

Introduction to Blackwater Valley Canoe Club for Potential & New Members

About the Club

We are a friendly canoe club, catering for all ages, interests and abilities. Our club was founded in 1986 and today the club is close to 100 members. We hope this is a useful guide for potential club members, new members and long time members. We'll provide the kit, all you need to do is turn up and pick a boat!

The club provides opportunities for young people between the ages of 8 - 16 years and adults to receive training and coaching in the sport and recreation of canoeing and kayaking.

All instruction and tuition is by qualified coaches who are trained and have been screened for their suitability for working with young people and adults.

The club has Sport England's Clubmark, which is awarded to clubs by the British Canoe Union (BCU) when the club is able to demonstrate that it meets the BCU's criteria as to the activities programme; safeguarding and protecting children; sports equity and ethics and club management. Clubmark is an acknowledgement that we take these issues seriously and that we are striving to provide a high quality and welcoming environment for young participants in the sport.

Our club Welfare Officers are, Damian Edwards responsible for ensuring that our child protection policy is implemented. Their contact details, should you have any concerns 07715 749636, are below.

Damian Edwards	edwardsdamian@hotmail.com	07715 749636
Matt Williams	wmd@hotmail.com	07790 915888
Alan Byth	alan.blyth86@gmail.com	07969 350218

Times and Dates

From June to October/November the club meets on Wednesday evenings at 19:00 at the Aldershot Lido. Then during the winter months we meet at the Basingstoke Canal Centre in Mychett where we do indoors sessions on a variety of paddling-related topics - these sessions help to keep everyone in touch over the winter as well. From the beginning of April we are back outdoors, paddling on the Basingstoke Canal (or occasionally elsewhere) on a Wednesday night, until the lido opens at the end of May.

First visit to the club

When you arrive on the night, try to make yourself known to the committee. Their "mug shots" can be found on the [committee](#) page of our website. Parking-wise in the Lido, we use the main car park, behind the centre. Look out for several roof racks on cars and you've found us! You then need the side gate. When parking at the Basingstoke Canal Centre, again look for roof racks near the centre (the first building on the left as you enter the car park). Try to avoid going any further than the white barrier if you can.

We will show you around the facilities, introduce to club, brief you on health and safety, operating guidelines and anything else we can think of.

Membership

You are more than welcome to come along to one of our Wednesday sessions to find out more about the club (we are happy for non-members to come along to a few sessions initially but we then ask that people become members), either at the Basingstoke Canal Centre or at the Lido.

Courses

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Adults -we run a range of courses from beginner through to more advanced using the BCU Star Awards, currently 1 star to 3 star, together with other BCU awards such as Foundation Safety and Rescue Training (FSRT). More information on the [1 to 3 star BCU awards](#) and the [FSRT](#) can be found on the BCU website (www.bcu.org.uk).

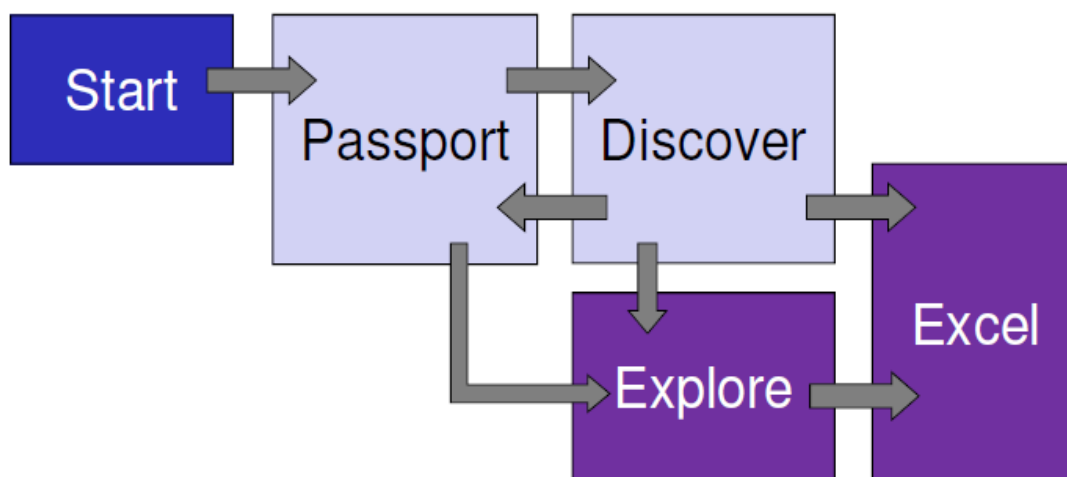
In addition we are able to offer more advanced courses, such as the discipline-specific 4 star awards and the Whitewater Safety and Rescue Course, through our links with external providers.

