

STIRLING & FALKIRK CANOE CLUB

Many thanks for your enquiry about Stirling & Falkirk Canoe Club. Below is some generic information about the club and what we do, as well as contact details for committee members or other volunteers who look after specific areas of the club. I hope that you will find the answers to your questions contained below, but if not please feel free to contact any of the volunteers listed who should be able to give you more information.

The club is affiliated to the national governing body, the Scottish Canoe Association, and follows their rules and guidelines regarding our activities, coaches, child protection etc. More information is available from the SCA, www.canoescotland.org.

BEGINNERS & LESSONS

The club does not run specific sessions for beginners, however we do have 2 sessions a week that are open to anyone from first-timers to experts, at which coaches are available to assist with whatever is required. The first of these is on the Union Canal in Polmont, at Falkirk Community Trust's Action Outdoors centre. The second is at Bannockburn High School swimming pool. Both of these sessions require booking – please see the individual sections below, and if you would like some specific coaching it's worth letting the organiser know when booking.

CANOEING OR KAYAKING?

For those who are unsure, a canoe is generally an open boat in which you sit or kneel and use a paddle with only one blade (indian style). Kayaks are decked boats in which you sit and use a paddle with two blades (eskimo style).

The club has a large range of boats including touring kayaks, sea kayaks, white water kayaks and open canoes. We also have fleets of slalom competition kayaks and polo kayaks. All club sessions (with the exception of swimming pool sessions due to space considerations) support canoes and kayaks, and equipment can be supplied for use. Members may also borrow club equipment for their own use, subject to a small charge for some items (notably sea kayaks, which have a £5 per day fee). The fee is waived if you are participating in an organised club event.

COMPETITION

Stirling & Falkirk Canoe Club have a strong presence in both canoe polo and canoe slalom, and we run our own division 3/4 slalom in September each year. The club has equipment for both, and has many members who participate in one (or both) of these competitive areas. Club sessions cater for all abilities – ranging from beginners to British champions, and all ages! If you are interested in competition, please contact Sarah Stubley regarding slalom (slalom@sfcc.info) or Chris Carracher regarding polo (polo@sfcc.info, tel 07793 941628) who will be able to give more information about these disciplines, along with the dates & times of training sessions.

RIVER/LOCH/SEA TRIPS

The club has a busy activity calendar over the spring/summer/autumn months with many trips and training courses. These aim to cater for all members, perhaps with the exception of our experts who

tend to paddle in groups of like-minded paddlers when they're not assisting with club activities. There is always an "easy river trip" each month, aimed at progressing paddlers from the canal or lochs onto moving water, and we try and arrange a number of flat water loch or canal trips throughout the year too, to aid progression from the swimming pool to outside. There are occasional trips to the coast or estuaries, but we currently do not have any qualified sea coaches, so these are often "peer paddles" where like minded members get together. We do have some very experienced paddlers who don't have qualifications, so often these trips are run to high standards, but we are unable to endorse them as club trips. Each Sunday when there isn't a club trip running, groups of paddlers meet in Sainsbury's car park in Stirling at 9am, where they discuss plans for the day and travel to an appropriate river for a day trip. The location and difficulty will depend on who attends – and again these are not formally organised club trips because we don't prearrange coaching cover, however many of the club coaches attend these trips, so they are often run to the same standard as a formal club trip. Trips and training is arranged through the forum, so if you're interested in joining in with these activities, get yourself a forum login.

FACEBOOK & WEBSITE

Facebook is our noticeboard, along with the club website. We try to keep details of trips, training, events and so on up to date on the website, but sometimes last minute stuff will not make it, and occasionally it gets out of date when we're all too busy paddling! Generally, everything makes it to Facebook, so it's worth signing up if you want to get involved. The Facebook page can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/601635239946056/> and the website is accessed at www.sfcc.info.

COACHES

Sometimes, we get qualified coaches who want to join us, or find out more about us. We love to hear from you! We have around 20 coaches from L1 to L4 within the club, across multiple disciplines, but with all of the activities we try and host in the season, more are always welcome. We also offer occasional training for coaches when we have enough interest – in the past couple of years the club has run 2 UKCC L1 courses, a UKCC L2 course, various 3*, 4*, FSRT, WWSR and various assessments. If you'd like to get involved with coaching, either as a new coach or an existing coach, contact Steve Linksted (coaching@sfcc.info, 07710 415539) or come along to a pool, canal or other club session and introduce yourself.

UNION CANAL, POLMONT

From around Easter to roughly mid September, Tuesday evenings from 7pm until 9pm is our slot at Action Outdoors on the Union Canal in Polmont. This is an open session – anyone can come along from beginners to experts, and equipment can be provided. We ask that you book through directly via the forum (there is a post for each week in the "Coaching & Club Trips section") so we can make sure we have enough coaches and equipment – please book even if you have your own equipment. There are canoes, kayaks, paddles and safety equipment available and the centre has hot showers and changing rooms – we even supply tea, coffee & hot chocolate! Sessions are £3 per head, all you need to bring is a set of clothes you do not mind getting soaked and muddy (often old trainers, tracksuit bottoms, t shirt and sweatshirt), and a clean set to go home in! The centre is based in the grounds of

the Grange Community Centre, Redding Road, Brightons, Falkirk FK2 0AA, opposite the prison. There is a map at <http://goo.gl/maps/lwW2>.

SWIMMING POOL

7pm to 9pm on Wednesdays during term time is our time at Bannockburn High School swimming pool, Bannockburn Road, Stirling FK7 0HQ. This is split into 2 sessions, from 7 to 7:50pm and from 7:50 to 8:40pm, and costs £4 per head. Numbers are strictly limited and booking is essential. Kayaks and paddles are provided, or you are welcome to bring your own – thoroughly cleaned! Jason Sharp looks after the bookings, which can be made from the Thursday before the session (i.e. maximum of 6 days in advance) and ONLY by phone, no emails, texts or answerphone messages! Calls are accepted between 6:30pm and 9pm – do not phone outside of these hours, Jason's number is 07792456597. Please note the pool is very popular and books up quickly, so booking early is essential. DO NOT PHONE OUTSIDE OF THESE TIMES.

BENEFITS

Club members have access to a range of benefits. Scottish Kayaks and Paddles (www.scottishkayaksandpaddles.co.uk) offer members 10% discount on production of a valid membership card. Active Stirling (www.activestirling.org.uk) offer club coaches, or those working towards becoming a coach, free training for support courses such as child protection. The club is a member of the Archers All Stars programme provided by Archers Sleep Centre (www.archerssleepcentre.co.uk), which provides ongoing sponsorship for the club and gives members 10% discount on production of a valid membership card.

CONTACTS

All of the committee members and their contact details are included on the website, but the main ones you'll need are below...

Steve Linksted, Chairman & Coaching Coordinator, chair@sfcc.info, tel 07710 415539.

Bob Parker, Secretary, secretary@sfcc.info, tel 07904272495. Deals with club secretarial matters other than membership.

Tasha Cadman, Membership Secretary, membership@sfcc.info. Deals with all membership queries and applications.

Sarah Stuble, Slalom Representative, slalom@sfcc.info.

Chris Carracher, Polo Representative, polo@sfcc.info, tel 07793 941628.

Jason Sharp, Pool coordinator, pool@sfcc.info, tel 07792 456597 SEE NOTE ABOVE REGARDING CONTACT TIMES!

Mark Sadler, Open Boat Representative, openboat@sfcc.info.

Gary Hammond, Sea Representative, sea@sfcc.info.