

## Aire fish passes

Fish passes are to be installed on the River Aire on the large weirs at Armley, Kirkstall, Newby and Saltaire in 2020, the object being to get salmon up to the Skipton area, as in pre Industrial Revolution days. Some £714,000 of funding is coming from the Heritage Lottery, £500,000 from Yorkshire Water and more money from various other bodies including the EA, who say this will 'provide fantastic opportunities for the River Aire to be enjoyed by everyone' and 'make it a more welcoming environment'. Walkers and ramblers are to 'create a series of short self-guided trails'. Volunteers are to clean up the banks and remove the litter and invasive plants although there is no mention of boats anywhere or that the passes will be combined with canoe chutes, as they would be on the Continent.

## Wensum modifications

The EA, Natural England and Water Management Alliance have been making modifications to the River Wensum upstream of Norwich and will continue to

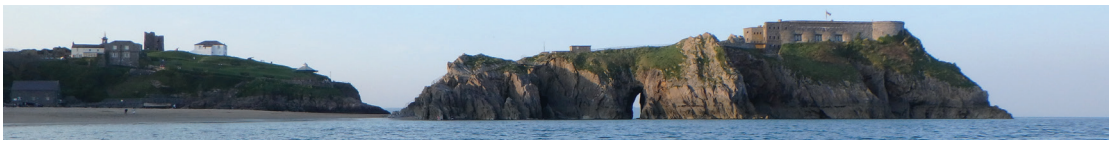
do so for another eight years. This year they worked on 1.4km between Lenwade Mill and Great Witchingham Hall. A 1.3km section at Attlebridge will follow next year. A fish bypass is to be installed at Lyng with 2km to be worked on. One technique is hinging, bending trees down so that they trail in the water to provide a more interesting environment for fish and, no doubt, strainers for boats. They also talk of gravel glides. Elsewhere in the area rivers have been changed to give gravel shallows which require portaging to cross. The EA say the changes are popular with anglers, naturalists, locals and tourists but do not mention river users.

## Welsh beaches cleaner

Helped by the weather, all 105 bathing beaches in Wales have been shown to be compliant with bathing water standards in 2019. Natural Resources Wales' sampling showed 83 were in the 'excellent' category compared with 78 last year. Earlier, Tenby's Castle Beach was named as the *Sunday Times* Beach of the Year (*shown below*).

## Beaver questions

In answer to a question about flood risks resulting from beavers being released into the wild, Defra say that their latest trial on the River Otter, begun in 2015, will end in 2020. They do not say whether they will round them up, stop releasing more or just walk away and leave them to get on with it. They say that the trial will help them to understand how they effect flows in rivers and surrounding ecology. One would have thought they would have investigated these before releasing them into the wild.



# INCIDENT FILE

## Accused man disappears

A search for a missing 59 year old man off Western Australia was called off after three days. Reported to be fit, strong and an experienced paddler, he was seen off an island but later set off his personal locator beacon when 3km offshore. His kayak, a fast touring K1 with rudder, and his PLB were each found within 50 minutes in the water and his paddle ashore. Previously he had pleaded not guilty to historical underage sexual offences and was due back in court. If this was part of a deliberate plan to disappear it is surprising that he should have raised an alarm where his equipment would be found so quickly.

## Casualty review

The MCA's Casualty Review Panel believe that half of the 22 fatalities in 2018 could have been prevented if the people concerned had been wearing lifejackets. The majority were anglers or commercial fishermen, especially on Scottish sea lochs.

Users are reminded of other safety aids. Carry a VHF radio and know how to use it. A PLB or EPIRB will help rescuers to find you even if you are unconscious. Download the RYA SafeTrx app to your phone. Wear appropriate clothing for the conditions.



The attacked tent.



Francine being flown out.

## Unusual bear attack

A party of four were attacked by a black bear while asleep in a tent on the riverbank some 240km from Happy Valley-Goose Bay in Newfoundland & Labrador at the end of July. Francine Grondin was bitten on the leg. She and her husband are used to wilderness paddling and reckon to have paddled 20,000km in the last 40 years. Screaming at the bear did not dissuade it and it retreated only when hit on the leg with a large birch log. It did not go far away, either when they built a large fire and moved their tents close to it or when they used bear bangers. They struck camp quickly, grabbed their canoes from the vicinity of where the bear had last been seen and moved to another beach some 2km away. They called for help by satellite phone and were rescued the following day. The attack was seen as unusual. The site was dirty and there was evidence that it had been used by anglers or hunters who had left garbage. Perhaps the bear saw their tent as a garbage bag.

This omits rivers where there is a historic right as on the Severn from Shrewsbury to Stockport where there is an unopposed right and many over rivers where there is a disputed right.

DEFRA does not know what the law is.

I have twice asked my Labour MP for Canterbury to raise this with DEFRA but I have had no reply.

## The third way

From Paul Caffyn.

What a massive compilation of information.

Thanks for including the info on my two books still in print.

There doesn't seem to be the same level of interest in books as there was when I was growing up.

The article on buoyancy by Peter Lamont fails to mention the 1985 Kiwi development of a seat as a third or middle bulkhead.

Most NZ sea kayak manufacturers all picked up the concept.

The concept maximized buoyancy and minimized the amount of water that could enter the cockpit in the event of an 'out of boat' event.

Keep up your wonderful work on keeping the silvertail bureaucrats honest.

# Letters

## The Canoeist website

From Craig Bousfield.

You know what they say. 'To err is human; to really cock it up you need IT.'

## The incorrect answer from DEFRA

From Douglas Caffyn.

In the May *Canoeist*, page 15, you do not comment on the fact that the answer given on 22nd February is quite clearly incorrect.

The reply states that unless there is a navigation authority permission must be obtained from the riparian owner.