

Exe Kite-boarders News-Letter

July 2011

Welcome

As part of the recent drive to reinvigorate the Exe Kiteboarders Club and raise the awareness of kite boarding on the Exe generally, it was decided to produce a quarterly newsletter for the Club.

The short version of this newsletter, and arguably what the club is about on a number of levels can be captured in the following by Jason Furness.

'I've been down the beach with my kids and it can be quite a scary place to be with a three year old that just wants to play in the sand. I know how dangerous it can be. We don't want too many laws, we still want it to be a free spirited sport, but people have to use their common sense and also have the balls to walk up to someone who you think might be about to endanger themselves or others and use your experience to give them some advice.'

The longer version of the newsletter is what follows.

The aim of the newsletter is to capture relevant issues, the views of club members and provide a forum for how the club and kite boarding can develop over the coming years as the popularity of the sport increases.

This newsletter also serves to provide an opportunity to remind members that the focus of the club is on developing and representing the interest of kite boarders, with an emphasis on safety and youth development, built on a foundation of enjoyment and socialising.

The following provides an update on recent initiatives by the Club and an outline of suggested future proposals.

Members' interests

The club is now affiliated to the BKSA. Future news letters will outline the benefits of affiliation in more detail, however a benefit that we hope to capitalise upon is funding. Such funding could hopefully be matched by sponsors to subsidise kiting courses for lifeguards or courses to attract more youngsters into the sport.

A lifeguard training and awareness session took place organised by Edge and supported by the club. As a way of developing a good ongoing relationship with lifeguards it has been proposed that some of the clubs funding be used to provide lifeguards with line cutters and that lifeguards be invited to future club socials.

The club have regular representation at the Exe Water Users group where our interests are championed on a wide range of issues, including water cleanliness. There is the option of the club approaching South West Water in the future to take them to task over water cleanliness if members feel this is a sufficiently big issue.

Safety

No newsletter would be complete with out safety being discussed as there is a direct link between safety and continued access to the beach and the reputation of kilters (see quotation above).

Following several accidents the RNLI recently called a meeting to review rescue and safety procedures for Kitesurfers. They are very supportive and positive and to date have done an excellent job, as Mike Way and Simon Perks will know.

All club members can help by observing the code of conduct and advising visiting Kilters of this and the local conditions.

Please stay away from navigation channel, respect other waters users and appreciate their point of view, particularly now as the busy period for the estuary has begun.

Training

It is hoped that a social event will be run soon with the focus on allowing members share their kiting experiences and incidents, which would enable us to identify any lessons or learning opportunities.

Miscellaneous

To assist lifeguards and as part of the move to increase the profile and identity of the club, both amongst members and with other kilters, the green tag cable ties are available in Edge. They will also be handed out at future meetings.

It goes without saying kiting makes for a great spectacle and will always attract the attention of the public. Therefore whenever the opportunity arises we are encouraged to engage positively with other beach users (and their dogs).

The generation of good will through answering questions and an explanation of what the sport is all about will pay dividends in the long term. All too soon the beach access we take for granted will be debated by non kilters and local authorities. A groundswell public support will help preserve our interests for the long term.

Finally

The club is unique so let's build on what we have.

- it has a world champion, British senior and British and European junior champions as its members;
 - it has an association with Edge Watersports which is invaluable in terms of the support, advice and profile they willingly provide;
 - our 'home ground' can be used in practically all wind directions;
 - we even have our own wine cellar to meet in.
- We have forged good links with the authorities and other water users-lets build on this and promote a safe sport in Exmouth.