

Canoe Association of Northern Ireland



May 2013

STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 – 2017



THE CANOE ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND (CANI) IS THE GOVERNING BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MANAGEMENT, CO-ORDINATION, DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF CANOEING IN NORTHERN IRELAND. IT REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF ITS MEMBERS TO GOVERNMENT, THE PUBLIC, AND THROUGH THE BRITISH CANOE UNION TO THE INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Canoe Association of Northern Ireland (CANI) was formed in 1964 and is the governing body for canoeing in Northern Ireland. CANI is the Northern Ireland division of the British Canoe Union (BCU). The BCU is the governing body for the UK. CANI, through the BCU is affiliated to the International Canoe Federation.

CANI is currently run by a Voluntary Council of 10 who are elected at the AGM each year. To assist Council with developments, there are a number of specialist sub-committees. The Coaching Panel takes responsibility for the implementation of the BCU Coaching Scheme. The Racing, Surf, Polo and Slalom committees take responsibility for the Competition and Squad developments. All members of committees and sub committees are volunteers.

CANI currently employs four staff and hopes this will increase during this period. CANI has in excess of 500 individual members of whom approx. 400 are coaches. There are also 250 affiliated members; these are paddlers who are members of affiliated clubs. Currently there are 22 clubs who are registered with and affiliated to CANI.

1.1 Current profile of canoeing within N.I

Participation

Canoeing within Northern Ireland has two main access routes; within the outdoor education / outdoor experience sector or through a canoe club. Canoeing within Northern Ireland is largely a recreational focussed sport and the demographics of the participants reflect this. Over the past years canoeing has become more accessible for long term participation as the clubs have developed and now have the ability to welcome new members.

Competition

Competitive canoeing has evolved over the past 4 – 6 years due to the work of the N.I Surf Kayak Club in the development of athletes who have achieved British, European and World titles. In order to meet this growing need, CANI has recently established a junior development pathway and development squad for slalom and sprint kayaking and hopes that the athletes within this system may be future Olympians.



Coaching

Over the past 4 years CANI has been phasing in a new UKCC coaching scheme which focuses on improving the standard of coaching within the UK. The new coaching scheme is both recreational and competitive and provides coaches with many opportunities for development.

1.2 Strategic relevance of the development plan

CANI is a division of the British Canoe Union (BCU) which is the umbrella organisation of the Canoe Association of N.I, Canoe Wales, Scottish Canoe Association and Canoe England.



1.2.1 BCU Strategy

MISSION STATEMENT: “to help and inspire people to go canoeing”

A people focused organisation that supports and provides opportunities for everyone to enjoy and realise their potential within all aspects of canoeing.

VISION 2020: to be the first choice water sport for all

“Do it – or know who does” - over 300,000 households “go canoeing”

The number 1 Olympic and Paralympic canoeing nation



As a division of BCU, CANI contributes towards its strategic objectives

- Increase regular participation – based on a people focused approach to develop and support all areas of the sport to meet the needs of current, new and potential paddlers. To better understand the needs of all our customers and to adapt our services; leading to increased regular participation, enjoyment and performance.
- Internationally successful – we aim to develop clear talent pathways, supported by structures and expertise, that lead to world records for adventure/extreme endeavour and to be the number one nation that consistently wins medals at significant international competitions.
- More and better places to paddle – we will improve the information available on how and where people can paddle and work to increase overall access to water, alongside improving the facilities locally and nationally to reflect the needs of our sport for 2020.
- Raise our profile – we will work to inform and publicise the full range of canoeing activities leading to greater recognition and media profile, attracting sponsorship, funding, international events, access and new participants.
- Strong governance and leadership with quality operations – we strive to be an exemplar governing body that is vibrant, innovative, and financially sustainable and that seeks continuously to improve. All our staff, coaches, leaders and volunteers are trained, supported, informed and backed up by efficient systems / procedures.



1.2.2 Sport NI strategy

CANI is core funded by Sport NI and contributes towards its objectives which are detailed in Sport NI Sport Matters – NI Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009 – 2019

Sport NI works in partnership with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) to deliver on Sport Matters: The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation, 2009-2019.



This Strategy sets out a new shared sporting vision of 'a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport', as well as the key strategic priorities for sport and physical recreation, and informs the direction of future investment – underpinning three areas: participation, performance and places.

It sets out the case for on-going and increased investment in sport and physical recreation to deliver a range of sporting outcomes and support the wider social agenda in areas such as education, health, the economy and the development of communities over the period 2009-2019.

It explains how sport in Northern Ireland will be developed over the next ten years and affirms Government commitment to put in place effective structures and mechanisms in support of a vision.



