



Waveney Valley Canoe Club

The Friendly Family Club

WVCC OCTOBER 2007 Newsletter

As the formal part of our canoe year draws to a close we can reflect on the success of the course run this summer. As Dave Cassell outlined at the BBQ in September we have had one of the most successful years for the number of people gaining their BCU Star awards. Most club nights WVCC has been a hive of activities with enthusiastic paddlers keen to get on the water. Usually things tail off in the summer with holidays etc, but not this year! Even on 4 September the second RiverCare clean up trip two instructors took out about 30 canoeists. It was quite an eventful trip down to Wainford with two swans deciding to take off from the water and fly through the group.

The club committee has now finalised the early winter programme of activities that everyone is encourage to take part in. (See enclosed) What ever level your skills are experience and Miles on the River counts or in the pool. There are plans for further investment in more kayaks, racing boats, canoes and other kit.

We currently have a waiting list of people who wish to take courses in 2008.

A hearty well done for all those that achieved their Star awards this year and thank you for continually demonstrating enthusiasm and determination to achieve the level of competence required.

For further information and view photographs of any trip click on the WVCC web site. www.waveneyvalleycanoeclub.co.uk

Forthcoming Events - Trips

Trip type	Date	Location	Organiser	Telephone
1*	30 September	Hardley Staithe to Loddon	Dave Lines	01508 518539
2*	14 October	River Deben	Dave Cassell	01508 498433
1*	28 October	Shotford bridge to Homersfield	Keith Poulson	01502 678202
2*	11 November	Orford Ness	Dave Cassell	01508 498433
1*	25 November	Beccles to Worlingham	Rob Fisher	01508 520025
2*	9 December	Broads Trip	Dave Cassell	01508 498433

Trips

If you plan to go on any of the above trips you will need to telephone the trip organiser at least 2 days before the trip to book your place. The organiser will then make final arrangements how contact needs to be made to confirm the trip in case of bad weather.

Essential on all trips

Buoyancy Aid, Warm Clothing (several thin layers) **DO NOT WEAR DENIM**

Warm hat-gloves and bring a spare set of clothes-towel-cagoule

Packed lunch and hot drink

Whitewater Weekends

For further information on whitewater trips below please telephone Chris Sharp on 01502714812

2-4 November – Tyne and Allen Rivers, Grade 1-3

18 November – River Exe descent, Grade 1-2

SUNDAY POOL PRACTICE SESSIONS on alternate Sundays at Archbishop Sandcroft School in Harleston from 5.30pm – 6.30 pm on:

You can practise all your skills in the safety of a warm pool and perhaps learn how to roll. You can bring your own paddle but canoes are provided. Wear a swimsuit and tee shirt.

Sunday 23rd Sept	Sunday 4th Nov
Sunday 7th Oct	Sunday 18th Nov
	Sunday 2nd Dec

POLO SESSIONS on Mondays at Archbishop Sandcroft School in Harleston from 7.00pm – 8.00pm on:

You do not need to have had any experience of playing polo it is suitable for all abilities.

Monday 24th Sept	Monday 12th Nov
Monday 1st Oct	Monday 19th Nov
Monday 8th Oct	Monday 26th Nov
Monday 29th Oct	Monday 3rd Dec
Monday 5th Nov	Monday 10th Dec

You can bring your own paddle but canoes and helmets are provided. Wear a swimsuit and tee shirt.

Blakeney Point Trip – Sunday 5th August 2007

It is always a highlight of the year when we have the opportunity to paddle out to Blakeney Point in north Norfolk. This year was no exception. Fifteen paddlers gathered at Morston Quay on this beautiful morning – no rain, no wind and a vast expanse of calm sea out towards the point. Perfection!

The only problem with Morston is the mud. It is infamous. We slid down the bank across the pebbles to the mud, you just can't avoid it! We soon got everyone out on the water and Dave Cassell gave a brief summary of what we should expect for the trip – sea state 2-3, winds picking up later, tide turning after lunch, so paddling back needed to be well timed to avoid the worst of the receding water (and mud!)

It was a pleasant paddle across the estuary (the River Glaven) which widens quickly to meet the sea. On the landward side is shallow water and reed beds, on the seaward side is the shingle spit known as Blakeney Point. Much of the spit is a haven for seabirds, especially terns, and for the famous seal colony. Today the seals were all gathered on the far point of the spit where tourist boats headed for a good view of the seals, sunning themselves on the banks.

We kept our distance from the seals – mainly for the benefit of the tourist boats as the seals are attracted to kayaks and this annoys the owners of the tourist boats! So to keep the peace we paddled at a distance and saw some seals in the water, some on the spit. We had planned to land for lunch along the spit, but much of it was fenced off for the tern colony. However we did find a good lunch spot and dragged the kayaks up onto the shingle, through beds of samphire (which some people took the opportunity to harvest for supper!). Real Ray Mears stuff!

