A young person is kayaking down a river. They are wearing a black helmet with 'JOBE' on it, a white and yellow jacket, and a white bib with 'chorus' and the number '106'. The kayak is blue and green. The background is a lush green forest with some autumn-colored leaves. The water is dark and there are some whitecaps.

Canoeing
Ireland

2020 Vision for Canoeing

Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Draft for Consultation

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*"It is not enough to aim,
you must hit."*

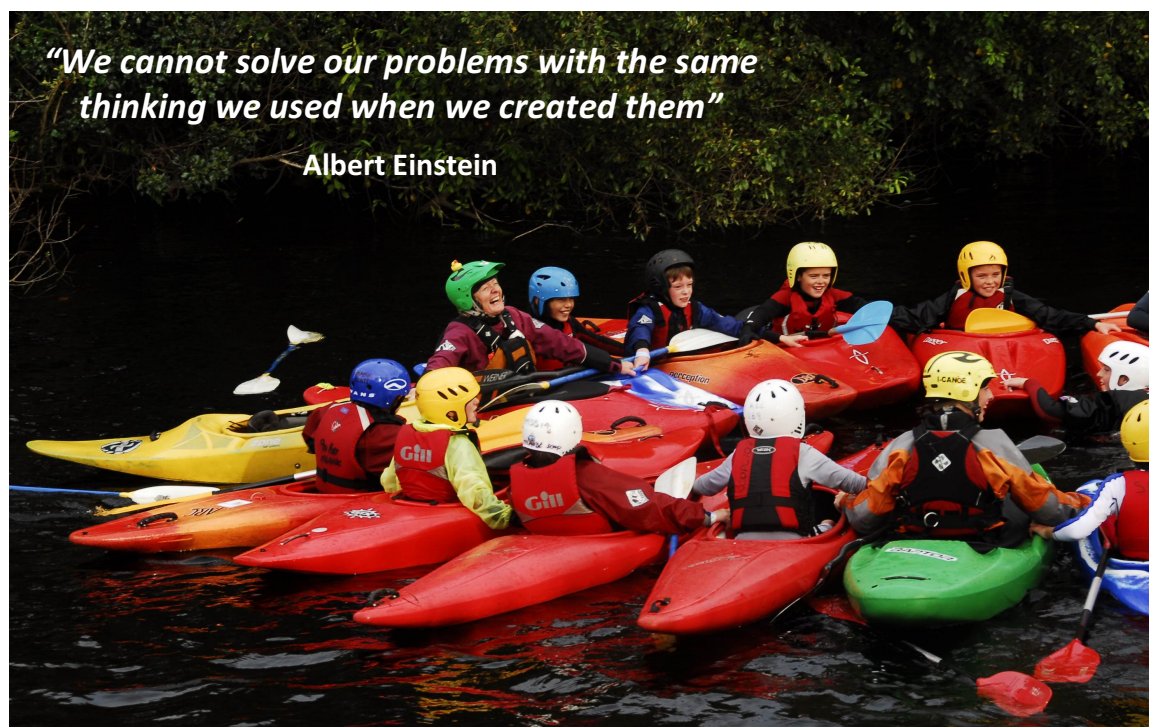
Italian Proverb



2 Situational Analysis

Canoeing Ireland has a membership of approximately 3,000 out of an estimated 5,000 active paddlers in Ireland today. More than 70 clubs register with Canoeing Ireland annually which represent approximately 70% of the membership, the remaining 30% being made up of individual members. The highest concentration of members is in Leinster where 60% of the membership is registered. The Canoeing Ireland membership is on average 75% adult and 25% junior with a 70% male and 30% female division. Almost 15% of the members hold a Canoeing Ireland qualification, a coach or instructor award.

Outside of the existing Canoeing Ireland membership structure there are approximately 150 activity providers who deliver Canoeing and Kayaking activities professionally. These activity providers include the 12 state-run Outdoor Education Centres, a small number of large private Adventure Centres and numerous smaller businesses. These providers nationally introduce approximately 100,000 to canoeing annually, primarily through school and junior activity programmes. 80% of provider participation is junior and 51% of the participants are female.



3 Strategic Planning Process

Canoeing Ireland's previous strategic plan was *"Start, Stay, Succeed"*. In recent years, Canoeing Ireland has carried out two online membership surveys, nine strategic stakeholder workshops with professional facilitators and a final consultation on the final draft strategy with the membership. The accumulation of this consultation and planning process is found in Canoeing Ireland's new strategic plan; *"2020 Vision for Canoeing"* for the period 2017-2020.



***"You don't need eyes to see
You need vision"***

Maxwell Fraser, Faithless

4 Vision, Mission, Values, Themes, Goals and Objectives

4.1 Vision

To inspire and enable participation and performance in canoe sport in partnership with a thriving network of members, clubs, social, community and educational organisations and to continually enhance our international success.

4.2 Mission

Canoeing Ireland develops, promotes and governs recreational and competitive canoeing in Ireland for all, through a network of members and partners with whom it delivers high-performance and participation training programmes and activities.

