

# Adaptive Surfing in Scotland

## What is surfing?

Surfing is the sport of riding waves in an upright, kneeling or prone position. Surfers catch the ocean or man-made waves and glide across the surface of the water until they break and lose their energy. In the ocean, surfers ride the waves toward the shore. The origins of surfing can be traced back to the ancient Polynesian culture, specifically in the islands of Hawaii.

## What is adaptive surfing?

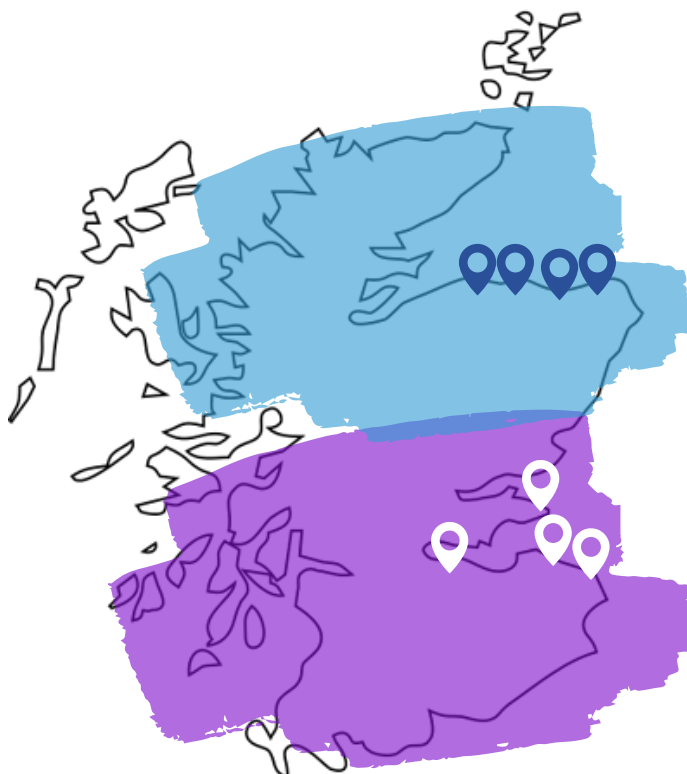
The term 'adaptive surfing' refers to those with additional needs or challenges, such as those with a disability, that require extra assistance, specialised equipment or an adapted surfing experience to match their abilities.

## Surfing in Scotland

The Scottish Surfing Federation (SSF) is the governing body for surfing in Scotland. The SSF are a member of the International Surf Association (ISA), who is the world governing authority for surfing. Despite the cold, Scotland has some excellent surf spots and a burgeoning surf community. 2024 saw the launch of the Lost Shore Surf Resort, a £56 million pound in-land surf resort in Ratho, Edinburgh.

## Adaptive surfing in Scotland

There are two charities that deliver adaptive surf sessions in Scotland. SurfABLE Scotland (part of the charity Friendly Access - charity number SC045029) and Inclusive Surfing Scotland (charity number SC052597).



- Lossiemouth Beach
- Hopeman Beach
- Cullen Beach
- Sandend Beach



**Inclusive  
Surfing  
Scotland**

- Belhaven Bay (East Lothian)
- Pease Bay (the Borders)
- St Andrews West Sands (Fife)
- Lost Shore Surf Resort (Edinburgh)

## SurfABLE Scotland



Founded in 2017, SurfABLE Scotland is the country's first adaptive surf school. Run by Glyn Morris and Kev Anderson, the charity offers a wide range of adaptive sessions up and down the Moray Firth with sessions catered to meet the needs of each surfer. SurfABLE deliver 1-1, seated tandem and small group sessions supported by an amazing group of volunteers. The team also deliver adaptive swimming sessions as SwimABLE Scotland.

## Inclusive Surfing Scotland



The charity was founded in 2023 to bring adaptive surfing to Scotland's central belt, including surfers from Edinburgh, Perth, Glasgow and Dundee. Inclusive Surfing Scotland cater to athletes with a wide range of disabilities and work with both children (8+) and adults. Surf sessions are delivered with the support of in-water volunteers and surfers can use a wide range of adaptive surf equipment including adaptive wetsuits, beach wheelchairs and prone surfboards.

## The Wave Project



The Wave Project is a surf therapy charity that supports children and young people who have experienced trauma, anxiety or social isolation. Surfers can be referred for six weeks of surf therapy with The Wave Project by headteachers, doctors and social workers. The Wave Project deliver sessions from Dunbar and St Andrews and any person with a disability is always welcome to be referred to their surf therapy courses. For more information visit their [website](#).

## Competitive para surfing

Scotland has had para-athletes compete in a range of surfing competitions across the world including the English Para Open, the Welsh Para Open and the [ISA Para Surfing World Championship](#) in California. There are [9 categories](#) for competitive para surfing set out by the ISA, 7 physical categories and 2 visual categories and athletes compete within their categories. There is also the [Para Surf League](#), which holds adaptive surf events across the world.



Surfer Karen Darke at the 2023 ISA Para World Championship surfing in the Prone 2 category

## Competitive para surfing in Scotland

The para surf coordinator for the SSF is Caorann Fosbrooke. The Para Surf Committee run taster sessions for people interested in trying surfing, coaching for experienced surfers and host an annual competition for Scottish athletes. For more information on these please contact [info@thessf.scot](mailto:info@thessf.scot) or via SurfABLE Scotland or Inclusive Surfing Scotland.