

BCU Surf Committee

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SURF CANOEING IN GREAT BRITAIN

Following an incident at Croyde Bay, Devon, where it is alleged that a canoeist in a slalom boat collided with a board surfer, causing him considerable injury, the BCU Surf Committee have met with the British Surf Association and agreed the following Code of Conduct. All members are asked to respect this code, to help avoid accidents, to ensure continued good relations with board riders, and to avoid the imposition by local councils of restrictive legislation.

- 1) NOVICES AND BEGINNERS: DO NOT SURF IN AREAS WHERE THERE ARE SWIMMERS AND BOARD SURFERS.
- 2) DO NOT PADDLE ACROSS THE PATH OF INCOMING SURFERS.
- 3) IF YOU ARE SWEEPED IN SIDWAYS BY THE SOUP, CAPSIZE. THIS WILL STOP YOU.
- 4) THE FIRST PERSON TO TAKE-OFF ON A WAVE HAS RIGHT OF THAT WAVE.
- 5) IN A SIMULTANEOUS TAKE-OFF, THE SURFER NEAREST THE SHOULDER HAS RIGHT OF THAT WAVE. TO POACH A WAVE FROM ANOTHER IS CALLED "DROPPING-IN" AND CAN BE DANGEROUS.
 (CANOEISTS CAN PADDLE OUT FASTER AND TAKE-OFF FURTHER OUT THAN)
 (BOARD SURFERS, THIS MEANS THAT JUST THREE OR FOUR PADDLERS CAN)
 (COMMANDEER THE BEST WAVES OF EVERY SET BETWEEN THEM. THIS SORT OF)
 (ACTION IS BOUND TO CAUSE FRUSTRATION AND ANGER AMONGST BOARD)
 (SURFERS, SO...)
- 6) ENSURE THAT BOARD SURFERS GET THEIR SHARE OF THE WAVES.

Many of the popular surf beaches are now becoming very over-crowded and are no longer suitable for less experienced surf canoeists, their inability to handle their craft safely in such conditions has been demonstrated by the occurrence of several serious incidents. In essence, many of the breaks favoured by board surfers are too fast and hollow for the limited handling capability and speed of most paddle-surf craft.

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 Canoeists who go surfing are requested to support the Surf Committee in our efforts to ease some of the current problems facing all surfers: Please follow the Code of Conduct and please heed the Beach Guide

AREA	BEACHES TO AVOID	RECOMMENDED BEACHES	AREA	BEACHES TO AVOID	RECOMMENDED BEACHES
S.WEST	SENNEN COVE ST.IVES. (ALL BEACHES) NEWQUAY. (ALL BEACHES) BUDE. (BOTH BEACHES) CROYDE BAY. PUTSBOROUGH.	HAYLE SANDS. POLZEATH. WATERGATE BAY. WIDEMOUTH BAY. WESTWARD HO. SAUNTON SANDS. WOOLACOMBE.	EAST	JOSS BAY. LOWESTOFT. E & W. RUNTON. SCARBOROUGH.(PIER AREA) SOUTH SHIELDS.	MARGATE. SEVERAL IN E. ANGLIA (BEWARE! SOME 'DUMP') LINC'S BEACHES GOOD. SCARBOROUGH. (N.BAY) RUNSWICK BAY.
SOUTH.	BOURNEMOUTH.(BY PIERS)	DAWLISH WARREN. BOSCOMBE. SWANAGE BAY.(N.END) LITTLEHAMPTON (EAST) CAMBER SANDS.	N.WALES	HELLS MOUTH. TREARDOUR.	NEWBOROUGH WARREN. BLACK ROCK SANDS.
			S.WALES	WHITESANDS BAY. LLANGENNETH (MAINBREAK) LANGLANDS BAY. CASWELL BAY. PORTHCAWL. LLANTWIT MAJOR.	NEWGALE--BROADHAVEN. REST OF RHOSSILLI BAY. PT EYNON OXWICH BAY.
IRELAND.	(FEW CROWDED BEACHES!)	ASK THE B.A.N.I.			
SCOTLAND	(FEW CROWDED BEACHES!)	ASK THE S.C.A.	CHANNEL ISLANDS	ENQUIRE JERSEY C.C.	ENQUIRE JERSEY C.C.