4.3 Core Values

Teamwork: To provide leadership to the diverse groups within our sporting community, working towards common goals

Transparency: To be open in all things we do in accordance with high ethical values

Excellence: To pursue excellence in all our activities

Respect: To demonstrate mutual respect and honesty in all things we do

Commitment: To show commitment and dedication to improvement and growth

Inspiration: To act with enthusiasm, passion and pride

4.4 Strategic Themes and Goals

Participation and Inclusion: Increase participation and retention in canoeing through an expansion in the network of canoe clubs across the country and by improving diversity of participation, particularly of women, juniors and people with disabilities

Member, Club and Discipline Services: Improve and promote Canoeing Ireland's membership structure, services and benefits and provide training, support and recognition for volunteer club and discipline officers

Education and Training: Enhance and expand the scope and reach of our awards and qualification scheme and expand the number and quality of programmes delivered across all disciplines of canoeing

Facilities: Promoting the sustainable development of Ireland's waterways and work with strategic partners to develop existing and new participation, competition and training venues up to international standard in each discipline

Performance and Events: Improve the quality and increase the number of domestic competitive events, establish structured Talent Pathways and improve the preparation, management and performance of international teams in each canoeing discipline.

Governance, Leadership, Management and Communications: Develop a strong and vibrant organisation which members are proud to join and support through transparent, accountable and policy-driven leadership, management and communications

Financial Sustainability: Strengthen our operational efficiency and financial base to improve the financial independence and sustainability of the organisation

***“An obstacle is often
a stepping stone”***

Prescott



5 Strategic Themes, Goals, Objectives, Actions and Outcomes


5.1 Participation and Inclusion

In the past couple of decades, we have experienced a shift from the traditional “bricks and mortar” club structure through the emergence of “roof-rack” clubs consisting of groups of young adults who do not have a fixed base but generally consist of car-based groups who are highly mobile. While there is undoubtedly a place for this model, it is highly transport-dependent which can be a barrier for youth involvement. It militates against local facilities being developed and available to introduce junior paddlers into the sport in a locality other than through school, scouting or youth service routes and on progression from that level, retention within the sport can be a problem.

An expanded network of fixed-based clubs throughout the country is key to the future strength and sustainable development of our sport. We must broaden and strengthen the existing network to provide the basis to achieve sustainable growth and build a true sport-for-all. Our current gender and age breakdown points to the need to support greater participation of women and of youth paddlers who represent our future. We also need to be more accessible and attractive to under-represented sectors of society in our sport, particularly those from areas of disadvantage and people with disabilities and to showcase our exciting sport in all its varied disciplines.

THEME 1: PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION			
GOAL: Increase participation and retention in canoeing through an expansion in the network of canoe clubs across the country, by improving diversity of participation, particularly of women, juniors and people with disabilities			
Objective		Actions	Outcomes
1	Promote the development of new clubs	1 Identify strategic areas for new club development such as in Blueway catchments and work to develop interest with local partners such as LSP's and Waterways Ireland	Expanded network of canoe clubs nationwide
		2 Provide subsidised instructor / coach training and certification for developing clubs	
2	Develop existing and build new youth participation programmes	1 Promote and build on the Scouting Ireland <i>Get your Group Paddling</i> Programme	Increased participation and retention in targeted youth groups and transition to established clubs
		2 Initiate structured liaison and between Canoeing Ireland and Scouting Ireland	
		3 Develop and promote an accessible and affordable <i>Schools Paddling programme</i> to be delivered nationally.	
		4 Establish liaison with School Sports Forums to promote and encourage school paddling and club linkages	
		5 Develop accessible Instructor training courses for PE teachers.	
		6 Expand the Junior Kayak Academy programme	

3	Develop existing and build new disadvantaged-community participation programmes.	1	Continue and expand work with Youth Services nationally to promote canoeing in the activities of the sector	Improved accessibility of canoeing to all in society
		2	Expand on the Instructor Training Initiative with Youth Services in disadvantaged communities.	
4	Develop existing and build new women's participation programmes.	1	Organise an annual Women in Canoeing forum to promote the social value of greater female participation in the sport and recognise and promote female role models and icons throughout all disciplines	Improved participation and retention of females in the sport
		2	Work with all disciplines to promote greater female participation in events and competitions	
		3	Promote and encourage female leadership through the instructor, coaching and tutor programme.	
5	Develop existing and build new disability inclusion programmes.	1	Provide staff and volunteer training in disability inclusion.	Improved accessibility of canoeing to all in society
		2	Build relationships with disability organisations such as Irish Wheel Chair Association, Irish Blind Sports, Special Olympics to encourage participation in canoeing at the Canoeing Ireland Training Centre and in collaboration with clubs and providers.	
		3	Build relationships and work with Local Sports Partnership, Sports Inclusion and Disability Officers nationally.	
6	Support strategic multi-paddlesport events	1	Support the further development of the acclaimed Junior Paddlefest event as an important incubator for interest in junior paddling across all disciplines	High profile, excellent "ambassador" events which profile a wide range of disciplines in a very attractive light
		2	Support established regional, multi-paddlesport events such as Cranafest as important opportunities for networking and cross-discipline participation	



*“One mended fault is always better than two
found faults”*

Benjamin Franklin


5.2 Member, Club and Discipline Services

Our membership is our reason for existence as an organisation. An excellent level of service and support from the Board, technical committees and staff, which is responsive to their needs and provides them with the resources they need to be fully engaged and develop, is what is expected by our members and is our duty to provide. Events at corporate level in recent years have at times diverted Board attention away from the core work of strategic development and service to our members and has undoubtedly resulted in a gap in confidence developing. This gap must be bridged and confidence regained if we are to achieve our potential.

Our sport is driven largely by volunteers who operate at local and national level and we must acknowledge the huge contribution they make to our success and provide the support they need to thrive.

