

## **Foyle Paddlers Canoe Club Charity Commission Report 1 Jan 2023 to the 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2023**

- Charity Commission No:- 107484
- Foyle Paddlers purpose:- The advancement of amateur sport
- The Trustees of the Club have had regard to the Public Benefit requirement statutory guidance.
- Trustees: - Mr Gerald Mc Gahey, Enda Cummins, Mr Niall Lavery, Mr Martin Lynch

### **Foyle Paddlers Canoe Club Activities and Achievements**

It's been another eventful year for FPCC. **Nine** committee meetings took place during 2023 excluding the AGM. It was good to see members getting back to in person face to face meetings.

The FPCC Coaching Officer and other club coaches/leaders organised many river and sea paddles throughout the year. River paddles included the Strule, Owenkillew, Mourne and Crana rivers. There were approximately 10 club paddles on the Foyle including the Turkey paddle on the Foyle 28<sup>th</sup> December 6, 2023. Approximately 19 club paddles took place on the Swilly. The club also organised a surfing trip to Ballyliffin and a number of very enjoyable coastal paddles including Leenan to Fanad Head (2), Tullagh to Leenan, Leenan to Rockstown Harbour, Portballintrae to Ballintoy harbour.

Postballintrae to the Whiterocks/Skerries. Members also attended Enagh Lough safety and rescue training sessions at Enagh Lough.

Senior and Junior Pool sessions continued as normal in the early part of 2023 and the Autumn/Winter pool sessions began in October. The Treasurer organized a 4/5-week induction course which began in November and attracted seven applicants. Special Olympics pool sessions ran earlier in March/April.

Twelve members of the club are now trained in REC 2 first aid course.

The Secretary carried out significant work during the year updating some of the older governance documents which were last reviewed in 2010. Documents reviewed included: Agreement of club expenditure, Management of committee meetings, Junior Code of Conduct, Club Code of Conduct, Interim policy on funding of training, Membership, Joining the Club and Communication, Membership Training and Development Agreement, Equipment Hire Form, and the Risk assessment for managing pool sessions.

The Club constitution is currently being reviewed/amended. Safeguarding training was organized in October/November and twelve members completed the course. The Safeguarding Officer has been consulting with Sports NI on the correct procedure for completing Access NI checks and has assisted members on completion of these checks.

Work was also taken forward from last year looking at ways to improve efficiencies in the processing of members annual CANI insurance by batching members insurance applications rather than processing them sporadically. The club treasurer also submitted the Charity Commissions annual monitoring return at the end of October and undertook a lengthy challenging process to transfer the existing FPCC bank account with Bank of Ireland to Danske Bank.

There is an ongoing consultation process between members of the Committee and the Council over the continued use of the upper boathouse after the Council served a 'Notice to Quit' at the end of October. The Committee is currently considering the acceptability or otherwise of any future financial costs likely to arise by vacating the upper boathouse. Storage provision and internal space for club equipment/activities is available within the new Council Storage unit building and within the existing containers albeit final costs associated with such options has yet to be agreed.

Members carried out a clean-up of the lower boathouse and new racking was installed by members to allow some equipment to be moved back down from the upper boathouse.

Some members of the club assisted with safety during the Celebration of Life Challenge in August undertaken in the river Foyle by swimmer Danny Quigley.

The Coaching Officer organised the Mourne Race to take place in Dec 2023 but was postponed due to water levels and rescheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and members volunteered their time and energy to ensure this was a successful and safe event.

### **Public benefits**

The direct benefits flowing from our purposes include:

- Easy access by the people of the Derry and Strabane areas to participate in local amateur paddle sports.
- The opportunity, for all those involved, to develop paddling skills which will enable them to enjoy safe recreational water activity or perhaps engage in competitive water activities.
- Ensuring that all members can enjoy a water activity in a safe and caring environment.
- As a result of engaging with diverse groups in an outdoor environment, participant's overall health and well-being will be enhanced and community connections strengthened.
- To manage the areas of the Prehen Boathouse currently utilized by the club The benefits will be demonstrated through the following means: We will provide structured opportunities for people to participate in paddling skills development

programmes with fully trained instructors enabling them to participate in weekly paddling. As part of the sessions participants will learn about water safety, how to paddle safely and will develop skills and techniques under the instruction of the qualified instructors. The club have produced a number of trained coaches and leaders, as well as a number of members with a variety of safety qualifications since the club was founded in 1981. We will monitor participant numbers (both existing club members and members of the general public) engaging in the activities offered through the use of attendance tracking sheets Canoeing is a risk sport, even though statistically the risk is slight. The club aims to minimise those risks by using qualified instructors and by following CANI (Canoe Association NI) guidelines, implementing a Health and Safety policy and Risk Assessments for club events. Our beneficiaries are the people from the Derry and Strabane council area. The only private benefit gained is if the club decides to subsidise course fees, for members of the club seeking to gain accredited paddle sport coaching qualification, which will in turn enable the club to meet its purposes in particular the clubs safety responsibilities and hopefully ensure sustainability. Individuals may also benefit from canoe training acquired during club events.

### **What your organisation does**

The public benefit of Foyle Paddlers Canoe Club is the advancement of amateur sport. The club meets regularly (typically 1 or 2 times per week) at various outside venues throughout the year to help members develop their skills in paddlesport disciplines such as Sea/Touring, Whitewater, open boating and Surf Kayaking; as well as competition. Weekend sessions during the winter are supplemented with canoe pool sessions Membership of the club is open to the public. For safety reasons, joining the club requires either demonstrating a degree of competency in paddlesports, or participation in a variety of beginners courses, which the club offers throughout the year. All of the members of the club are amateur. Paddlesports promotes good health in participants by engaging them in both physical exertion and mental skills The club is affiliated to, and has as its governing body, the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland (CANI) and promotes progression through the formal skill levels set down by them. Members of the club hold formal CANI coaching and skills qualifications appropriate to member needs. The club does make a charge for participation in events but ALL of the monies raised are used to cover the costs of venue hire and club equipment. The Club Constitution specifically states “in no circumstances can any profits be distributed to members, but any profits earned shall be contributed to a general fund for furthering the objectives of the club.” ... [more].