



PRESS RELEASE

PR042

AUGUST 2010

KAYAK ANGLERS LAND ANOTHER CATCH

A fast growing Carmarthenshire sports club that was only set-up last year has hooked a pot of cash to help keep up its rapid development.

The Llanelli-based South Wales Kayak Anglers began life when a small group of keen anglers decided they could make more of their fishing trips off the South Wales coast.

A Community Chest grant of £1,000 from Sport Wales and Carmarthenshire Council was recently awarded to the club to help them keep up with the latest safety necessities.

The club now has around 30 members regularly taking part and competing in the increasingly popular sport.

With the club continuing to add to its numbers, the funding will pay for training so that more members can lead sessions and take part in key safety training for marine radio protocol.

Safety being an extremely important aspect of fishing on open water, training will also promote safe kayak fishing for new members.



Picture: Senior members of the South Wales Kayak Anglers (left to right), Jerry Beer, Paul Jenkins, Edward Gibson and Adam Bailey.

Paul Jenkins, from Felinfoel, is the club secretary. He said:

“The main aim of the club is to promote safe kayak fishing. From the safety angle it’s been a real success. We’ve developed a network of anglers who come together to take part in the sport, and there’s also safety in numbers.

“It’s one of the fastest growing sports in the UK and is very much an extreme sport. Forming the club has also brought us some great support, funding and sponsorship from companies and organisations.”

They hold weekly kayak fishing sessions and monthly safety sessions on sea and inland waters, including the Swiss Valley Reservoir and Millennium Coastal Park.

All their activities are insurance covered through affiliation to Canoe Wales and the Welsh Federation of Sea Angling (WFSA).

To emphasise the success so far, they recently held a national competition at Oxwich Bay on Gower, which attracted over 60 competitors.

“Our competitions are species based and always catch and release” added Paul.

“Our growth has been huge. We gained even more numbers from the event, which proved a big success.

“If the sea conditions don’t suit then we tend to go on fresh water. It’s basically fishing from a plastic kayak.

“The (Community Chest) grant is huge to the survival of the club. The administration costs are covered by the club members, but when you want to train members and encourage more people into the club you need to go that extra step.

“An important thing for us is that new members are going out with trained and experienced people. There are so many aspects to a safe kayak trip.

“One of our biggest supporters has been the RNLI. They’ve actively supported our development. We’ve done briefings with them and they’ve held open days for us, while we’ve done fundraising for them.

“We’re even involved in a conservation project with Swansea Boat Anglers, which is a trigger tagging project to monitor shoal movements and sustainability. The beauty of the kayak is being able to access places other traditional boats can’t.

“There’s a great camaraderie in the club - we’re just likeminded individuals doing what we enjoy. A lot of the members are anglers using the boat as a means of transport, and is why it’s important for us to promote the safety angle.”

Professor Laura McAllister, Chair of Sport Wales, said;

“It’s great that a new club like this has started so well.

“It’s important that we provide a range of different opportunities for people to be active. Whilst Kayak fishing may not necessarily be a high profile activity, through Community Chest we have been able to provide support to the club to grow its membership.”

Carmarthenshire county executive board member for leisure services Cllr Clive Scourfield said:

“For such a large county we have a relatively small coast but the county’s splendid beaches and varied inland waterways play such an important part in our tourist and visitor industry. It is tremendous the Kayak Anglers are having such success and we are delighted to be supporting them.”

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