**Cumbria Canoeists 2023 AGM Sea Kayaking Report**

Having taken over the sea kayaking role at the last AGM, as a newbie to Cumbria Canoeists the whole of the last 12 months has been a daunting familiarisation journey. And this during a period when we’ve also been implementing the BC booking system and migrating our accounting to the BC financial system.

Despite the challenges, I am very pleased how our sea kayaking season has worked out, not least thanks to the fantastic support we’ve had from our very able leaders and organisers; overall clocking-upin excess of **200 participants over 24 events**.

Take a look at the sea kayaking events summary overpage.

The season kicked-off with a well-attended equipment **demo day** on Ullswater provided by our local suppliers Mike Tracey of Cumbrian Kayaking and Antony Pike Bowyer of Border Kayaks.

The ***Starters & Returners*** sea kayaking programme was a great success, with several of those paddlers joining clubs to continue their paddling career. This was based at Killington lake on Tuesday evenings from April, progressing to the Lancaster canal and Ullswater, and culminating in September paddling the tidal streams of the Leven Estuary.

Our ***Weekend*** programme typically provided one event per month in a variety of locations. The aim of this series is to provide tasters of diverse paddling challenges and environments. Just one, Farne Islands, had to be cancelled due to a storm; all others went ahead as planned, giving very positive feedback and CC Facebook posts.

Our ***Development Weeks*** are aimed at people who have previously benefited from beginner and improver coaching who want to progress their development into more challenging environments:

The **Gigha to Oban** trip was an expedition-style journey (their first kayak wild-camping trip for many), with two independent groups covering 165km (101 miles!) taking in Jura Sound, Dorus Mor and the Slate Isles. A preliminary overnight trip to **Piel Island** provided an opportunity to test kit and packing techniques, and to share tips.

On our **Taste of the** **Outer Hebrides**, a first group worked their way up the islands from Barra in the south to Uig on Lewis in a series of day paddles, including several island circumnavigations – wind and swell enhancing the challenge. A second group then reversed the experience from Uig, finishing at Barra.

The sea paddling season wrapped-up with a centre-based week on **Muck** in the Small Isles, honing paddling skills in some lively conditions, with social evenings back at base.

Next year will see a similar programme makeup with a monthly series of weekends exploring new coastlines and old, and three longer development weeks, which will again include an expedition journey. We won’t have a beginner programme (perhaps in the following year). Instead, we are looking at a format for ‘improvers’ ready to take a next step in their paddling career.

**John Soady sea kayaking lead**

**2023 Sea kayaking Events Overview**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event (no. of groups)** | **Dates** | **Bookings** | **Leaders** | |
| **Demos** |  |  | |  |
| Sea kayak demo day | 26 Mar | ~35 | | Cumbrian Kayaking and Border Kayaks |
| **Beginners** |  |  | |  |
| Starters & returners (11) | 4 Apr – 16 Sep | 56 | | Mike Sunderland, John Soady, Marie Corry, Mac Knowles, Mike Tracey |
| **Development weeks** |  |  | |  |
| Gigha to Oban (3) | 5-11 Jun | 26 | | Mike Sunderland, John Soady, Cedric Schofield, Bob Frazer |
| Outer Hebrides (2) | 21 Jul – 9 Aug | 16 | | Mike Sunderland, John Soady, Mike Beechey, Andy Gillham |
| Muck (1) | 15-27 Aug | 7 | | Mike Sunderland, Mac Knowles, Richard Simpson |
| **Short / weekend events** |  |  | |  |
| Kirkcudbright | 26-28 May | 9 | | Joe Stalker, Bob Frazer |
| Farnes (cancelled) | 30 Jun – 2 Jul | 12 | | Bob Frazer, John Soady |
| Summer Isles | 14-17 Jul | 7 | | Heather Crompton (organiser), Joe Stalker, Marie Corry, Shel Reason |
| Anglesey | 5-7 August | 12 | | Alan Ashby, Joe Stalker, John Crosbie,  Brennan Waller |
| Skye | 10-13 Aug | 4 | | Marie Corry, Shel Reason |
| Galloway | 16-17 Sep | 13 | | Joe Stalker, Bob Frazer |