After lunch we headed back towards Morston, the sun was still shining but the wind had gathered strength and the sea state was now 3-4 - this made the paddling even more exciting. As I paddled alongside Gavin, Roz and Paul I commented that this was one of the those days you'll always remember, about as close to my idea of heaven as you can get....Those without sea kayaks found it pretty hard work, but everyone battled through the waves and wind together to make it back to Morston without any mishaps. The open canoeists suffered the most as the wind pushed on the bows, wind-cocking the canoes. Some of the first timers on the sea (Carl and Emily) really felt the full force of the waves and wind on this day, but they made a tremendous effort and did incredibly well to get back to Morston safe, dry and sound. The mud was particularly sticky and slimy on our return and I pity the person who had to do the washing back home!

Thanks to Dave for yet another wonderful trip to Blakeney and enabling some new paddlers to experience the thrills (but not spills!) of paddling on the sea.

See the photos on the net.

Elaine Sherriffs

Ranworth Broad Night paddle

(Or has any one seen my paddle)

We all arrived at about 9.30-9.45 with a lot of excitement and chatter from our younger members out for their first night paddle

We all gathered together 16 in all to hear Dave's brief on health and safety and a request to keep the noise down as we had boats around us with people sleeping, also handing out night lights for all to be seen on the water. By 10.15 we were all on the river ready to set off with Dave still trying to convince us all that we must keep the noise down and stay behind his boat.

I personally soon became aware that if our 3 coaches decided to disappear we would have no clue to the route back to our cars. The trip carried on with a somewhat moonlit night and our young friends trying to use their energy up very quickly darting about and having a great time as the night went by, the moon gradually disappeared and clouds took over. The nightlights looked amazing, not Joseph's dream coat but a technicolour river.

We decided to stop for a short break, I know not where, but in my wisdom got out for a stretch and walk about, although there was lack of light, decided to seal launch my boat forgetting that it's a necky not the piranha, as I launch from the mooring it decided (not me) to turn over in about 18" of water trying to use the paddle to recover just did not work. The mud was also 18" deep, feeling a complete fool having to escape from the boat, then came the problem, where is my paddle? Anybody who has spent time wading in mud up to his or her knees at one in the morning know this is not fun! Yes!!!! We did find it eventually about 15 minutes of wading and convincing the younger members not to get in the water to help it appeared by magic of its own accord.

Many thanks to all who helped empty my boat and no I didn't seal launch the second time.

After convincing Dave that I was warm enough we carried on to the Abby and stopped for a late night feast and for me a hot cup of coffee after a 20 minute break we set off in the direction of Ranworth.

A great night was had by all and special thanks to the coaches for looking after us. If you have never been on a night paddle than I would recommend you give it a try its so amazing how your sight adapts to the light and great fun.

Andy Church

HARDLEY STAITHE TO LODDON

It was a bright sunny day on 30th September and our Trip Leader, Dave Lines, supported by Alan Jary, had everything perfectly planned for our paddle from Hardley Staithe onto the River Yare and then onto the River Chet to Loddon.

The other paddlers were Carl Boast, Roz Green, Paul Palmer, Elaine Sherriffs, Kavan Langston and Chris Scott.

At about 1100h we put in from grassy bank at the top of Hardley Staithe and paddled up the dyke to join the River Yare. Tide coming in at this point but it was easy paddling with no wind. About half a mile down from Hardley Staithe we joined the River Yare and paddled downstream to Hardley Cross. The cross is an ancient monument where the bishops of Norwich and Yarmouth met annually to settle any land disputes. It marks the half way point between Norwich and Yarmouth on the river. This is where the River Chet joins the River Yare. As we paddled up the River Chet the tide was rising fast and we paddled along quickly on the flow. The River Chet is quite pretty at full tide with reeds and trees along the banks and very little river traffic. Hardley Flood is on the right as you paddle upstream, but not accessible from the river, although Dave did have a go at shoving down the narrow outlet! No

idea why... For a lovely warm day there were surprisingly few fishermen out and those who we did see just smiled and greeted us.

Our lunch stop was beside a small dyke on the left hand bank, which gives access to the recreation area. Because of the tree roots growing out of the river we had to land beam (sideways) to the bank. I would rate this place as possibly the best lunch spot ever - with picnic benches, sun dappled grass, and even the convenience of a few bushes for the usual necessities of life. A great place to sit, eat, relax and talk a bit.

It was a seal launch for those in the smaller river kayaks, but beam-on for Alan and Elaine in sea kayaks. Roz also had a sea kayak but chose to do a seal launch. As luck would have it, she got caught on the tree roots and this destabilized then capsized the kayak as it entered the water. Nobody was close enough, or on the right side to do an Eskimo rescue and there was no depth for a roll, so into the cold water she went! Lesson learned – sea kayaks are NOT good for seal launching from uneven surfaces... something to do with the shape of the keel!

Once Roz was warmed up and in clean dry clothes, we paddled down the River Chet against the tide, past Hardley Cross and back to Hardley Staithe. It was more difficult paddling on the return as the tide had turned and was running against us, along with the flow of the river, so we ended up back at Hardley about 1500h after a bracing paddle back. Thanks to Dave and Alan for a great day out, and to the sun for shining on us all through the day.

