



## **Memorandum of Understanding**

### **English Nature and the British Canoe Union (Canoe England)**

#### **Introduction**

This Memorandum of Understanding seeks to establish and promote a framework for co-operation between English Nature and the British Canoe Union at all levels. This is based on a common understanding that canoeing relies on, and requires the use of rivers and other open waters that may be of importance for wildlife and nature conservation. It has been drawn up following meetings between the two bodies.

#### **British Canoe Union**

The BCU is the governing body for the sport and recreation of canoeing. It is a company limited by guarantee, and works to meet the needs of canoeing from foundation and participation through to performance and excellence. BCU policy and guidance is committed to promoting canoeing in ways compatible with conservation and the practical enjoyment of the aquatic environment. The fundamental need for canoeists to avoid environmental damage and disturbance to wildlife is stressed in the “Code of Conduct”.

#### **English Nature**

English Nature is the Government agency that champions the conservation of wildlife and geology throughout England. In the water environment, it aims to maintain and restore the characteristic biological diversity and natural features of lakes, rivers, estuaries and other wetlands. Some 400 lakes and reservoirs and 60 rivers and canals have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are subject to a regulatory regime under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

#### **Canoeing, wildlife and the water environment**

Enjoying the fauna and flora in the water environment is a key part of the canoeing experience. English Nature and the BCU agree that there is unlikely to be any significant impact on or lasting disturbance to wildlife and the water environment from the passage of canoes. English Nature recognises that the BCU’s Environmental Panel promotes due regard for possible impacts. The BCU will continue to actively promote environmental awareness to the canoeing community.

There may be more organised or intensive canoeing activities that will require consultation with English Nature, where an SSSI could be affected. English Nature's area offices should be the first point of contact: addresses are on the website [www.english-nature.org.uk](http://www.english-nature.org.uk) or in local telephone directories.

## **Liaison**

Contacts will be maintained at national level between English Nature and BCU. Meetings will be held as required to exchange views and information and to deal with matters that cannot be resolved satisfactorily at local level.

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