

## **Bulletin (No 4) Post Cruise**

### **DERWENT RIVER CRUISE**

Paddle Peak would like to thank all participants, helpers and Safety paddlers for making the Cruise such a positive and enjoyable experience, the smiles on so many faces said it in bucket loads.

#### **How we got there?**

It took a long time before we got the green light to promote the event and unfortunately that left us with just under two months to get the word out. We even got to the point where we were two days away from pulling out of organising the cruise because we felt we hadn't enough time to prepare for a quality event.

It was therefore most satisfying to see that despite the delays, we reached entries from almost 70 persons and of course to also receive the final OK from AVBC on the Wednesday before the event.

#### **Help beforehand**

We just need to say a **very big thank you:**

To the Derwent Valley World Heritage Team for their trust and unfailing support right through from the event's inception in August 2025, in our application to AVBC in November and through to the Cruise date.

To Councillor Ben Bellamy at AVBC for his efforts to smooth out the many demands made of us.

To Belper Town Council for promptly and efficiently supporting our requests and needs.

To the Parklife Café, Hayley and staff for being so welcoming.

To Karen and Nigel for help with parking locally.

To Louise for the superb mementos for each participant.

To the volunteer safety team to help oversee the wellbeing of everyone on the water.

And to the volunteer support staff on the bank and around the site during the day helping to make the event run smoothly.

#### **Post Event jottings**

Many thanks to all for being so patient whilst we were getting boats on the water, it went so smoothly you were well ahead of our estimated time allowance, so apologies for the wait.

You can find photographs and timings on the Peak PS website in the events section and there have been a number of postings on facebook.

For the sharp eyed amongst you, you may have noticed a mischievous old 2015 posting that was re-posted on Belper and Proud last week, inferring that participants had been shooting the Horseshoe weir at the event. This of course didn't happen.

#### **Some Questions from the day answered**

##### **Regular Event?**

Quite a few people said how good it would be to make this an annual or regular event.

We'd love to see this happen.

We have talked about how good it would be to run a 'Park Run' style cruise maybe once a month, where people paddle the course, get a time (if they wanted to) and then retire to the café' but just enjoy the experience together.

If there are some people out there that would be keen to help make this happen we'd like to chat with you about the possibilities of helping organise this.

##### **Permissions required?**

Some asked about the permissions etc. involved in paddling on the river.

The Strutts bequeathed this stretch of water to the people of Belper to enjoy in their leisure time and out of this The Belper Boating Association was formed.

We sought clarity from the Strutts as landowners on their thoughts and asked if they had objections to people paddling this stretch in canoes, Kayaks and on SUPs.

They responded confirming there were no objections.

Permissions still need to be obtained for launching from private land but not from public footpaths and common land.

Technically the River Gardens are administered by AVBC so it would be courteous to ask, however many appear to launch without any objections. Once on the river there should be no restrictions to your passage or any challenge to your navigation.

### **Illegality?**

Land owners own the bank and river bed to halfway across, water authorities own the water, fishing clubs have rights to fish, but no one owns the rights to prevent navigation. King John gave the rights to ordinary people to navigate natural water courses when he signed the Magna Carta. These rights of navigation have never been repealed.

Some would still argue that it is illegal to paddle on rivers.

If paddling on rivers was not allowed, it cannot be illegal if you did paddle because trespass is not a criminal offence, trespass is a civil offence and therefore not a police matter and thus it would need a private prosecution to be undertaken for any dispute to be considered.

Aggravated trespass or an aggravated approach from a complainant is however, very much a police matter.

If we treat other water users and landowners with a respect for their peace and tranquillity there should be no reason for any complaint.

We trust the above helps bring some clarity to some of your questions at the event and encourages you to feel more confident about paddling on the river.

In any case we hope to see you on the water again soon.

Best wishes,  
The Paddle Peak Team.