

RETROSPECTIVE



...AND TRIPS 2011

HAPPY NEW YEAR CKC!

In a few weeks' time, Chelsea Kayak Club will have been in existence for a whole year, and a well-deserved pat on the back is in order for those who made it such a fantastic one by organising 2010's stunning trips. I hope this little reminder inspires some of you who haven't organised a trip before to get going and sort something out – there is plenty of help out there to do so, and we need volunteers to organise some CKC trips!

[CKC goes east trip report](#)



2010 started with several fantastic **Thames** trips, including the "leisurely" April Sunday paddle east towards Tower Bridge and HMS Belfast, excellently captured by Tim. A challenging and exciting trip for all involved, it demonstrated how a Thames paddle can turn into a memorable excursion!

Phil organised a great **Isle of Wight** trip in May – 7 of us went for Four Star Sea Kayak Training, and somehow in all the drizzle, we pulled off a great weekend's paddling! [Four Star Notes from IOW](#)





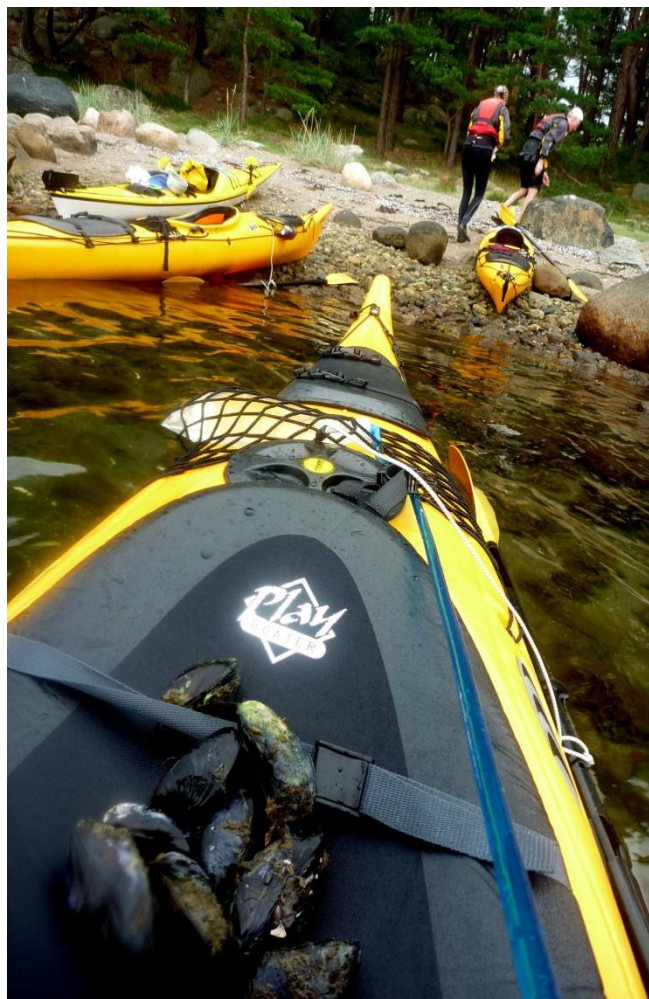
June is a lovely time to visit Sunny Scotland, but we were especially lucky with Geoff's invitation to an idyllic four days in **Kilchoan**. Sea paddling the Western tip of the Ardnamurchan Peninsula was a first for most of us, and made for a truly unforgettable trip. (Thanks Phil & M for pics) [Kilchoan Trip Report](#)



Longer trips abroad/ in the UK take planning, but are doable with a bit of experience & forethought. If you haven't planned a trip before, why not start by planning a **coastal day trip** with CKC? Phil, Miranda, or anyone on the committee can help you plan a trip.

Planning Pointers (Not a comprehensive guide – do discuss with a committee member when planning your trip ☺)

1. The plan will have 2 stages. Stage one will comprise a rough outline, including destination, paddling plan, dates, accommodation, rough cost, and no of spaces. Stage 2 will be more detailed, and done nearer the time when feedback from likely participants is available.
2. The difficulty level should be determined (see the grading guide, [Trip Guidelines](#)) & stated at the outset.
3. Once an idea of numbers is available, a trip leader needs to volunteer, and a good balance in the numbers of experienced paddlers vs. newer paddlers should be ensured.
4. A deposit is usually needed to secure accommodation bookings (and kit bookings if club kit is not being used), so take care to confirm numbers before handing over cash, and get payment from people in a timely fashion to avoid being out of pocket!



Choosing just one highlight from all the great experiences we had in the Bohuslän archipelago in **Sweden** in August is impossible, suffice to say there's no beating the tingle of excitement that comes from stuffing your boat with a week's kit, and paddling off into the fjords without a care in the world! Not to mention the wild camping and wild cooking! Thanks Phil – another stunning trip – and a CKC expedition first! [Bohuslan Trip Report](#)



A Swell Time in Folkestone

<http://www.chelseakayakclub.co.uk/2010/09/12/a-swell-time-in-folkestone/> describes how a few of us headed down to Folkestone for a Saturday paddle in September, only to be met by high winds and slightly lumpier sea than initially anticipated (Sea State 4-5).

