



Stirling and Trossachs Scout District

Water Activities

WATNEWS issue 3 – March 2019

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

Issue 3 brings news of the proposed refurbishment of water facilities at Invertrossachs, the District Website, permit renewals in general, Splish, and other bits and pieces.

Plans for the boatshed

These are still on hold, as the new lease for the site has not yet been signed. The reason for this delay is because the company, which bought the Estate over a year ago, has been taken over by another organisation, thus complicating the process. We are still confident that the lease will be renewed soon, and are in communication with their solicitors, but we have to wait until everything is signed off before proceeding with any major expenditure.

However with more time to make a closer examination of the costs, and with potential financial support emerging, it has now been decided that our preferred option would be to demolish the existing boatshed and construct a new, custom-built activity building to house new changing and storage facilities, whilst still constructing a separate site maintenance workshop. Charlie and Ben Rowley are leading this part of the project and would welcome any offers of assistance in the design of the facilities.

Kayak Pool Sessions

Eight leaders from around the District are currently undergoing a fairly intensive programme of training, which it is hoped may lead to the award of some permits later in the year.

The District Website

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

Under the **Resources** section, a sub-section has been created entitled **Water Activities**. Whilst still 'work in progress', it will eventually have various headings where you will be able find information relating to Water Activities at Invertrossachs. It pulls together in one place information pertinent to Bell Boating, Kayaking, Canoeing, the Safety Boat, B1 Limits, back issues of WATNEWS etc. There will also be two Power Point presentations, one relating to the Scout Association Rules and the second, Bell Boating. Both of these were shown at the Bell Boat Training evenings held in May 2017 and should prove useful if you want to remind yourself of particular aspects of the training you may have forgotten.

Water Activities Programme 2019

This is now available on the Resources/Water Activities section as described above.

Your attention is drawn to **SPLISH**, on Saturday 27th April, when we meet up at Invertrossachs to check out all the equipment. This is a vital responsibility of the water activities team and the core team do need help in this task. Anyone is welcome. Once the work is over there is the opportunity to have a paddle and give those muscles a workout. 10.00 a.m. start.

The two other main events on the calendar are **SPLASH** (for scouts) and **DROOKIT** (for Explorers). Both of these will require help from some members of the Water Activities Team i.e. yourselves, so please make a note in your diaries.

Radios

I'm not sure how many of you are aware that we have a set of 6 walkie-talkies complete with waterproof cases at Invertrossachs, predominantly for water activities. They are kept in a plastic box in the changing room in the boatshed, along with instructions on their use, and should be carried by each bell boat helm, each kayak and canoeing group instructor, the safety boat if used, and a nominated person on shore. The radios are (non-rechargeable) battery operated and spare AA batteries should also be in the box.

Persons leading groups on the water should be familiar with the use of the radios prior to going out on the water.

Permit renewal

Are you keeping a log of your activities?

The Scout Association requires that activity permits have to be renewed every 5 years. This is to ensure that permit holders cannot retain their permits indefinitely without proof of keeping active in the sport, and that proof comes in the form of an Activity logbook. So if you want to renew your permit then you must keep a log of your experiences and present it to the assessor (obviously the more the better).

One way you can keep active is by helping out when visiting groups are looking for people with permits to run an activity for them. It can be quite good fun, and teaching a group of youngsters you don't know can be a totally different experience to teaching your own troop or pack.

Out of pocket expenses for travel are available, as we get income from the visiting group. Watch out for opportunities (normally circulated by email).

Safety Boat

I think it might be useful to explain who can use the safety boat, and the role of it plays during a Scouting activity. The **Permit holder** for the activity is the kayak/canoe instructor, who is in overall charge, and that includes the operation of the safety boat.

The safety boat is an optional addition to providing safety cover during the activity, as the kayak/canoe instructor(s) should be capable of controlling the group and carrying out all necessary rescues. The safety boat crew (helm + 1 other) should only intervene or assist when requested by the permit holder, or in an emergency if someone is in distress.

However the safety boat can simply be a reassuring presence and, without doing anything, can give confidence to the group.

The person in charge of the safety boat (helm) must hold a minimum RYA Power Boat 2 award, but does not require a scout Power Boat permit. This means that the safety boat can only carry young people in a rescue situation. For any other power boat activity involving young persons a scout Power Boat permit is required.

A further requirement is that all operators of the safety boat must also have attended the power boat induction at Invertrossachs.

See the District website – resources - for further information.

Helmets

10 additional helmets have been purchased to keep pace with the number of craft we have. We know that some bell boat helms kit out their crews with helmets; this is a personal choice by the helm as the wearing of helmets is not mandatory. So on the rare occasions we have both bell boats and kayak/canoes out on the water and there is a shortfall in the number of helmets, then kayaks and canoes take priority, as their occupants must wear helmets.