2 OVERALL VISION AND STRATEGY

CANI shares the BCU's mission statement:

"To help and inspire people to go canoeing"

CANI supports and provides opportunities for everyone to enjoy and realise their potential within all aspects of canoeing with N.I.



2.1 CANI's VISION for 2013 - 17

To develop a system and culture to enable long term participation opportunities, access to quality coaching and a performance pathway that will enable athletes to succeed at the highest level.

2.2 CANI's Objectives for 2013 - 2017;

- **CANI aims to become financially sustainable and will work with key organisations to meet joint goals.**
- **CANI has successfully focused on participation in the past but within this period the focus will largely be towards performance by developing a solid base of athletes and by supporting athletes to achieve international success.**
- **The coaching workforce is key at all stages of the pathway and CANI will continue to support developments to ensure new paddlers and those within the system receive quality coaching.**
- **CANI will support its clubs to develop their ability to introduce beginners and support their members in their progression either as a paddler, competitor or coach.**

2.3 2013 – 2017 Development areas;

During 2013 – 2017 CANI will focus on five key development areas



2.4 Alignment of the canoeing strategy

This strategy aligns closely with the following documents which form the basis of the key partnership approach towards CANI's development over this period. CANI work closely with Sport NI, Canoeing Ireland and the British Canoe Union and its other home nations.

- Sport N.I Sport Matters Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009 – 2019
- Canoeing Ireland development plan 2013 – 2017
- BCU development plan 2013 – 2017

3 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT

The following areas are crucial to CANI's growth as a robust governing body. During this period CANI will focus on broad developments which underpin and support governance, talent, high performance, coach and club developments.

The targets for the 2013 – 2017 are to develop a system that will provide strategic direction and growth by focusing on the following key areas.

- Membership
- Marketing and promotion
- Volunteer development
- Recognition scheme
- Events
- Facility and access development



3.1 Membership

CANI will provide a professional member service and aim to increase its membership base through promotion, increased benefits and affordable pricing. Our Membership database will be enhanced to improve its efficiency.

3.2 Marketing and profile raising

CANI will develop a new marketing strategy as well as, rebuild the website to improve communication and support for members and produce an electronic newsletter. It will maximise the use of social media to promote canoeing within N.I. and aims to increase commercial income through new partnerships.

3.3 Volunteer development

A volunteer recognition scheme will be put in place and guidance provided for clubs on how to support their volunteers.

3.4 Approval and accreditation schemes

The BCU Centre approval scheme will be re-launched, along with a tailored version for providers who have achieved Adventure Mark. All clubs with junior sections will be asked to complete the CANI Clubmark NI scheme. All CANI coach educators will receive a quality assurance visit and support will be provided if required.

3.5 Events

- CANI will deliver the World Police and Fire Games Sprint and Surf Kayak events in 2013.
- CANI aims to host a major kayak marathon race and a major freestyle kayak event by 2017
- To support coaching CANI will organise a regular coaching conference.
- Inter club activities and club coach / leader development will be promoted through Paddlefest and an annual club festival. Clubs will also be encouraged to organise major events which attract national and international delegates.

3.6 Facility and access development

A key target will be to develop sites for slalom and sprint kayaking across N.I. and work towards achieving a pumped whitewater course. CANI will develop and maintain access arrangements where required to ensure that canoe trails and waterways are accessible to all and, where possible, waterside facilities are made available.



4 GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

During 2012 CANI carried out a governance review which highlighted areas for improvement. A similar process will be conducted in 2013 and this will inform further areas for development.

The biggest challenge for CANI in the 2013-2017 period is to progress from a predominantly recreational culture to one which is linked more closely to performance.

The targets for 2013 – 2017 are to develop a more effective business, focus on the growth of canoeing with particular emphasis on performance disciplines and develop key partnerships. The areas of focus are

- Legal status and compliance
- Leadership and structure
- Control environment
- Organisational Management
- Performance Management
- Internal and external relationships



4.1 Legal status and compliance

- CANI will review its constitution to reflect changes in the organisation's infra-structure
- Financial management systems will be reviewed and strengthened where necessary.

- We will provide guidance on BCU insurance, current Health and Safety requirements and Safeguarding and Vetting matters to all its committees, clubs and coaches.
- Human resource management procedures will be reviewed, implemented or updated where necessary

4.2 Leadership and structure

- The role of CANI's committees will be appraised and terms of reference reviewed and updated to meet current needs.
- A committee induction system will be introduced, along with a succession planning policy, with the aim of recruiting one external member for each committee.
- Progress against targets and overall effectiveness will be monitored.

4.3 Control environment

- Strategic decision making will continue to be made by CANI council and outcomes monitored.
- Delegated authority procedures will be kept under review and circulated to all staff. A risk register will be maintained and reviewed and all expenditure will be made in line with CANI's financial policies.

