

Paddlesport for Disabled People in Scotland

This fact sheet provides an overview of paddlesport in Scotland for those with a disability. It also provides useful contact details for your local club or Approved Paddlesport Provider – the best places to get started.

PADDLE
SCOTLAND

Paddlesport – Something for Everyone

Paddlesport is a diverse and welcoming sport with something for everyone - whether you prefer canoeing, kayaking or stand up paddleboarding (SUP), wild rivers or tranquil lochs and canals. Paddlesport is also a highly competitive sport with Great Britain a leading nation in multiple disciplines including Paracanoe.



Paddlesport allows family and friends to get some exercise and is therapeutic for both mind and body. More importantly, it is pleasurable and fun!

To promote and develop opportunities for people with a disability to go paddling, we use the concept and term Paddle-Ability. Paddle-Ability focuses on the individual's ability rather than any disability.

What is Paracanoe?

Paracanoe is the only Paralympic discipline within paddlesport. It is a flat water race over 200m and is open to anyone with an upper or lower limb impairment or spinal injury.

Paracanoe can be summarised in 3 words: Speed, Power, Skill. It is a fast race with tight margins up to a hundredth of a second and very exciting to be a part of. Great Britain has dominated Paracanoe worldwide for several years running, with Scotland's Hope Gordon being crowned World Champion in 2023.

How do I get started?

If this sounds like something you might like to try, you can start your Paracanoe journey by filling out this form: bit.ly/scot-paracanoe

Once you complete the form one of the Paddle Scotland team will be in touch and we will look to schedule a bespoke paracanoe taster session for you. If you enjoy the taster session and would like to keep taking part in paracanoe, we will connect you with a local canoe club and support you through a sample training block. This will show you what it is like to be a paracanoe athlete and give you a realistic expectation of what it might take to make it to the Paraplympics as a Paracanoe athlete. Following the training block, if it is still something you wish to pursue we will be right there to continue supporting you in your club.

All across the country there are canoe clubs and paddlesport providers who specialise in getting people on the water. Paddle Scotland supports the clubs and providers, working hard to ensure that everyone has the opportunity, support and adapted equipment to paddle.

To find your local club or provider you can search on Paddle Scotland's website or contact hello@paddlescotland.org.uk.

Events:

Paddle Scotland is proud to support many SDS events including Wheels to Water and regional Parasport Festivals. If you see us at an event please come and say hello! We usually come with representatives from local canoe clubs and paddling providers who you can speak to directly about getting on the water following the events.



Key Contacts

Paracanoe Pathway Officer:
Maddy Jennings
maddy.jennings@paddlescotland.org.uk

Paddle Scotland Development Manager:
Roger Holmes
roger.holmes@paddlescotland.org.uk

Paddle Scotland Main Office:
hello@paddlescotland.org.uk

Key Websites

Paddle Scotland
www.paddlescotland.org.uk

IPC
www.paralympic.org

British Paralympic Association
www.paralympics.org.uk



PADDLE TO THE PARALYMPICS

In 3 Steps



Scottish Paracanoe



1. Start Your Journey

Sign up to explore Paracanoe



2. Get on the Water

We will help you join a suitable club near you and support you in getting comfortable on the water



3. Paddle Towards Performance

Embark on a transformative journey into performance sport by training closely with your club and Paddle Scotland, unlocking opportunities only sport can give you along the way

Eligibility

- SPINAL INJURIES
- LOWER LIMB IMPAIRMENTS

NEW CLASSIFICATION

UPPER LIMB IMPAIRMENTS

STARTING INTERNATIONALLY FROM 2028. JOIN NOW TO BE AHEAD OF THE GAME!