THEME 2: MEMBER, CLUB AND DISCIPLINE SERVICES		
GOAL: Improve and promote Canoeing Ireland's membership structure, services and benefits and provide training, support and recognition for volunteer club and discipline officers		
Objective	Actions	Outcomes
1 Improve the Canoeing Ireland membership offer and satisfaction ratings	1 Review and develop our membership structure, categories and fees	A more responsive and member-centric organisation with membership growth to 6,000
	2 Establish a Direct Debit membership-fee payment system	
	3 Standardise renewal date for membership across all categories	
	3 Develop, promote and administer a national member-to-member and business-to-member discount scheme for benefit of members	
	4 Develop metrics and targets for service delivery in all areas of operations and report quarterly on progress in achieving these to the Board and membership	
2 Develop the Canoeing Ireland website and online service as an important tool to attract and provide service to members	1 Continuously review and improve the content and functionality of the Canoeing Ireland website	Attractive, functional and informative online window for Canoeing Ireland information, resources and services
	2 Develop online, map-based information systems for members relating to Events Calendar, Training Courses, Clubs, Providers, Rivers and Sea Trips guides	
	3 Establish an online resource of canoeing-related books and periodicals	
	4 Establish an online Video Library	

3	Improve membership compliance through IT solutions.	1	Complete the roll-out of online entry system for events / courses run under the auspices of Canoeing Ireland through the membership database to facilitate event organisation	Improved service with automatic membership confirmation to event organisers and course providers
4	Annual Discipline, Club, Affiliated Organisation and Member Satisfaction Survey	1	Conduct annual Surveys to determine levels of satisfaction with aspects of C.I. Board / discipline / office support to identify gaps and areas of satisfaction / dissatisfaction to inform improvements required	Healthier, more relevant and member-centric NGB
		2	Draw up annual plan to address service gaps and needs	
		3	Each year, publish survey results with review of actions taken and proposed	
5	Develop membership metrics and reporting systems.	1	Measure and report on membership numbers, geographic distribution, age, gender, certification, qualifications, discipline participation, and club numbers, size, geographic distribution, access to facilities, events organised etc.	Evidence-based strategic and operational decisions
		2	Analyse and report on an annual basis to aid forward-planning and review	
6	Develop resource materials and training opportunities for volunteer club and discipline officers	1	Draw up a suite of guidelines and template documentation for clubs and discipline committees in areas such as Constitution / Financial Records / Annual Accounts / Risk Management / Standard Operating Procedures / Minutes / Policy Documents / disability inclusion etc.	More effective club and discipline committee management
		2	Hold annual workshops for club and discipline committee officials in governance, financial management and other relevant topics	
		3	Provide on-demand support service as club and discipline committee needs determine	
7	Promote, acknowledge and reward excellence in volunteer work	1	Develop a Volunteer Policy and Handbook to encourage and support volunteerism within the sport	A valued and committed volunteer base
		2	Establish an Annual Awards Scheme to acknowledge and incentivise the work of volunteer club and discipline committee officials	
8	Appoint a Member Services Officer	1	Identify funding to appoint a full-time staff member to support disciplines, clubs and individual members in getting maximum value and benefits of membership	Central focus on member service and satisfaction

A kayaker in a red kayak is captured in a dynamic pose, performing a maneuver in white water rapids. The kayak is tilted sharply, and the kayaker is wearing a red jacket and a black helmet. The water is turbulent, with large splashes and white foam. The background shows the continuation of the river with more rapids.

*"We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence then is not an act,
but a habit"*

Aristotle

5.3 Education and Training

Canoeing Irelands Award and Qualification Scheme comprises awards and qualifications in river and sea kayaking and open canoeing and consists of skills awards and instructor and coach qualifications. It is complemented by river safety & rescue and coastal navigation awards. The scheme is highly regarded and has been developed, in association with Coaching Ireland, within the *Euro Paddle Pass* programme which is a project involving seven National Canoeing Federations in Europe including Canoeing Ireland, the aim of which is to create a common system of paddle sport competency awards across Europe.

As an adventure sport in a dynamic environment with an inherent element of risk, it is vital to have a robust system of skills and safety training in place to ensure the safety of participants and it is largely due to the success of our awards and qualifications scheme that we have a very low level of serious incidents occurring given the high level of paddling activity in Ireland. We must not be complacent in this regard and need to constantly review, update and promote the scheme to keep ahead of best practice elsewhere.

THEME 3: EDUCATION AND TRAINING			
GOAL: Enhance and expand the scope and reach of our awards and qualification scheme and expand the number and quality of programmes delivered across all disciplines of canoeing			
Objective	Actions		Outcomes
1 Review and update the current Awards and Qualifications Scheme	1	Initiate a consultation on the current structure and operation of our Awards and Qualifications Scheme with the Training & Development Unit, clubs, general membership, course providers and Coaching Ireland, to assess revisions necessary to address current and future needs	More relevant and focussed Scheme to address the current and future development needs of the sport
	2	Support development of new awards in emerging disciplines such as SUP, Rafting and the competitive disciplines	
	3	In association with the TDU, discipline committees and Coaching Ireland, prepare a draft revised scheme for final consultation, adoption and implementation	
	4	Review and improve award scheme resources and course materials, in particular, web and audio visual resources.	
	5	Strengthen our involvement in the European Paddle Pass programme to create a common system of paddle sport competency awards across Europe	
2 Develop a Junior-specific awards scheme	1	Develop a junior-specific scheme with an emphasis on technical proficiency to improve paddling standards nationally	Youth-focussed scheme to encourage skills development and progression
	2	Develop cross-discipline skill progression awards aimed at 6-16 year olds	

