

# PRESS RELEASE

27<sup>th</sup> April 2020, For immediate release



Established Abingdon 1974. A Registered Charity CIO 1170349

## **SPORT ENGLAND GRANT HELPS KEEP LOCAL CANOE CLUB AFLOAT**

In these difficult times Kingfisher Canoe Club is glad to be able to share some very welcome good news.

As you may be aware, planning permission was granted for our new club store/changing facility at Abingdon Lock last year. Over the last few months we have signed a lease for a new site with the Environment Agency and, just recently, have received the excellent news that we have been awarded a National Lottery / Sport England grant of £36,000!

We had already raised a similar amount through a combination of our fund raising activities and grants from local and national organisations. Amongst the local organisations that have supported us financially in raising this amount are Christ's Hospital Abingdon, Oxfordshire County Councillors Allison Rooke, Neil Fawcett and Emily Smith through the OCC Councillor Priority Fund, Abingdon Rotary Club, Abingdon Town Council, Balliol Boys Clubs Association, Abingdon Marathon, Tesco Bags for Life, Waitrose Community Matters as well as many individual donations from well-wishers and people in the community. GO Outdoors Oxford also supported us by allowing the club to hold a bucket collection at their store.

National organisations that have supported us include River Legacy Trust, Thames Water, Persimmon Community Champions, Landfill Communities Trust, Aviva Community Trust and One Stop Carriers for Causes. We must also thank the following companies for providing services to the club free of charge; London-based law firm Hogan Lovells, Oxford construction services company SIAD and John Cromar's Arboricultural Company.

Now, combined with this wonderful grant from Sport England, we now have sufficient funds to be able to fund the project the total cost of which is in the region of £88,000. This will ensure the sustainability of the club and the 45-year tradition of community canoeing and kayaking in Abingdon.

We are immensely grateful to all who have supported us in all ways during the difficult times over the last few years. Times are very difficult for everyone now, but at least we now have the resources to make a contribution to the life of Abingdon when we get through this present crisis.

**ENDS**

## **Notes to editors**

### **The National Lottery**

National Lottery players raise, on average, £30 million each week for projects all over the country. In total £38 billion has been raised for Good Causes since The National Lottery began in 1994 and more than 535,000 individual grants have been made across the UK, the majority (70 per cent) of which are for £10,000 or less, helping small projects make a big difference in their community!

### **Sport England**

Sport England is a public body and invests up to £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport. It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That's why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.

### **Kingfisher Canoe Club**

Based in Abingdon on the banks of the River Thames, Kingfisher Canoe Club and its associated Pathfinders Youth Section is a local club which has existed for over 40 years and introduced hundreds of people to the sports of kayaking and canoeing. The club is unique in the area in that it is principally an adventure club open to anyone, as opposed to racing or competitive clubs, and its membership range from 11 to over 70 years of age. In addition to providing training, coaching and led trips for its members, the club actively engages with the local community, running monthly open "taster" sessions, sessions for local Scout, Cub and other Youth Groups as well as supporting community events such as Abingdon Fun in the Park and undertaking river clean-ups with AbiBinit!.

In 2017, development meant the club had to leave its base of over 20 years and seek a new location. A lease for a new site was agreed with the Environment Agency in February 2020 and the target funds to begin building a new club hut were reached in March 2020 with many donations from local organisations and individuals and a £36,000 grant from Sport England and The National Lottery.

*For additional information please contact our Communications Officer, Simon Knox, via:*  
[comms.kcc@gmail.com](mailto:comms.kcc@gmail.com)

*For queries specific to the new hut project please contact our Site Committee via David Surman:*  
[davidsurman@hotmail.com](mailto:davidsurman@hotmail.com)