

Caring for the environment

Your canoe is a traditional craft used throughout the world for exploring wilderness areas and quietly observing wildlife and flora. It causes no erosion, noise or pollution, and leaves no trace of its passing. Canoeing at appropriate water levels is an environmentally benign activity** and causes no damage to fish stocks***.

By following the simple steps below you can ensure your presence is not detrimental to the environment:

- Leave the environment as you find it
- Find out about the area before you go, noting its sensitive places, species and breeding seasons
- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home with you
- Keep noise to a minimum
- Take care not to cause damage when launching or landing along natural banks. Float your canoe for launching and lift out when landing
- Where possible keep to any designated paths or launching points
- Gravel banks may contain fish spawn – avoid paddling over them in low water conditions

- Paddle at a distance and in a manner to minimise any disturbance to wildlife
- Be aware of Environment Agency information to help protect the fresh water environment when using canoes and equipment overseas****

Report pollution or damage to the relevant authorities:

Environment Agency
24 hour incident reporting
Telephone 0800 80 70 60

British Waterways
Emergencies
Telephone 0800 47 999 47

Report birds or animals in distress to the RSPCA
Telephone 0990 55 59 99 (24 hours)

For Coastguard and other emergencies call 999



Canoe England Membership

Membership of Canoe England offers a huge range of benefits including:

- Licences to paddle on 2,800 miles (4,500km) of Britain's navigations and canals
- Third party liability insurance up to £5 million
- A yearly directory
- Six editions of Canoe Focus magazine
- Discounts on events, equipment, clothing, travel, boat insurance and coaching supplies
- Access to information, resources, courses and competitions
- Access to the member's area on the website, including classified advertisements

So don't delay – join or renew your membership today!

Phone 0845 370 9500 or visit
www.canoe-england.org.uk

*For safety and other health information visit www.bcu.org.uk and see news section

**Canoe England has a Memorandum of Understanding with English Nature (now formed as Natural England) that states "English Nature and the BCU agree that there is unlikely to be any significant impact on, or lasting disturbance to wildlife and the water environment from the passage of canoes"

***An Environment Agency report entitled "W266 - The Effects of Canoeing on Fish Stocks & Angling" concluded that there is no empirical evidence linking canoeing with damage to fish spawning grounds or damage to fish stocks.

****There is a possibility of unknowingly importing a fish parasite from Europe with serious consequences for UK fish stocks. It can survive in damp or wet conditions for five or six days on water recreation clothing and equipment – canoes, fishing tackle etc. It is important all equipment used abroad is disinfected before reusing in the UK. For details of this procedure and further information visit www.bcu.org.uk. Refer to the 'News and Events' section, then Environment & Health Protection – G Salaris.

Issued 2007

You, your canoe and the environment



www.canoe-england.org.uk

canoe england

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The UK has a wonderful network of inland and costal waters that are amongst the best in Europe. This leaflet provides guidance on good practice for using these waters in an appropriate and responsible manner for paddlers to best enjoy their sport and recreation and time on the water

In general, be considerate, treat others as you would wish to be treated, respect the freshwater and marine environment and follow safety recommendations in order to be seen as a welcome visitor.

Always observe the Countryside Code, for more information visit www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk

For information on the water to be paddled, contact the Canoe England Local River Advisor, Local Coastal Advisor, Regional Access Officer, Navigation Authority or the Canoe England website.

Take responsibility for your actions

The outdoors is a great place for sport and recreation, but it is also a natural environment which needs to be treated with respect.

- Be aware of the hazards on your chosen journey and ensure you are confident in the ability of your party to negotiate them
- Take account of water, flows, levels and weather conditions
- Use suitable equipment in good condition
- Leave details of your trip with a responsible person
- It is recommended that you take advantage of the courses that the BCU have to offer on canoe skills and safety, which are available for all levels of ability
- Be aware of health and other safety information*
- Permission may be required to go to a private place

Consideration for others

Canoeists will meet a variety of land and water users on their journeys. Common sense and polite communications can help to improve understandings.

On land

- Stay away from houses and private gardens
- Change discreetly. Use public facilities where possible
- Drive sensibly at all times
- When parking do not obstruct roads or entrances to buildings or farm property
- Ensure your kit does not cause an obstruction when unloading
- Leave property and gates positioned as you find them

On Water

- Follow the general rules of navigation and any local bylaws. Obtain any necessary licences
- Respect and do not obstruct other water users
- Keep a look out. Be aware that larger vessels may not see you and are less manoeuvrable. In confined waters keep to the edge of the deepwater navigation channel
- Keep the numbers in your party consistent with safety, the nature of the stretch of river and the impact on your surroundings
- When offering assistance to those in need, on or off the water, do not put yourself or fellow paddlers at risk
- Show consideration for organised events and give way to their passage

Anglers

- The needs of canoeing and angling requires mutual cooperation
- Keep a look out for anglers whilst paddling to avoid lines and nets. Anglers can be hard to spot on banks
- If it is unclear where to pass lines or swims (area being fished), then quietly attract the attention of the angler(s) and agree a route to follow
- When an angler is playing a fish from the bank or wading, stop some way off and await their acknowledgement
- Do not linger in pools or swims occupied by an angler

For more information about paddling elsewhere visit the following website:

www.bcu.org.uk