4.4 Organisational Management

- CANI Development Strategy will be reviewed annually taking into account new developments and the wider economic and political climate. We aim to have representation on all key BCU committees and attendance at relevant Canoeing Ireland performance committees. CPD should be available for CANI staff and key office bearers.
- Information management will be updated.

4.5 Management of the performance system

- Athlete and squad performance targets will be monitored and clear links between participation, coaching and performance developed. There will be a selection and de-selection process for talent and high performance athletes. Athletes, parents and coaches will be made aware of the policies and procedures that affect them.
- CANI will promote Anti-doping to all performance athletes, parents and coaches.

4.6 Internal and external relationships

A strategy will be developed to ensure clear communications between CANI, its members, the BCU and other canoeing home nations. CANI will consult with relevant external organisations when developing programmes and plans. Key partnerships will be formalised with contracts and memorandums of understanding. Information sharing and Public Relations capabilities will be expanded.



5 TALENT IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

CANI will focus on developing a performance system which enables the growth and development of international and world class athletes. With the establishment of competition squads, it is already encouraging young paddlers to consider competitive paddling as well as recreational. Those currently within the system are making good progress. Priority will be given to building a large base of performance activity in clubs and schools.

The targets for 2013 – 2017 are to develop a talent identification and development system that will provide opportunities for athletes and coaches to develop along a clear pathway and ensure that support structures are in place by focusing on the following key areas.

- Talent pathway
- Talent profiling
- Talent development and environment
- Talent tracking



5.1 Talent pathway

CANI will direct human and financial resources to developing a vision and strategy for talent development aimed at progressing athletes from grass roots to representation at the highest level. Key performance indicators will be in place to monitor success. As part of this process, CANI will also target talent from outside canoeing.

5.2 Talent Profiling

- A talent profiling system will be established and implemented for all disciplines.
- An analysis will be carried out to identify soft medal opportunities within the Irish and GB teams.
- Talent profilers will be established to add depth to the talent base.

5.3 Talent development and environment

- A talent assessment process and confirmation programme will be developed. CANI will continue to run development squads and encourage committees to develop inclusive competition programmes.
- An athlete exit strategy will be implemented across all disciplines.

5.4 Talent tracking

- A system will be established to monitor athletes' training hours, biological maturity and progression. The system will support the successful conversion of athletes from junior to senior representation.
- CANI will set realistic benchmarks that will give indicators for the success of junior athletes when they reach senior levels.



6 HIGH PERFORMANCE

High performance development will be a focus for CANI during 2013 – 2017. CANI already supports a number of high performance athletes and aims to develop more athletes in this period. CANI high performance support will be developed in partnership with Canoeing Ireland and the British Canoe Union.

There will be close links established between talent development and high performance to encourage a smooth transition of athletes and coaches.

The targets for 2013 – 2017 will be to develop a system that supports high performance athletes to achieve their goals by focusing on the following key areas;

- The high performance system
- High performance coaching
- Services for performance enhancement



6.1 The high performance system

- CANI will develop and maintain records of all previous and current athletes and share information internally. Key Performance Indicators will be recorded in partnership with the Sports Institute NI to monitor athlete progress.
- Systems will be implemented that will monitor the effectiveness of the high performance system against targets that will be regularly reviewed.
- The athlete pathway and KPIs, along with athlete profiles, will be published on the CANI website.
- High performance coaches will be offered support for their on-going professional development.
- Targeted athletes will be offered assistance with an exit strategy.
- CANI will adopt the selection appeals process of the country the athlete represents and will provide assistance if required.
- CANI will ensure its performance committee works closely with Canoeing Ireland and British Canoe Union performance teams.
- CANI will work with Sports Institute NI to conduct reviews of athletes' performance twice a year to ensure they are fully supported.

6.2 High performance coaching

- CANI will recommend that targeted athletes identify and secure the services of their own high performance coach. CANI will aim to provide financial support via Sport N.I for this.
- Athletes will be required to submit an annual coaching plan and training programme to CANI which will link with the athlete's targets. The athlete's coach will also be encouraged to share best practice and learning with other performance coaches.

6.3 Services for performance enhancement

- CANI, in conjunction with the athletes and the Sports Institute N.I, will review previous services and performance gaps and arrange for services to target the needs identified.
- There will be regular assessments of the impact of services provided and athletes will be asked to submit annual plans. Athletes and coaches will be encouraged to share key findings to assist with development of other athletes. Through the Sports Institute CANI will support targeted athletes to return to fitness from injury.



7 COACHING

This section will align with the BCU coaching vision which is to create a cohesive, ethical, inclusive and valued coaching system where skilled coaches support young people and adults at all stages of their development in canoeing. The mission of BCU coaching is to support coaches and paddlers to improve their performance and achieve personal success.