Going any distance was certainly off, but we earned our cream tea with a fairly challenging skills session closer to shore.



We had a great time revising what we'd been taught on the IOW 4 star course, practicing surfing, surf landings, and rolling a sea kayak in surf (nice work Geoff!).

An exhilarating time for everyone. As Andy commented on the post, *no substitute for the salty!*



Even if I do say so myself the **Scilly Isles** was an inspired destination for our last summer paddle of 2010. Ever since having to drop out of camping trip to the Scillies organised by a friend, I have wanted to head down there and explore the uninhabited islands and rolling oceans.

So when there were calls to organise weekend UK trips last year, I jumped at the chance to drag a few people down to St Mary's to scope out the lie of the land. First, I had to ask myself was it a **feasible option**? Was it logistically possible? And would the challenge be appropriate?

A crossing from Land's end to St Mary's would be guided, in view of the considerable challenge. Guided trips can offer the opportunity to do trips too difficult to do safely unescorted, but I felt it would be great fun lead the trip ourselves. So I started less ambitious, and we hired boats in St Mary's, as the CKC fleet was yet to be a reality.

A week's self-sufficient island hopping and camping expedition would have been ideal. But no matter how much I wanted the sun to shine, it was the last weekend in October, and we only had four days (including travel), so we opted for a cosy cottage and a series of daily trips.

I contacted the **kayak centre** to establish availability of kit and dates. Happily they didn't mind hiring kit out with no guide (which some centres insist on). Then I emailed CKC to gauge interest. There was plenty. So I confirmed our interest and rough dates with the centre. The exact numbers and dates came after a reminder email to the club two months before the trip.

Travel there was complex. I chose to offer different options as people were coming from far and wide on different days, plus we were only 5 in total on the trip. Obviously the itinerary can be the product of informal discussions, but when emailing the group it is clearer if there is one set travel plan. Flights are usually booked and paid for by individuals rather than the trip organiser.

A month before, I sent a **final confirmation** email requesting payment (for deposits for kit hire and accommodation) and a **daily itinerary** with travel details and a very rough trip plan for each day. I answered questions about what kit we would have, the weather forecast, and what the day trips would comprise.

The trip was stunning, with some great paddling. We had a lovely serene paddle with seals across "The Pool", a not-too-successful fishing trip, and some really exciting rough water trips out towards the perimeter of the group of Islands.

This would be a great future trip, with either an island hopping expedition or a similar trip to last year's for a group with a pretty wide mix of abilities.



December is a great month for paddling – less of the hordes to contend with, and the chance to immerse yourself in the beautiful scenery you would normally only see on a Christmas card. And when else are you going try out all that expensive warm weather gear?



Richard started off by organising a sea paddling trip to **Eastney**, where a great time was had by all, with an interesting nose out into the lumpy solent – Trip Report by Andy

[CKC Eastney Trip](#)

An exhilarating day out – disappointed to have missed that one – check out the size of those grins! Thanks to Andy's blog for the pic – taken by Richard's mate Peter

Boxing Day Paddle...

Time: 0930 hrs

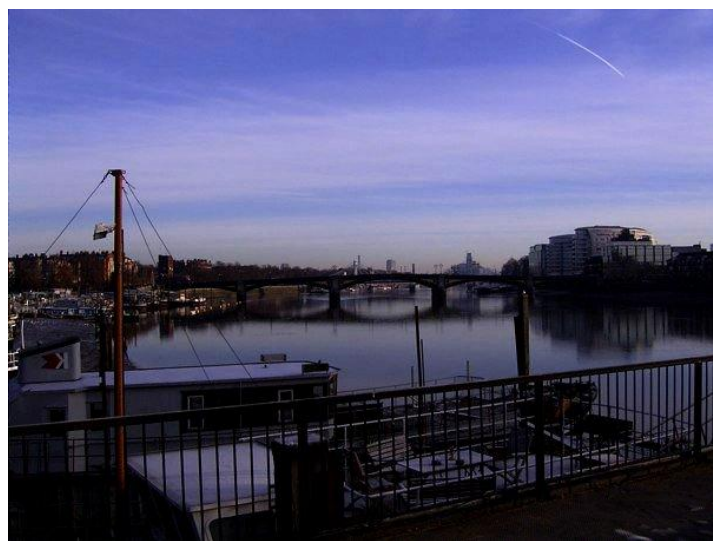
Ambient Temperature: 4°C

Outlook: Fair

No of CKC paddlers on river: 6

Fair play to all those who made it out on Boxing Day Morning – a beautiful day, and a lovely festive paddle lead by Geoff. Ta for the pics, too!

Again, I missed it (Hmm seems to be a bit of a recurring pattern here – anything after October seems to have me suspiciously absent). Note to self: New Year's resolution – must try harder not to be a fair-weather paddler.



IN THE KNOW Thames Paddling

Knowledge of the Navigation guidance is vital for anyone paddling on the Thames. Here's the PLA's - [PLA navigation guidance](#), and Here's for paddling on the Thames above Putney - [Tidal Thames](#)