ANY ATTEMPT TO CLASSIFY BEACHES WILL BE OPEN TO CRITICISM. NO BEACH IS TOTALLY SAFE. CONDITIONS CHANGE FROM DAY TO DAY. TIME OF YEAR IS CRUCIAL.
 SURF CANNOT BE GUARANTEED. REMEMBER, IT IS YOUR JUDGMENT, SKILL, EXPERIENCE, PREPARATION, CONDUCT/GROUP CONTROL THAT MAKES FOR 'SAFE' OR DANGEROUS SURFING.

BRITISH CANOE UNION

JOINT STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Sports Council and the Water Space Amenity Commission have inspired the production of a Joint Statement of Intent between angling and riparian interests and the British Canoe Union, which it is hoped will be of positive help to local negotiators for access to disputed water.

The Statement of Intent given below has been accepted by the British Canoe Union as a reasonable step in the right direction for securing a reduction in conflict over access to canoeing waters. The thirty-one paragraphs preceding the statement below explain to the uninitiated the background to the respective sports of angling and canoeing and have not, therefore, been repeated in full here. Any member wishing to see the full text should apply for a copy from HQ (see please).

The position at this time is that the anglers are circulating the document within their respective organisations with a view to a joint document being signed by the National Anglers Council and the British Canoe Union at their next joint meeting.

32 It is the intention of all those concerned with water recreation and with the problem of conflict between anglers and canoeists to co-operate in the provision of reasonable and controlled access to non-tidal fishing waters by canoeists. Recognising the various rights enjoyed by riparian owners and anglers, it is still preferable for problems to be settled on the basis of mutual respect between the two sports. This presupposes a knowledge and understanding of the problems and requirements of both fishermen and canoeists, which, in the main, can only be gained at local level in terms of uses and ownership of areas of water and stretches of river. Information on these is the first step towards knowledge and understanding.

33 Consultation and co-operation is therefore the key message of this statement. This may relate on a local basis to any of the factors listed in paragraph 35(c) below. At the national level the bodies concerned can do little more than create an atmosphere of goodwill or to assist and advise in the drafting of local access agreements. They may also be concerned directly or indirectly with such matters as planning, administration and control so far as they relate to water recreation and water sports in all their forms. They have therefore agreed to do all in their power to seek ways and means of reducing the problems of conflict on the one hand and to co-operate in the provision of reasonable and acceptable access. They have also agreed that at the national level discussions be continued between landowners, riparian owners, angling and canoeing organisations. The following bodies lend their support to this statement of intent and to the creation and development of sound and sensible access agreements:

British Canoe Union
Country Landowners Association
National Anglers' Council
National Farmers' Union
National Federation of Anglers
Salmon and Trout Association
Sports Council
Sports Council for Wales
Water Space Amenity Commission

Access Conditions

34 The national authorities supporting the Statement of Intent believe that there is much merit in local groups representative of anglers, canoeists, landowners, water authorities and other interested parties being formed at local level to maintain constant liaison on all local access problems.

35 In general terms the following factors need to be taken into account when access agreements are drawn up. That:

- a) there is an acceptance by canoeists and understanding of the legal rights of angling clubs and riparian owners on waters where there is no public right of navigation;
- b) there is a belief that the various interests can be reconciled;
- c) local access agreements on private waters should take account of such factors as:
 - physical characteristics and existing use
 - close seasons
 - spate conditions
 - spawning areas
 - zoning by time and space
 - marking of canoes
 - payment of fees
 - limitations on numbers
 - control of club members
 - control of 'unattached' visitors
- d) means must be available which will ensure adequate enforcement of byelaws or voluntary agreements;
- e) access agreements are made locally within a national policy for access to private waters;
- f) an effective scheme of registration and marking of canoes is introduced;
- g) all agreements must be mutually acceptable and entered into willingly;
- h) riparian owners must be assured that a proper system of control of canoeists is available;
- i) access agreements must be for the benefit of BCU individual or affiliated club members only so that it may control, regulate and identify canoeists and thus prevent overuse;
- j) rivers should be carefully identified where canoeing may take place;
- k) a reasonable amount of access be offered to BCU members so as to give genuine satisfaction to the majority.

