

# Surrey Canoe Club

## Paddle-Ability Pilot Sessions



### Spelthorne Disability Club sessions and general sessions

**What were the main objectives of the project?** Our club started in July 2010. The objective is to encourage adults and youth with a disability to try canoeing and give them the opportunity to join a mainstream club where paddlers with or without a disability all participate in the activities together.

**What we did:** We run sessions at Shepperton marina, Hampton Pool and Spelthorne Leisure Centre Pool and we will be running sessions at Walton Rowing Club in 2011. All club coaches and volunteers have attended workshops on how to coach disabled people in sport and disability awareness training. People with disabilities are involved in the planning and execution of activities by being part of the club committee, coaches and trainee coaches. We have additional coaches to provide one-to-one coaching at the regular sessions if required, personal assistants are included as joint members and they participate in the activities if they wish, We have "buddy" paddlers for those with visual impairments.



**Barriers and how they were overcome:** we had to improvise and adapt boats; we have decided to keep the offer concessionary membership fee to people with disabilities and their assistants. The Head Coach/Chair Albert Donovan has developed a system of training cards to give the opportunity to members with disabilities to gain star award qualifications at their own pace and time. Social events have helped members to get to know one another and understand individual needs better so all members regardless of ability support and encourage each other at the regular club sessions.



**Results and the future:** As a result of the sessions 17 people with disabilities have joined the club out of which 2 are training to become L1 coaches. Our vision is to be an inclusive club of excellence and to expand the sport of canoeing to more people with a disability. We hope to see some of our youth members develop in the competitive sport of paracanoe.



We hope to have the funds in 2011 to purchase boats and equipment and offer bursaries to our L1 trainee coaches to be able to attend the L1 training and assessment course.

We have the Surrey Active Silver Accreditation Award so we hope to work with local schools in 2011.

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