3	Accelerate the development and implementation of the coach training programme	1	Promote greater uptake of the coach training process.	Greater spread of coaches across the discipline and club network facilitating a rise in performance levels
		2	Develop and implement the Levels 2 & 3 Coach Training Programme	
		3	Identify and recruit future coach course tutors.	
4	Promote the delivery of strategic, low-participation awards	1	Allocate budget and criteria for course subsidisation for club instructors / coaches	Gaps addressed in affordability and uptake for targeted courses
		2	Promote skill and instructor awards in Sea Kayaking and Open Canoeing .	
		3	Promote Level 4 and 5 Skill Awards and Instructorships	
		4	Promote River Safety and Rescue and Advanced Coastal Navigation Awards	
5	Promote and subsidise discipline and club volunteer coaches and officials	1	Train discipline-specific coaches / instructors at regional and national level.	Disciplines and clubs supported in developing skills and progression of members
		2	Develop volunteer, instructor and coach codes of practice.	
		3	Subsidise Instructor & Coach Training for new and developing Clubs	
6	Implement a comprehensive CPD scheme	1	Organise an annual Coach and Instructor Conference for information-sharing and learning incorporating an Awards scheme to recognise excellence in training, instruction and course provision	Consistent updating and refreshing of skills ensured and recognised
		2	Support delivery of quality Instructor and Coach CPD courses nationally.	
		3	Empower registered course providers to deliver CPD programmes	
		4	Monitor CPD compliance annually at member registration.	

7	Improve the quality of course participant experiences	1	Implement an online and affordable Canoeing Ireland Provider Registration System incorporating a systematic programme of annual provider compliance visits	Quality assurance of service provision by registered providers
		2	Implement a desk based quality assurance process through the PRS	
		4	introduce provider-visit questionnaire and checklist to capture client outcomes	
		5	Establish a registered provider portal on the C.I. website with links to provider websites / course calendars	
8	Improve the condition and expand the functionality of the Liffey Training Centre (LTC)	1	Prepare a report on the current condition of the LTC building, grounds and equipment with costed proposals on short, medium and long-term plans for development	Excellently maintained, equipped and multi-functional Training Centre
		2	Prepare a report on LTC activity levels with two-year prior comparisons and costed recommendations for expanded levels of activity and revenue implications and develop metrics for quarterly report to the Board for review	
		4	Provide infrastructure in association with South Dublin County Council to establish flat water slalom and sprint facilities and a permanent Polo pitch at the LTC to facilitate training activities for these disciplines.	
		5	Develop the premises and river bank in association with Fingal County Council and disability organisations to host mini para/special-games at the LTC to encourage disability participation in the sport.	
		6	Make C.I. Liffey Training Centre and equipment available for course providers to rent at competitive rates subject to availability.	
9	Explore the setting up of further Regional Training Centres	1	Commission a report on the feasibility of developing further Regional Training Centres either as stand-alone or shared facilities	Broadened regional scope of CI training programmes
10	Appoint full-time Education and Training Officer	1	Identify funding to appoint a full-time staff member to work with disciplines, clubs and the TDU in delivering a revised, comprehensive Coaching, Training and Awards scheme	Central focus on implementation of programme in association with

*“Things do not happen,
things are made to happen”*

John F Kennedy



5.4 Facilities

In Ireland, we are fortunate to have access to an abundance of rivers and coastal waters providing a rich and varied environment for our sport in all its forms. However, the raw material of water is only part of the story and we rely on various forms of infrastructural enhancement to provide optimum conditions for recreational and competitive canoeing whether in the form of access / egress points along the emerging Blueway network or the more specialised infrastructural developments required for events such as slalom, sprint, freestyle, polo etc.

Much has been achieved in these areas in recent years in collaboration with strategic partners such as local authorities, local sports partnerships, Sport Ireland and Waterways Ireland with grant aid from the Sports Capital grant scheme and other sources. We need to build on this momentum and expand the availability of facilities needed across the country to see the sport achieve its true potential.

THEME 4: FACILITIES		
GOAL: Promote the sustainable development of Ireland's waterways and work with strategic partners to develop existing and new participation, competition and training venues up to international standard in each discipline		
Objective	Actions	Outcomes
1 Continue development and promotion of the national Blueway trail network to enhance facilities on strategic river routes	1 Coordinated activity with Waterways Ireland, Local Sports Partnerships and local authorities to progress the establishment of the network of 25 inland and coastal Blueway Trails	National Blueway Network to be fully completed by 2020 positioning Ireland as a premier canoeing and kayaking destination with national and international appeal
	2 Develop a multi-annual, prioritised programme to progress the development of the nationwide Blueway Trails	
	3 Work with strategic partners including Bord Failte to position Blueways as one of the top 10 recommended activities for national and international tourism in Ireland.	

2	Build relationships with key stakeholders to support, fund and facilitate the enhancement and development of canoeing facilities	1	Explore ongoing facility development opportunities with a range of strategic partners and stakeholders at local, regional and national level	Improved and expanded canoeing infrastructure supporting all levels of recreational and competitive activity up to the holding of Pan Celtic / international events
		2	Continue lobbying for Marlay Park White Water Course following on from the technical and economic feasibility studies completed in 2014.	
		3	Work with Leitrim County Council to develop and utilise the international-standard sprint course on Lough Rinn	
		4	Lobby relevant government departments to remove legal buoyancy aid requirements in sprint events in order to comply with ICF rules and facilitate holding of international / Pan Celtic events at Lough Rinn	
3	Develop policies and guidelines for canoeing activities to promote a clean, ecologically sound, safe and healthy network of waterways.	1	Promote the Leave No Trace (LNT) ethos and goals.	Leave No Trace
		2	Produce canoeing-specific LNT environmental codes of conduct and information brochures in areas such as Invasive Species and the mechanisms of transfer.	
		3	Provide opportunities for members to complete LNT training.	
		4	Establish strategic events as LNT races providing wash-down facilities and demonstrations of best practice	
		5	Work with local authorities and other statutory agencies to implement rat control measures in suspect areas.	
		6	Promote and implement an annual spring clean-up day of local waterways in association with clubs, discipline committees and providers	
4	Appoint full-time Development & Events Officer	1	Identify funding to appoint a full-time staff member to work with strategic partners in delivering a programme of facilities development and environmental improvements	Central focus on implementation of programme in association with key actors