Elaine Sherriffs

STITCH UP ON THE DEBEN

It is almost 4.00 pm on Bawdsey Quay side and I hear “Does anyone want to do a write up?” The next words I hear are Gavin’s “Richard will do the write up.” “You meant the Stitch Up.” I reply.

However, I feel I should start at the beginning. I joined the Waveney Valley Canoe Club (WVCC) early this year and I signed up for Dave Cassell’s Open Canoe Classes. I duly attended on a Tuesday evening and having come with a little experience by the end of July I had passed by Two Star test. The main prompt for joining the club was that I had arranged to go on a Wilderness Canoe Camping Trip this September.

So, fresh back from Canada, I looked at the trips on the club website and thought that the River Deben would be a good jaunt. After all it would be nice to put my now strengthened paddling arms to good use. I telephoned Dave and he said to come along.

Arriving on the quayside Sunday morning I saw some familiar faces, some sea kayaks and some other kayaks but no opens. Strange not to see Dave in an Open? Ummm!!! Not long afterwards and another car arrived with a Canadian Canoe strapped to the roof. I no longer felt so conspicuous. Soon we were all ready and after a short briefing from Dave we were on our way. It was a lovely sunny day and nice to be on the water again.

Dave was right about the tide aiding our journey and we paddled with ease. Whilst alongside Dave I said to him that I was surprised not to see him in his Open boat, as I had

only ever seen him in it. He replied that he had come in his sea kayak because it would be quicker to get to the aid of someone in trouble – sounded very reasonable at the time. I was later to find out that this was actually code for “Are you mad? I am not paddling a bath tub today when I have got a sea kayak!” Anyway after what seemed like no time at all we stopped at a likely spot for a coffee and team photo.

After coffee we slipped off again and it was not long before my fellow Canadians left our group to head back. We continued to glide effortlessly towards our lunch stop and a small beach.

Lunch over and I noticed that the tide was still coming in but it had been an easy six miles til now! Not long and I realised that everyone else seemed to be paddling a lot easier than I was. I soon found myself at the back of the group paddling hard to keep up. Gavin and Keith obviously had some sympathy and kept me company. We kept going relentlessly, dodging the ever present traffic until the quay was in sight. The last mile or so aided by the now changed tide.

Once beached back at the quay I heard a few comments like “That was a bit of a slog.” and “I thought we were in for a good paddle when the Chairman turned up with his sea kayak.” However, we were all in good spirits after what had been a good day. Apparently it had been a twelve mile round trip although it seemed like about 4 miles there and eight back!!

Canoes loaded, a bit of banter, and I heard “Does anyone want to do a write up?”

Richard Narey

Warning to all river users Outbreak of crayfish plague

The Environment Agency has made us aware of the above, please read the full note on www.waveneyvalleycanooclub.co.uk

Over recent weeks hundreds of dead crayfish have been seen in the lower River Waveney between Outney Common near Bungay and Beccles. Crayfish plague or another disease is suspected as the cause.

Dead crayfish were first noticed by a local farmer in the middle of September and later by anglers. Unfortunately the Environment Agency were not informed until early October when samples were taken and sent for analysis.

This virulent disease has wiped out many populations of our native white-clawed crayfish in England and Wales. Alien crayfish species from America, notably signal crayfish, carry the disease but are not susceptible to it. It is spread by affected crayfish or, more commonly, equipment such as fishing nets, boats etc being transferred from infected waters.

White-clawed crayfish were formerly widespread but have been wiped out from many rivers and now exist in increasingly isolated populations. There is so much concern for the future that it has been designated a Biodiversity Action Plan species as part of the UK's response to the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and protected by EU legislation

(Habitats Directive). Norfolk rivers such as the Wensum, Yare and Stiffkey contain some of the last populations in East Anglia.

The Environment Agency is strongly advising that anyone using equipment in the river take recommended precautions before using the same equipment in any other river system. The stretch of river to be considered potentially affected is anywhere downstream of Homersfield, including Oulton Broad.

Anything that comes into contact with the water – keep nets, waders or wellingtons, canoes or other craft, farm machinery etc – could potentially spread the disease. To stop this happening, carry out the following steps:

- Clean off any mud or vegetation and remove any standing water

Then either

- Thoroughly dry the equipment, preferably in sunlight making sure all nooks and crannies are dry.

Or

- Treat with a proprietary disinfectant capable of killing fungal spores. (Please contact the Environment Agency for further information about this option).

There is no need to carry out these precautions if equipment is being moved to another site within the Waveney or its tributaries. Also if boats are being transferred via the sea or Breyodon Water, there is no need as the spores will be killed by sea water.

It is not known how the disease spread to the Waveney, but it is likely that it was through contaminated equipment, possibly even an unlicensed crayfish trap. This underlines the need to carry out these precautions. If the same situation had occurred in the Wensum, it would have dealt a severe blow to the future of the native white-clawed crayfish in East Anglia.

Oct 07

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