of sessions, and who you were paddling with. The key is to demonstrate to the assessor that you have used your permit, and kept your own skills up to date. I would expect to see at least 3 entries per year as a minimum.

There are various ways to get time on the water outside of running your own sessions:

1. Offer to take out a visiting scout group (there are usually around half a dozen opportunities per year for which we are always looking for volunteer instructors)
2. Take part and help with a bigger, organised event such as **Splash, Splosh, Drookit, and Drench**.
3. Take part in **Splish**; our annual leaders day where we get together to check all of the equipment, have a meet, and get out on the water. This will be held on **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020**.
4. Come to any of the offered loch sessions. Whilst there will be a focus on training up the 'new recruits', there will always be a spare boat to hop on and have a paddle.
5. Trainees and adults with permits are able to book boats for themselves, providing they are not paddling alone and stay within given limits. This would be as an **Adults Only** group.

If you have any questions, or want to know more about the renewal process, please contact Mark Wright.

*Whilst Bell Boating is not within Mark’s remit, it is less onerous in the requirements of personal skills, but we would still expect Bell Boat helms to maintain a log and to have been out on the water at least once each year.*

## **Bell Boating Adult ratios**

Bell Boating is defined as a placid water activity, and is usually carried out on small reservoirs, slow moving rivers, and canals, with Water Classifications of C and B1. At Invertrossachs, we venture out on to potentially more serious B2 waters and therefore have to be more vigilant and careful, particularly in regards to changing weather conditions.

Because of this, we have always advised that Bell Boat helms should have at least one additional adult crew member when taking youth members out on the water (two in the case of cubs). On the loch the weather can change very quickly, young people can tire, and accidents can, and do, happen (even to helms), so a second adult on the boat makes absolute sense.

And of course, IF IN DOUBT, DON'T GO OUT.

You can always come back another day.

## **2020 Programme and Kayaking Pool Sessions**

A draft programme for next year will shortly be available on the Water Activities Resources pages of the District Website.

We are planning to have pool training sessions early in 2020 but have run into difficulties in securing a venue, but we hope to be able to resolve this shortly.

## **The District Website**

We are slowly building up the Water Activities Resource Library on the website. If you feel that there is something you wish to see included in these pages, then please let any of the Core team know.

<https://www.stirlingandtrossachsdistrictscouts.org.uk/site/index.php>

## **Non-swimmers – a reminder**

As instructors in charge of young people on the water, it is our duty to check up with their leaders that they are able to swim. Members of the Movement taking part in a water activity must be able to demonstrate to a suitable person (such as their Leader) their ability to swim 50 metres in ordinary clothes and keep afloat for five minutes.

Non-swimmers may take part provided that the conditions stipulated in P.O.R. rule 9.42 are met, which are;

*a non-swimmer may take part in water activities, at the discretion of the person in charge, only if certain precautions are taken;*

- *Any non-swimmer must wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid of approved design and be in the charge of an adult (this does not apply for swimming, paddling or activities near water).*
- *There must be no more than one non-swimmer in any craft, unless a one-to-one ratio is maintained (one competent adult to one non-swimmer).*
- *In the case of single-handed craft this should only be on C or B1 Waters [for classifications of waters see Rule 9.44 (b)] with supervision on a one-to-one basis (one competent adult to one non-swimmer).*
- *Where non-swimmers are taking part in swimming activities (as defined in Rule 9.50) they must be under the direct supervision of an adult in the water. This must not exceed two non-swimmers to one adult.*

## **ALL PADDLERS on Loch Venachar please note:**

Please be aware that the weather on Loch Venachar can change quickly and it is incumbent on each group to ensure that the experience of the group(s) is adequate for the expected range of environmental conditions likely to occur on the day. It is also expected of each group using the facility, that they have adequately addressed management of groups on the water terms of:

1. Communication,
2. Roles & responsibilities,
3. Contingency plans,
4. Emergency procedures,
5. Appropriate personal skills.