Youngsters - The BCU recommends the Paddlepower scheme as most suitable for young people aged 14 or under and the Star Awards for most paddlers aged over 16. All youngsters under 14 in our club join the Paddlepower scheme. More information can be found on the [Paddlepower](#) pages of the BCU website.

Paddlepower scheme

The scheme been designed to meet the needs of young people based upon their age, development and learning styles. One key aim of the scheme is having FUN whilst learning, so they will do lots of games without realising that they are developing new FUNdamental skills . The scheme provides a progression and reward achievement in a wide range of topics/skills such as safety awareness, paddling skills, varied experiences and supporting knowledge. In addition it will show them all aspects of the sport – both competitive and adventurous. They then can progress to the Cadet Leader award.

The **Paddlepower Awards** comprises 5 Awards to support a young paddler's introduction and progress in Paddlesport There will be trips as part of the awards.



How is Paddlepower Different from the Star Awards?

Paddlepower has been designed around the needs of young people – fun, colourful and with easily identifiable progression mapped to the Long Term Paddler Development framework.

We welcome parents and carers to all training sessions, all off-site club events and competitions and value your support. For the weekly club sessions, we do ask that a parent or carer remains onsite during the session.

Throughout the winter season for junior members there is a series of Paddlesport competitions with other clubs in the Southern Region including canoe polo, dragon boating racing slalom and sprint racing.

Water Confidence & Rolling Courses

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Whilst at the lido we try to ensure paddlers have the necessary confidence in the water, which means being able to swim at least 50m in canoe clothing. We have regular rolling courses held at a local indoor pool during the winter and at the Lido in the summer.

Scouts/Cubs/Beavers/ Brownies/Guides/ Duke of Edinburgh

We can assist paddlers in obtaining the various awards in the relevant youth organisation, including taster events, Duke of Edinburgh assistance/guidance/planning/support of expeditions.

School links

We are working on setting up a link with a local school, to provide some of their students with the opportunity to learn canoeing and kayaking.

Long Term Paddler Development

Even though you may have done some Star awards, the club coaching team can assist you in writing your own development plan for personal goals such as being able to roll in white water or start coaching or learn freestyle, which in turn helps the Club Management Committee identify training and development needs

Trips and Events

As part of all awards, including Paddlepower, there is a requirement to do journeys.

We run a range of trips and events during the year suitable for all abilities. Details are announced at the briefing sessions after Wednesday paddling and are also available on the club website www.bvcc.org.uk.

Equipment

We will provide the necessary basic equipment for most courses such as boat, paddle and buoyancy aid (PFD). We also have helmets, splash cags and splash trousers available to borrow if they are needed due to either weather conditions or the paddling environment.

When paddling, clothing is very much a personal choice, although the club will provide guidance on the suitability of the paddler's clothing paying due regard to the weather and water conditions. The club insists that a properly fitting buoyancy aid will be worn at all times when on the water. Additionally it is mandatory that a properly fitting helmet is worn when paddling on turbulent water (where there is the risk of capsizing), playing polo, competing in slalom or on a club white water trip.

Paddling & Course Fees

The fees are based upon either a session or a course, They are set each year at the AGM. Details of current fees can be found on our website at www.bvcc.org.uk/home/sessions/.

Sections

Polo – we have an active polo section who compete at various levels in the leagues and who welcome new members. The polo team trains on a Wednesday night, at Alton Swimming Pool during the winter and at the Lido during the summer. For more information please email polo@bvcc.org.uk.

Marathon & Slalom – we have members who participate in regional events and competitions.

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Code of Conduct

We ask everybody to agree the club code of conduct by signing the membership form. This is to ensure that all paddlers, parents, volunteers, coaches and club officials show respect and understanding for each other and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Club. The aim is for all paddlers to improve their performance and have fun in a safe and co-operative environment.

The code of conduct is available on the website, club notice board and upon request from the Management Committee.

Operating Procedures & Risk Assessments

Everyone involved in the Club must abide by the Club rules and policies which are available on the website, club notice board and upon request from the Management Committee.

Contact Details and Medical Conditions

It is important that the Club is informed of any medical condition or allergies that may be relevant, should the participant fall ill or be involved in an accident while at the club. These, and your contact details, must be kept up-to-date. We ask all members to fill in a new membership form each year so that we can make sure we always have the most up-to-date information, but if there are any changes during the year then please let our membership secretary Ian Morris know (secretary@bvcc.org.uk).

We look forward to seeing you on the water soon.