***“If you can’t measure it,
you can’t improve it”***

William Thompson



5.5 Performance and Events

The large number and variety of competitive disciplines within our sport presents a challenge in organising a sufficient number and quality of domestic competitions with sufficient numbers of domestic competitors to build a critical mass of talented athletes to produce elite squads capable of achieving competitive performances at international level. Of course, domestic participation is for many paddlers the extent of their ambition within the sport and this must be nurtured and catered for within our systems.

The vast amount of volunteer effort required to run domestic events and to organise national squads and international teams is extremely challenging and central supports for these vital roles has been difficult to achieve within current resources – both staffing and financial. There is much which can and must be done to incentivise, train and equip these vital cogs in our competitive wheel.

Despite these limitations we have, as a small nation with limited resources, consistently produced quality athletes who have achieved significant results at international level across all disciplines in the sport.

THEME 5: PERFORMANCE AND EVENTS			
GOAL: Improve the quality and increase the number of domestic competitive events, establish structured Talent Pathways and improve the preparation, management and performance of international teams in each canoeing discipline.			
Objective		Actions	Outcomes
1	Increase the quality and number of domestic competitions	1 Hold annual workshop on generic event management principles (risk management / safety procedures / PR / marketing etc) with discipline-specific components	Attractive, high-quality events providing optimum conditions for performance pipeline development
		2 Hold annual workshops and certification for discipline-specific event officials / judges / referees	
		3 Acquire and equip two event trailers equipped with promotional, branding and event management equipment for event organisers	
		4 Introduce electronic timing and result compilation systems for event organisation across all disciplines	
		5 Co-ordinate an overall web-based events calendar for publication in December each year for following season	
		6 Roll out a mandatory, on-line event entry system for use at all C.I. sanctioned events	
		7 Develop a web-based, central event-results database for each discipline	
		8 Develop / review event organisation guidelines and rulebooks for each discipline	

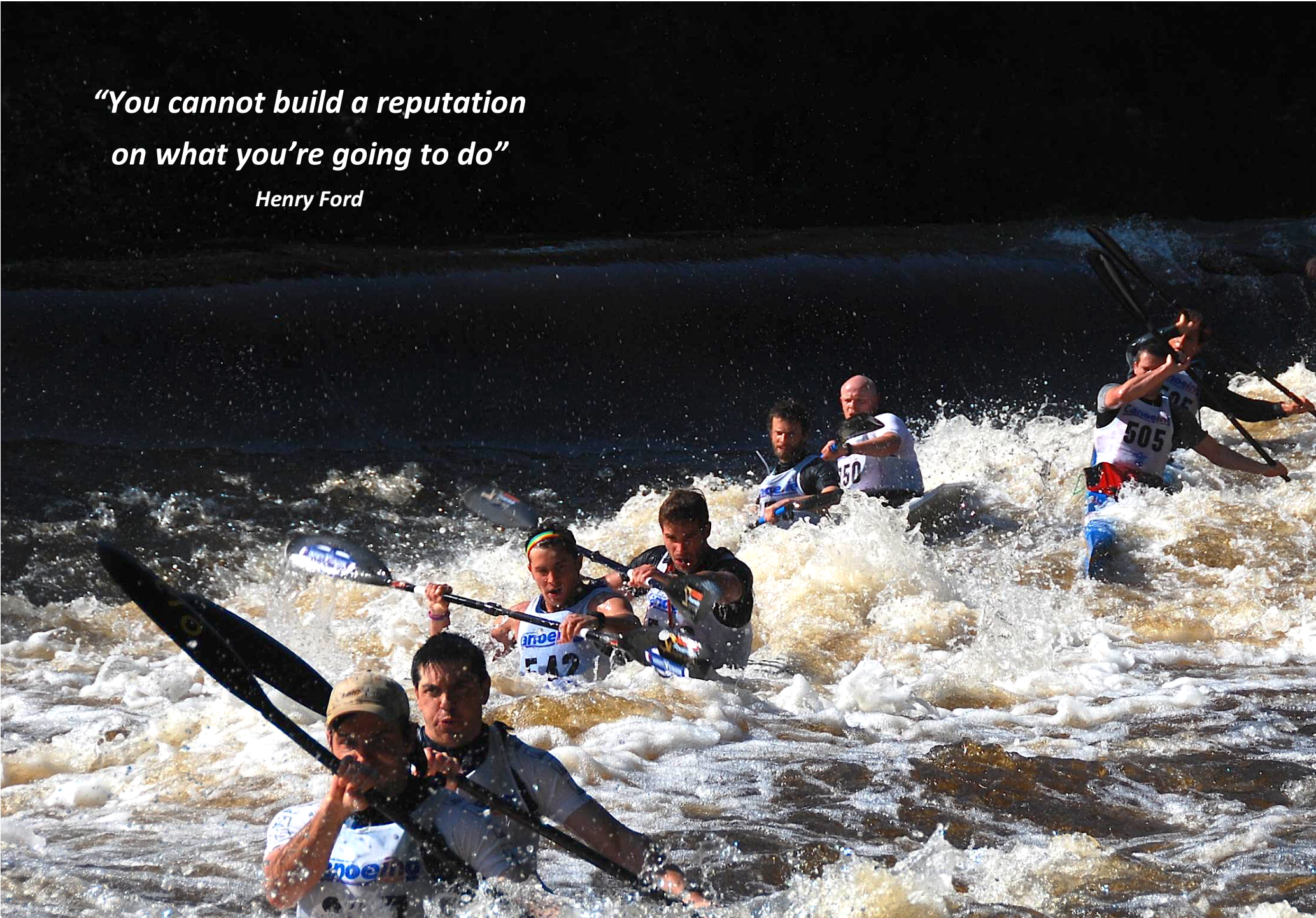
2	Increase junior involvement in competitive events	1	Promote the running of regular afternoon and weekend junior events throughout the year across a variety of disciplines.	A focus on growth in the key junior demographic
		2	Develop a structured programme of regional and local Summer Camps profiling a range of competitive disciplines to expose young paddlers to the sport and present avenues for interested participants to progress further in disciplines for which they show promise and interest	
		3	Implement changes to competitive event formats to encourage junior participation, progression and retention	
3	Track domestic event and participation levels year-on-year	1	Develop metrics from a 2015 base to annually record event numbers and participation by age and category in each competitive discipline in a standardised format to measure activity levels over the period of the strategic plan	Evidence-base for forward planning
		2	Set targets for increase in participation levels, review annually and plan forward based from an evidence base	
4	Promotion of Intervarsity, School and Scouting National Championships	1	Actively support partner representative organisations to develop and promote annual championship events with assistance of C.I. disciplines and clubs	High-quality youth championship events
5	Support International and National Championship events in each discipline	1	Continue and enhance support for the International Liffey Descent as a the most high-profile showcase event in Irish canoeing calendar and the annual Junior Liffey Descent	High quality showcase events
		2	Support National Championship events in each discipline	
		3	Facilitate a programme to attract international and cross-national (such as Pan-Celtic) events to Ireland in all disciplines	
		4	Allocate C.I. staff , equipment and funding resources to support the volunteer work of discipline committees in organising, running and publicising such events	
6	Effective pipelines for talent identification and athlete development	1	Develop a Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Model for all competitive disciplines	Early identification and induction of talented athletes into development programmes
		2	Develop discipline-specific Testing Protocols and programmes for Talent Identification	
7	High performance training centres	1	Establish and develop high performance training centres for each discipline based on existing centres of excellence	Good national training facilities for coaches, clubs and athletes.
		2	Promote the development of multi-purpose, well-equipped training and competition venues for use by complementary canoeing disciplines	
		3	Develop and equip the C.I. Training Centre, Strawberry Beds for strength & conditioning training by national squads	