CANI coaching will continue to support the recreational workforce but will primarily focus on the development of performance coaching.

The targets for 2013 – 2017 will be to develop a coaching system that will improve the quality and quantity of coaching within N.I across all disciplines of the sport in these key areas.

- Coaching development planning
- Identification and recruitment
- The education system
- Management and support
- Targeted development of performance coaches



7.1 Coaching development planning

- The coaching pathway will be clearly communicated to all members and will be fully aligned to the needs of the paddler and the coach.
- Coaching objectives will be reviewed and gaps analysed to prioritise resources. CANI committees and members will be able to provide input through CANI coaching, club and performance committees who will make recommendations to CANI council when key coaching decisions are being made.
- Human resources will be directed towards coaching developments to ensure the system develops effectively. CANI is represented on all key British Canoe Union committees.
- A coaching plan will be in place and align to the BCU coaching development plan 2013 – 2017.

7.2 Identification and recruitment

- CANI will maintain a coaching database and where appropriate share information with the British Canoe Union, carry out a workforce analysis on the active qualified workforce and put in place a system to recruit talent development and high performance coaches

7.3 The education system

- A needs based analysis of the coach education programme will be carried out and adjusted accordingly. A coach education programme will be in place and all components made available for the following:

- Coach educators
- Internal verifiers
- Quality assurance officers
- Targeted mentors

- Continuous Professional Development opportunities will be made available, primarily for talent and performance coaches, but also taking into account the needs of recreational coaches.

7.4 Management and support

- CANI will seek to improve communications with its workforce and develop further member benefits specific to coaches.
- CANI will work with the BCU to explore a coach licensing scheme.
- CANI will endeavour to deploy only qualified or suitably experienced coaches within its programmes and will encourage a culture of on-going learning and development across the workforce.
- Robust recruitment and selection procedures for talent and high performance coaches will be in place along with job roles and descriptions.



- Management and reporting procedures will be embedded and all coaches deployed by CANI will receive regular appraisals.

7.5 Targeted development of performance coaches

- CANI will seek the best coaches and adhere to recommended standards for deployment. Regular training, performance appraisals and CPD will be implemented. A talent pathway for development and performance coaches will be established which will include informal and formal programmes.

- A performance coach forum will be developed to encourage the sharing of knowledge and programme ideas between development and performance coaches.

- An apprenticeship scheme will be launched to support recreational coaches or retired athletes to become development or performance coaches.



8 CLUB AND GRASS ROOTS

Over the past four years CANI has invested significant resources in the development of the club structure within N.I and as a result the majority of CANI clubs are in a much better position to support the development of canoeing.

For the next four years CANI will be focusing on performance canoeing at grass roots level and helping those clubs interested in making this transition.

The targets for 2013 – 2017 will be to develop a club system that will enable all clubs to strengthen and grow, to ensure that opportunities to canoe are greater and that a wide range of canoeing is offered at club level. This will be achieved by focusing on the following key areas.

- Club development planning
- Club communications and affiliation
- Knowledge and understanding
- Club support and guidance
- Club education and development system
- Club accreditation system
- Grass roots development



8.1 Club development planning

An analysis will be carried out to establish needs and priorities.

CANI will encourage clubs to develop efficient and effective governance structures. As part of this development CANI will continue to support the clubs' committees to ensure that development reflects their needs.

CANI will continue to direct physical and financial resources towards club development to ensure that grass root opportunities continue to grow.

8.2 Club communication and affiliation

We will develop the club database and communication systems to improve information recording and sharing. CANI will continue to support clubs in their development, run club membership and affiliation schemes.

Clubs and performance disciplines will be closely linked to ensure a smooth transition from recreation to performance.

8.3 Knowledge and understanding of clubs and their position

CANI will gather comprehensive knowledge of affiliated clubs through regular contact, analysis and data collection.

8.4 Development support and guidance for clubs

Guidance will be provided to CANI affiliated clubs in these areas:

- Participant / paddler development
- Club partnership initiatives and community links
- Club coaches, officials and leader development
- Volunteer management and development
- Club governance and structure development
- Club finance, funding and business models
- Club facility and equipment management systems
- Safeguarding and vetting
- Inclusive paddling



- Club development planning
- New club start up

8.5 Club supporting education and development system

CANI will actively promote continued development of the leadership and coaching awards and CPD for coaches and non-coaching officials.

8.6 Club development and accreditation scheme (Clubmark NI)

CANI will continue to promote and implement the Clubmark NI scheme, provide support and resources to clubs and assessors and manage the assessment process.

8.7 Grass roots development

CANI will develop regional schools programmes, link with outdoor activity providers and ensure that inclusive paddling opportunities are promoted.







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