

Blackwater Valley Canoe Club

Committee Meeting Minutes – 23 February 2015

1. Attendees

Richard Green	Ian Morris	Paul Rose	Jake Robertson
Tom Page	Mike Hamilton	Damian Edwards	Elaine Lee

2. Apologies

Graham Snook

3. Youth

Lots of ideas for continuing improvements to the youth section were discussed; we need to get more keen young (14-18ish) paddlers involved to help keep the club going – train up as coaches etc.

We have a lot of scout / taster sessions, but need to get more of them to come back; advertise the club better, use the leaflets/handouts to encourage people to come back to the regular sessions.

Could also try and target other areas for new members; schools / colleges etc.

We also need extra helpers – possibly get parents to help with emptying boats, find more people within the club who are interested in helping out; should try and get more people through safeguarding course and DBS checks too. Ian to send email to club members.

Ideally need two coaches per session, plus two helpers so that we can have separate ability groups and keep some structure to the sessions so they get something out of it, while still trying to keep it fun.

Perhaps have a Lee Valley trip for them as something to aim for, with a mini course leading up to it?

4. Courses

We have a couple of outstanding courses that weren't quite finished at the end of last year; need to try and finish these off once we're back on the canal (and include some local day trips) so that we can start with fresh courses on the Lido.

It was suggested that we should have beginner/intermediate courses, rather than specific 1*/2* courses so we can offer them to people who don't actually want/need to do awards, although we'll probably still have people who want to do the assessments so need to make it clear they are available if required.

5. Scout / Taster Sessions

It was decided that as in previous years we should run additional sessions on a Tuesday/Thursday as taster sessions for local scout groups (and any other groups that are interested) subject to coach availability in order to run the sessions.

It is also recommended that we pre-arrange a number of dates that are suitable for us and offer these as/when we are asked for sessions, rather than just fit in with their requests. Ian to start co-ordinating when coaches/lifeguards might be available.

In addition, the Farnham Scout Family camp is 25th April; ideally need about 8 people to run the canoeing session again this year. This is a good opportunity to advertise the club (and our taster sessions).

It was also suggested that in order to try and encourage more girls into paddling we could specifically target groups such as Brownies/Guides for some of these session. It may also be a good idea to arrange female coaches for these sessions.

6. Trips

We should try and arrange more local day/afternoon trips – canal, Thames, Mole etc. The current membership is perhaps less interested in whitewater trips – try to have more touring trips, another more social trip like the Barle aimed at newer paddlers/families to get more people involved.

We already have a number of dates (and suggestions); Jake to circulate so everyone knows what they are.

7. Polo

The polo section is currently going well; currently mid-season, been in a couple of tournaments and have a few more coming up. Paul to circulate dates to try and avoid clashes with other club events.

The current plan is to return to the Lido again this summer, hopefully incorporate some more beginner/intro sessions and also sessions for the kids.

There is a new South East regional league... Paul is putting himself forward for secretary. Keen to get involved in local polo; has ideas for dedicated youth and ladies development days, getting well known coaches/players involved etc.

We'd also like to get another beginner/taster session in at Alton soon; Paul/Elaine to arrange suitable date that doesn't conflict with other events, then let people know so we can arrange not to have the scout hut...

8. Socials

A number of ideas for social events were discussed; such as Paintball (spring/summer?), Gravity Force, Bowling, Beer/Skittles etc. some of which could be on Wednesday evenings in place of scout hut sessions. Elaine to look into possibilities and dates which don't conflict with other events.

It was also suggested that we should have another BBQ, possibly combined with a Lee Valley trip although this may not be practical / cost effective. Alternatively could be more local and combined with a touring trip (which may be accessible to more members & their families).

9. Lido

Prior to the recent petition, the favoured plan for the Lido was to turn it into a splash pad which would make it unsuitable for use by the club. The council's suggestion was to assist with providing a facility similar to runways end, or possibly help us get into Farnborough pool on a Saturday evening. However, the recent petition is likely to change things, possibly moving towards a half pool, half splash pad, which may still be suitable for the club, although would limit our capacity.

As always we are going to be a little short on coaches, but should hopefully have enough; ideally we'd like someone to meet/greet new people and also to organise what is going on for the evening. We should be looking to make use of members who are already competent to help out where they can (if they wish!) and possibly encourage them to become coaches.

It was also suggested that we could allow/encourage people to pay for multiple sessions at a time with the aim of encouraging people to come back more regularly, but this could be difficult to manage.

We should try and arrange a rough plan for the summer season so we know what courses and sessions we think we can offer; Ed to look into possible initial ideas.

10. AOB

There was some discussion on the clubs offering generally; what we do well, what we could do better. We should try and make more effort in promoting the club and what we can offer; the Lido is a fantastic facility – safe, clean, well contained and we have an excellent range of kit.

We need to make sure that the whole club is aiming for the same goals, improve communication and organisation to make best use of the Lido while we still have it...!

It would also be worth looking at simplifying leaflets / website and perhaps some posters; include just some very simple contact information, dates/times/costs etc. Mike to have a look into what we can do to make our promotional material clearer/simpler.

As well as trying harder to attract and keep new members, we also need to make sure we are still keeping our current members happy. We should make a survey to send round to current members to see what they want; what they like and don't like about the club; what courses, trips, socials etc. they would like to do. Richard to begin drafting and circulate for additional ideas/comments.

11. Next Meeting

We need to have another meeting before we return to the Lido; provisional date 16th March. We should also hold a club general meeting to set/agree fees etc. before we return to the Lido.

Summary of Actions

Topic	Description	Who?
3. Youth	Send club email to find members interested helping with youth sessions	Ian
5. Taster Sessions	Start arranging potential suitable dates.	Ian
6. Trips	Circulate current trip dates.	Jake
7. Polo	Circulate current polo tournament dates.	Paul
7. Polo	Arrange another taster session on a convenient Wednesday.	Paul/Elaine
8. Socials	Look into some more social events.	Elaine
9. Lido	Consider a plan for the summer season at the Lido.	Ed
10. AOB	Look into simplifying website/flyers etc.	Mike
10. AOB	Create a survey to send to current members to get their views on the club.	Richard