8	Develop club, squad and team coaching resources	1	Introduce mandatory coach qualifications for all club and squad coaching activity.	Certified coaching network at club, squad and international team levels
		2	Develop national (Level 2) and international (Level 3) coach training courses.	
		3	Develop home-grown international standard coaches using existing squad coaches and retiring team athletes as a foundation.	
		4	Inspire existing national and international coaches to complete coaching qualifications and become tutors on coach training courses.	
		5	Identify a national coach for each discipline and support with central resources from the Canoeing Ireland office.	
9	Coach and athlete education	1	Establish an annual, cross-discipline National Coaching Forum for coaches and athletes	Improved communication, networking, information-sharing and cross pollination amongst disciplines, coaches and athletes.
		2	Develop a cross-discipline educational programme of workshops for coaches and athletes on common topics such as nutrition, mental preparation, anti-doping, sponsorship, social media etc.	
		3	Develop a web-based archive of general and discipline-specific training and coaching materials for athletes and coaches	
10	Sport science supports	1	Develop web-based, guidance materials and advice on a range of entry-level supports which clubs may seek to source either on a volunteer basis or at discounted rates from professionals in sport science disciplines from within their local communities to benefit young aspiring athletes	Educated athletes equipped to handle the challenges of the high-performance sporting environment
		2	Introduce basic sport science principles and practice at an early phase in the development of young athletes at club and discipline level.	
		3	Develop linkages between third-level institutes and athletes on established international squads to set up regional support centres for athletes / coaches / mentors to avail of advice and assistance in the areas of nutrition, strength & conditioning, psychology, physiology, biomechanics, performance analysis and lifestyle choices including preparing athletes for life after the end of their athletic career.	
		4	Negotiation of maximum degree of assistance from the Institute of Sport for carded and sub-carded athletes to avail of necessary supports.	
11	Improve the management and administration of international teams	1	Develop updated and standardised team manager, coach and athlete Codes of Conduct and Contracts	Better managed and resourced teams operating under standardised codes and contracts
		2	Develop job specs and a selection process for team managers, coaches and officials	
		3	Hold annual workshops for training of team officials	
		4	Obtain video analysis programmes and equip and train team support staff in their use	
		5	Obtain site communications equipment for use by international teams	

