

Code of Conduct Review Exeter Mixed User & Paddlesports Meeting

Minutes

18:00 Wednesday 22nd November 2017

Location: Exe Watersports Association



Attendees

Stephanie Clark, Exe Estuary Management Partnership
Rowena Garne, Exe Estuary Management Partnership
Penny Avant, Exe Wetland Bird Survey
Heather Baker, Saddles & Paddles Exeter Ltd
Michel Bewsey, AS Watersports
Mike Brown, Exeter Canoe Club
Colin Acton, Exeter City Council
Gary Cook, Exmouth Gig Rowing Club
Sama Euridge, South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership
Simon Morrissey, Exeter Canoe Club
Kate Fortnam, The Green Blue
Scott Harding, The Devon Wildfowling & Conservation Association
Lauren Reid, Exe-Calibre Dragon Boat Club
Mike Spiller, Honiton Sea Angling Club and Wyvern Region
Eleanor Thomas, Local User
Councilor Carol Whitton, Devon County Council
Polly Williams, Exmouth Gig Rowing Club
Alan Wood, Royal Yachting Association
Victoria Perry, South West Rowing

Introduction to Review of Codes from Exe Estuary Officer

- As most of you already know codes of conduct are in place to encourage respect towards other users and the environment. They are there to ensure activities are undertaken safely.
- Codes are especially needed in areas with a wide range of activities being undertaken which is particularly relevant to the Exe.
- Codes have existed on the Exe for a long time.
- We have been given the opportunity to update the codes with input from users, making it a combined approach.
- We are not looking to implement any new restrictions.
- We envisage having a general code as well as several codes for specific activities, should there be the need for them.
- We would like input not only on content but format and distribution as well.
- Additional meetings can be set up for specific activities such as sailing.
- The final designs will be endorsed by the Exe Estuary Management Partnership in March.
- We have had two meetings so far in Exmouth and Starcross.
- The general feedback we have received so far has been that local users would like the following codes:
 - 2 general codes – shore and water.
 - Dawlish Warren Code.

- Codes for specific activities include:
 - PWC
 - Bait Collection (bait digging and crab collection)
 - Dog Walking
 - Kite and Wind Surfing

Other meetings organised so far this year:

- Sailing: 28 November, 2pm, Exe Sailing Club (another to follow at Topsham Sailing Club next year)
- Angling / bait digging / shellfish collecting / crab tiling: 29 November, 7pm, SFCC

All places can be booked through the EEMP website.

Q: What's the budget like for the printing of paper leaflets?

A: The budget is small, currently waiting for quotes. Any ideas on how to increase the budget or make the codes more affordable to print please let Steph know.

Individual Group Discussion Notes (Taken from notes handed in at the end of the meeting)

Group 1

- North of Double Locks. Paddle users should be wearing lights at night – to be seen, not to see.
- Exe Watersports Association already has guidelines – have been sent to Steph.
- Dragonboat code – check if a national code exists.
- Paddlesports can be categorised in the “water users” code.
- The water users code could be subdivided into powered and non-powered craft.
- Could include angling and bait collection in one code.
- Suggest hand book/brochure. Should have limited number of key points that are most important – direct to website for more information.
- There is a code in Lyme Bay for angling – generally they are quite generic.
- Water users code could include paddlesports, however perhaps it would be good to differentiate between powered and non-powered craft or estuary and upper river version.
- A4 and A3 size folded up is good for documentation.
- Waterproof paper is cost prohibited, a laminated version for shops, clubs, B&Bs should be fine.
- Signage at main launch points or even interpretation boards of codes and ways of the river with maps.
- Use of social media regularly to promote codes.
- Presumed that a shore code and water code would have sub levels but relevant parts can be extracted for leaflets on more specific codes.
- Have good meta data on websites so they can be easily found.
- Large signs/display boards in shops/club based schools.
- When hiring kayak as part of hire, could include agreeing to the code.
- Use of interpretation boards which include maps along river/canal/estuary.

Group 2

- Are the British Canoeing codes not sufficient to be applied here?
- Highlight procedure for lost/found craft (who to call if boat is found).
- Where possible general codes are preferred.

- Promotion of codes through usual formats clubs promote to members, hire centres brief customers, all to carry printed information and include on websites.
- Codes can be printed in sticker format to go on boats or on display boards at popular public launch points.
- Separate map for canal area (or zoom in/magnified map)
- We like the Poole Harbour map.

Discussion Summary

Format

- Liked the idea of both a shore and a water code.
- Don't see a need for any more individual codes – just the two main water and shore codes should suffice.
- Paddlesports can come under the general water code.
- Angling and bait collecting could be combined.
- Majority liked the Poole Harbour example, especially the map. Good content and design. Liked how it is appealing to people's better nature. Folded to tide table size.
- Kingsbridge another good example (EA) – where to park, where to go / not to go.

Approach to Circulation

- Could have laminated sheets at B&Bs.
- Could make use of app such as iCoast as well as social media and the internet to promote the codes.
- Embed the knowledge of codes within the clubs so that they can help to spread good practice.
- SC: Recently spoke with creators of iCoast, there may be some funding to roll out iCoast to the Exe – will follow up.
- Signage needed at slipways.
- Tide tables to include or to have links to.
- Promotion of codes through clubs
- Display board linking to codes at Launch points.

Content

- Local policy.
- Don't need to differentiate between different activities.
- Would British Canoeing be a sufficient code for canoeists?
- Information on lost and found boats – RNLI have stickers for contact details, might be worth promoting this on code.
- On Exe map – is there a possibility of having a zoomed Exeter version to include canoe loops and other more Exeter based activities, Exeter is a different demographic. Include more detail about powerboats, etc. on estuary; include information about dogwalkers and cyclists on canal.
- Include on codes some brief information on the birds in the area – include some details about migration, how far they've flown, eelgrass, depth of water they feed in and consequences if they are disturbed. Get readers of codes to empathise with birds on the Exe.
- Like how Poole Map shows speed of water in specific areas.
- Don't need to go into too much detail on safety – can be patronising.
- There is a need to highlight specific safety issues – especially those specific to the Exe.
- How to pass other vessels.

- Procedure for lost and found craft.
- Keep it short and concise.
- Signpost to further information.
- Not about “don’t” – there to advise. Positive message.
- Speed limit needs to be made clear – above all else.
- “Get some training” – good idea to include something about training in codes to encourage people to go out onto the water once they are prepared and trained.

Discussion with Chair of West Region Rowing Association - Summary

- Powered and non-powered vessel codes.
- British Rowing have a water safety advisor – Steve Worley.
- Target audience – visitors and new users.
- Registration of boats is a good idea.
- Harbour Masters give out codes when pay launching fees in some areas.
- Exmouth Gig Rowing Club – Gary Polly.
- Quay – address dogs attacking swans and fouling.

Next steps:

- Draft text & feedback through local clubs / groups.
- Drafts will be on the EEMP website for six weeks in the New Year for feedback.
- Additional meetings can be organised for specific activities during this six week period.
- Final designs to be endorsed by the EEMP Management Group in March.
- Promotion on the ground through officers, through local clubs, on signage, websites.