

Undercurrents

BC management report buried

More than two years after the report on BC's management style was due to have been published it is clear that it will not be. Instead, a six page summary of key findings and recommendations has been produced. Even that has nine sections blanked out. The impression given is of much less serious problems than the BBC exposed after a full report was leaked to them (May 2019, p8).

'UK Sport was not... aware of the development and pervasion of this culture of fear' its says, suggesting a lot of correspondence has gone astray. It has been 'going astray' for over four decades so that should not come as a surprise.

'A number of contributors, even those with no current connection to British Canoeing, expressed fear of reprisal. In relation to this investigation, there are instances of individuals who have declined to contribute, and instances in which evidence, once given, has been withdrawn.' Some issues have been spoken about more openly by paddlers than have been written down.

Reference to 'serious safeguarding matters' are barely brushed over. Most people learned to keep quiet. This summary suggests the recent problems were worse in sprint and overall union management than in slalom.

Too often we have heard that the union have abandoned the chase 'because he is no longer a paid employee'. Too often this summary implies that they only have to turn the page to begin again with a clean sheet and their history can be forgotten. Nowhere does it suggest legal action should be pursued against perpetrators or that anyone should be compensated. The first recommendation is that 'British Canoeing acknowledge and apologise for its past failings'. That would be too little too late, even if were to be done.

Reference is made to 'the physical and emotional welfare of many athletes.' The problems go far wider than just athletes and not just within the time frame covered by this report. This falls a long way short of reform. It is not even a convincing covering of tracks.

Norwich broads control changes

Whitlingham Country Park with its two broads was set up with a charitable trust by the Coleman family. In 1995 they agreed that the Broads Authority should manage it but they have now ended the agreement and will manage it themselves in future. Direct access onto the River Yare is a possibility. Car parking has been the main source of income, 500,000 visitors a year using the park. It was intended to use Whitlingham Broad for the junior events in Norwich Canoe Club's 2019 national marathon championships but an alternative venue had to be used because of the high winds.

Increased Thames traffic

Transport for London are to build extra piers on the Thames in London with a view to getting people out of cars and doubling the number of trips taken on the river by 2035, especially in east London. These are likely to be undertaken by Thames Clippers, which throw up substantial washes through the city. An electric ferry between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf is also being considered.

British Marine head to Southampton

British Marine are moving their head office from Egham to Ocean Village, Southampton. This will place

it closer to the country's leading boat show and in an area with two thirds of the marine leisure industry. Alternate board meetings, though, will be held in other parts of the country and there will be an autumn expo in the Midlands so that other parts of the country are not completely overlooked. That could result in a direct head to head this year with the Crick Boat Show being postponed until the autumn.

Unfit children

The World Health Organization are concerned that most children are not getting enough exercise. Those 5 to 18 years old should be getting an hour a day of exercise, enough to leave them too breathless to matter. Adults over 19 should have 2 1/2 hours a week of aerobic exercise and those over 65 should add further strength exercises two days a week. Exercise gives children fitter heart and lungs, stronger bones and muscles, improved mental health and lower weight, probably better brain development and later reduced risk of heart attacks, stroke and diabetes. There is too much emphasis on academic results, there are concerns about sport and leisure not being safe, accessible and affordable and too much time is spent playing with electronic devices. Three quarters of boys and 85% of girls in the UK are considered inactive, about the global average. Active children perform better at school and become more active adults. Gender differences may result from not promoting sports girls find attractive and may suffer from inadequate changing facilities.

Prince Andrew leaves museum

Prince Andrew is no longer Royal Patron of the Canadian Canoe Museum at Peterborough. In 2007 he opened the Royal Canoes exhibit, which features three canoes which were owned by the Queen and Prince Philip, Prince Charles and Lady Diana and himself. Ties with the 59 year old prince were broken after his handling of the BBC interview regarding allegations about historic sex crimes involving Jeffrey Epstein. His ties with nearby Lakefield College School, which he attended for six months in 1977, have also been severed for related reasons.

Whale returns camera

An attraction in Hammerfest Bay has been a tame beluga whale, nicknamed Hvaldimir after Vladimir. Joachim Larssen was taking photos with his GoPro from his kayak when the whale bumped into it, knocking the camera over the side. The whale, which had been following him, recovered the camera and returned it to him.

Coaches in positions of trust

'Earlier this year the *Guardian* reported that a freedom of information request had found that between 2014 and 2018 there were 653 cases in which adults who could be regarded as being in a position of trust had had a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old. Of the 495 cases in which the adult's role was recorded, the majority were in sport and the data showed that such incidents had increased.' So said Tracey Crouch (Con, Chatham & Aylesford) in the Westminster Hall debate on Sports Coaches (Positions of Trust). There is a desire to open out the scope of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 under which it is illegal for certain professions, such as teachers, to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old as they are considered persons in positions of trust.

Alexander Bridgwood



'My wave.'



In these circumstances, would you be taking snaps?



'Coming through on the right!' The Helsinki Annual Beer Float.

Miners Bridge lost

Miners Bridge across the Afon Llugwy at Betws-y-Coed was lost in floods in early February. The steeply climbing bridge stood between Swallow Falls and the Conwy confluence.

The Wave lecture

The Institution of Civil Engineers will present a free public lecture on the Wave surfing venue in Bristol University's Queens Building, Room 1.15, on Sep 1st. Refreshments will be offered from 6pm for a 6.30 start.