

Zonation and Code of Conduct Review River & Canal User Group (RCUG) Meeting



Minutes

6pm Thursday 16th March 2017

Location: Haven Banks Outdoor Education Centre, Exeter

Attendees

Stephanie Clark, Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP)
Alan Wood, RYA – Chair of meeting
Adrian Woolacott, Canoe
Lynn Trout, W.Trout & Son Ltd
Mike Trout, W.Trout & Son Ltd
Simon Reader, Retreat Boatyard
Pete Thorn, Canoe / Kayak
Paul Rutherford, Canoe / Kayak / Sail
Michael Bewsey, AS Watersports
Jane Evans, Exeter Canoe Club / British Canoeing
Vicky Sanders, Exeter Canoe Club Member
Jacqui Stewart, Exeter Canoe Club
Ben Hedden, Haven Banks OEC
Paul Wilson, Exeter Rowing Club & Regatta
Guy Parker, Exeter Boat Owners Association / Sailing
Roly Palmer, Angling / Exeter and District Angling Association
Mark Lewin-Titt, Exeter Canoe Club Member / British Canoe Union Member
Colin Acton, Exeter City Council Waterways Dept

AW / Chair welcome and thanks.

SC overview of EEMP & South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership (SEDHRP). Conservation designations of Exe Estuary explained. Reasons given for proposed Voluntary Exclusion Zones (VEZs). Consultation with user groups currently underway with everyone invited to give views on proposed areas of VEZs.

Dawlish Warren VEZ

Safety issues of encountering larger craft on strong tidal stream.

Kayak tours are taken down the estuary as a day trip.

Suggestion that canoes and kayaks be no closer than 10m to the edge of the mud in the VEZ.

Suggestion that the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee (SEDHREC) be taken out on the water.

The SEDHREC meeting takes place on the same day as the consultation event, therefore the date of the event needs to be changed.

Clubs can be used to email information onto members.

Exmouth VEZ

Kitesurfers launching into prevailing wind from SW.

Disabled surf-ski groups are taken onto the estuary and stay by banks.

JE stated that their groups leave Exeter at high tide, so is around half tide when arrive in Exmouth (therefore HW + 3 could be an issue).

JE: For safety, canoes can't definitely say they will stay out.

JS & VS: Could possibly accept proposals if safety was taken into consideration.

JE: Undertakes rescue practice at bottom of Duck Pond.

The whole group agreed with proposals if the following amendments could be made:

- Mid-September to end-December.
- Tidal limit: three hours either side of high tide (and same rules as power boats).
- The boundary could be moved to the right of slipway, if tidal.

Suggestion to have a sign with board which can be changed to show when Brent Geese are in the area.

Suggestion to change name from VEZ to Wildlife Area.

Should highlight positives and have an educational approach, rather than having a negative message (saying no all of the time).

Summary of Proposed Suggestions from RCUG Meeting

- Dawlish Warren VEZ: canoes and kayaks need to come out of main navigation channel for safety, suggested minimum 10m in from channel.
- Exmouth VEZ: The group agreed with proposals if the following amendments could be made:
 - Mid-September to end-December.
 - Tidal limit: three hours either side of high tide (and same rules as power boats).
 - The boundary could be moved to the right of slipway, if tidal.
- Make use of clubs to disseminate information to members / users.
- Install sign (with board which can be changed) to show when Brent Geese are in the area.
- Change name from VEZ to Wildlife Area.
- Promote positive message and have an educational approach, rather than having a negative message (saying no all of the time).