

Website and Blog Style Guide

Tone

Use positive language in a supportive and inclusive manner.

We want to be welcoming, encourage participation and cooperation of members and encourage new people to join. Try to reflect those aims in your writing.

Show we are safe, active and knowledgeable about sea kayaking.

Overall

Your text is likely to remain on the website for many years, so please consider these points when writing:

- Make your text interesting to a person interested in sea kayaking.
- For blogs, include information about the weather, sea state and tidal information, even if this is very limited.
- For blogs, include information which may be useful for a future club trip to the same location (eg “this location has an easily accessible boat ramp to launch”).
- Communicate your thoughts simply and clearly. Try to keep your sentences shorter, which are easier to follow for the casual reader.
- Write in full sentences with full stops at the end (!).
- Write in paragraphs and try to make each paragraph more than one sentence long.
- It is possible to embed links to other pages or websites, but these generally get broken after a few years. To ease the website maintenance, minimise the number of external links and only use if absolutely necessary.
- For the blog, you may write on any topic for the website as long as it relates to sea kayaking, although historically most of the blog posts relate to trips that CKC has paddled. We also need to show our landlord that we are active in our local area (Thames), so it is important that blogs also cover local trips on the website.
- While humour can be used it is often difficult to judge, so be careful. Do not make ‘in’ jokes or comments that make the club seem like an elite clique.
- Do not swear.

Consistency

The following help keep some consistency in the writing while not restricting your creativity too much:

- Do not mix fonts, font styles (italics), font sizes, font effects and colours. Keep it simple with primarily a single font. The website does not play nicely with a wide variation and mostly it will have to be removed.
- Refer to the club as “CKC” or “the club”.
- Generally it is preferred to use ‘we’ rather than ‘I’ in your text unless it is very specific to you.
- Use gender neutral terms such as ‘they’ rather than he or she, where gender is not important or unknown.
- Only use first names.
- All headings should have each letter capitalised except for pronouns (eg the, a , at). For blogs, include the month and year of the trip in the heading.
- Do not use capitalised words in your text unless it is a proper name (eg Kew).
- Abbreviations: always use the full name/word first followed by the abbreviation, for example: British Canoeing (BC). After the first time, you can use the abbreviation but only on that webpage or blog. You must assume that someone may arrive at any new webpage or blog post as the first landing point and therefore need to have a definition of the abbreviation. To do that always define the abbreviation on the first use.

Photos

- A 50:50 Ratio of Thames to Sea pictures is ideal across the website as a whole.
- Use photos that are interesting and varied.
- Make sure your pictures are in focus and not foggy, and of a reasonable resolution.
- Try to avoid pictures which show the picture taker’s kayak nose in it.
- Try to collect photos from other trip members to provide a variety of viewpoints.
- Photos should be 4:3 aspect ratio for the website to play well with them. Crop them before submitting if they are 16:9 (landscape) or square.