12	Objective analysis and comparison of international performances	1	Develop discipline-specific metrics for recording, analysis and year-on-year comparison of international results for specific athletes and generally	Evidence base for team selection and monitoring of international performance
		2	Develop a web-based archive of international results and analysis (for various event categories - International / Euros / Worlds) from 2014 and for last three Olympic cycles	
		3	Embed performance standards into selection processes	
13	Better resources to support international programme	1	Identify funding to appoint a High Performance Director to implement the HP Strategies and development programmes across all disciplines in association with technical committees and coaches	Improved management, coaching and resourcing structure of international programmes
		2	Aim for recruitment of part/fulltime coaches in Olympic and other disciplines	
		3	Negotiate incremental annual increases in Sport Ireland HP grant funding on foot of improvements in programme structure and performance	
		4	Seek to secure commercial sponsorship for international team supports	
14	Adopt and implement a HP Strategy for the Sprint and Slalom Olympic disciplines for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic cycle and beyond	1	Develop an Olympic Discipline HP Strategy for the 2020 cycle and beyond in collaboration with Sport Ireland, the Institute of Sport, the Olympic Council of Ireland and Paralympics Ireland, athletes, coaches and officials.	Improving results at international, European/World Championships and Tokyo 2020 Olympic / Paralympic performances
		2	Assess the financial and other resources required to achieve Olympic / Paralympic qualification and competitive results over the four year cycle and seek commitment of Sport Ireland to allocate sufficient funding to achieve	
		3	Set annual targets for structural improvements, budgets and performances with annual review and forward planning	
15	Adopt and implement a HP Strategy for each of the Non-Olympic disciplines	1	Develop a multi-annual HP Strategy for each non-Olympic Discipline in collaboration with Sport Ireland, the Institute of Sport, athletes, coaches and officials.	Improving results at international, European/World Championships
		2	Assess the financial and other resources required to achieve competitive results over the period of the plan	
		3	Set annual targets for structural improvements, budgets and performances with annual review and forward planning	
16	A drug-free environment in Irish Canoeing	1	Develop and publicise a strong anti-doping policy and practice in association with Sport Ireland, technical committees, coaches and athletes	Knowledgeable and drug-free athletes in all canoeing disciplines
		2	Develop and deliver an educational programme and on-line resources for athletes and coaches on supplement use and identification of banned substances	

***“You cannot build a reputation
on what you’re going to do”***

Henry Ford



5.6 Governance, Leadership, Management and Communications

These are the essential bedrock and building blocks of a healthy organisation which need to be achieved to bring Canoeing Ireland to a starting point from which the sport-specific elements of our strategy can be addressed. To some, talk of policies and procedures can be viewed as concentrating on bureaucratic processes but in many ways, they set the basis for a healthy culture and method of working within which progress can be achieved in a structured and collaborative way.

Each arm of the organisation has its own unique but inter-connected part to play in bringing Canoeing Ireland forward; the Board in setting and driving the vision and strategic direction and our volunteer technical committees and clubs in bringing that vision and strategy to fruition. Due to the transient nature of volunteer committees at all levels, our management and staff have a vital role to play in driving and supporting the achievement of our strategic objectives over time. All of this must be under-pinned by open communication systems which share the story of our journey with our internal and external stakeholders.

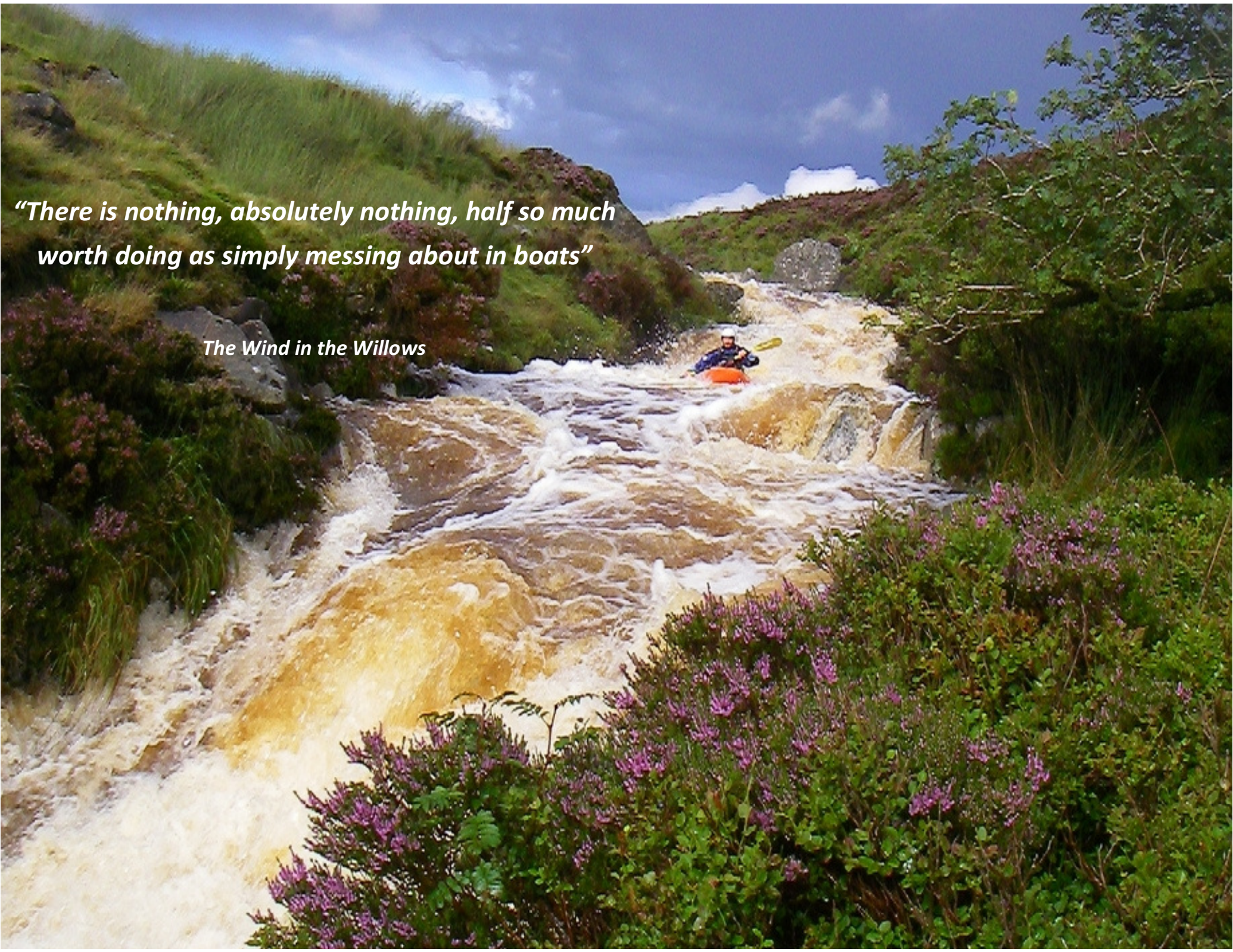
THEME 6: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS			
GOAL: Develop a strong and vibrant organisation which members are proud to join and support through transparent, accountable and policy-driven leadership, management and communications			
Objective		Actions	Outcomes
1	Develop policies and procedures that will enable the organisation to be governed effectively and lawfully	1 Develop a prioritised review programme and schedule for complete update of company policies in a standardised format	Effective governance structures in place
		2 Maintain and publish a schedule of all policies, procedures and guideline documents giving the title, reference/version number and approval and review-due date (shown on all individual documents)	
		3 Ensure the ongoing implementation and monitoring of policies and procedures and provide regular training in implementation for Board, committee members and staff	

2	Ensure Board and Committees accountable for running the organisation in accordance with CI strategy, policy and procedures	1	The Board and each technical committee will publish an annual operational plan under each strategic goal to implement this strategy with timescales and KPI's for delivery together with a review of progress on the previous year's plan.	Effective Board and Committee structure and operations
		2	An annual report incorporating the above documents will be submitted to each CI / technical committee AGM	
		3	The Board will carry out an annual self-assessment at board and individual director level to gauge board effectiveness and shall undertake board development activities to strengthen its effectiveness.	
		4	Technical committees will submit annual plans, budgets and quarterly reports to the Board for financial and other supports	
3	Strengthen the staff structure and skill-set	1	Review our current organisational structure to ensure it aligns with and supports the achievement of our strategic goals and objectives	Committed, effective and connected workforce
		2	Strengthen staff competencies and implement annual CPD programmes to improve the skill set available to the organisation	
		3	Implement annual work programming and analysis for all staff with linkage to corporate strategy and AOP	

4	Develop strong PR, Marketing and Communication policies and programmes	1	Develop an internal and external Communications Strategy to present the image and achievements of the sport in a professional and powerful way	Improved image and profile of the sport
		2	Develop contacts in local, regional and national media organisations and ensure regular briefings on activities to achieve regular positive coverage	
		3	Develop a compelling picture of our sport generally to support the attraction of commercial supporters and partners	
		4	Develop a Digital Strategy that generates increased following through our website and other digital media platforms	
		5	Develop CI logo and brand guidelines for implementation by staff, committees and clubs in all communications and events	
		6	Ensure timely communications from the Board and Technical Committees to members on all relevant plans and decisions	

***“There is nothing, absolutely nothing, half so much
worth doing as simply messing about in boats”***

The Wind in the Willows



5.7 Financial Sustainability

To ensure our financial sustainability, it is vital, over the period of this strategy, for Canoeing Ireland to maximise self-generated income from sources such as membership, events and course provision and from external sources through sponsorship and co-funding of programmes / projects with other agencies so that over time we reduce our high dependence on core grant funding from Sport Ireland. Much of the ambitious but achievable content of this strategy relies on achieving an increased level of discretionary spending to expand our development activities and our ability to achieve our objectives will be dependent on putting in place a realistic staffing level to achieve this. As part of this process we need to improve our budget forecasting / management and our monitoring / review processes to keep tight control of our finances.

THEME 7: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY			
GOAL: Strengthen our operational efficiency and financial base to improve the financial independence and sustainability of the organisation			
Objective		Actions	Outcomes
1	Maintain appropriate financial policies and operational procedures	1 Update and annually review our Financial Control Policy to ensure ongoing prudent management in line with best	Clearly documented and sound policies and procedures
		2 Update / develop a comprehensive manual of Standard Operating Procedures falling from the FCP	
2	Operate sound financial processes	1 Manage our finances prudently across all programmes without compromising progressive development	Finances managed in a prudent and efficient manner
		2 Realise annual surpluses and build towards achieving sufficient cash reserves to sustain the organisation through any future shocks	
		3 Review payment and accounting systems to increase efficiency and productivity while maintaining sound oversight	
		4 A budget will be approved annually by the Board and discipline committees linked with their AOP under this strategy	
		5 Support capital projects that will provide a benefit to our members and our sport	

3	Develop a well-funded model to underwrite the costs of developing the sport and securing international competitive success.	1	Develop a financially secure and commercially-focussed organisation that maximises on public funding, sponsorship, membership and self-generated revenue streams	Better-resourced and financially stable organisation
		2	Identify, develop and resource new revenue streams	
		3	Increase self-generated income from membership, events, merchandising, and other sources	
		4	Secure commercial sponsorship in conjunction with an improved communications and marketing programme	
4	Develop a sound monitoring and review system	1	Provide management a/c reports to the Board on a bi-monthly basis	Sound regular monitoring and oversight of financial affairs
		2	Provide necessary financial reports to technical committees to monitor spend against budget on their operational programmes	
		3	Develop budget allocation and monitoring at project and sub-programme level	
5	Strengthen operational efficiency	1	Undertake ongoing critical review under all cost headings to ensure efficiency and value for money	Operating capacity to match our ambition and financial capacity
		2	Control fixed costs to the maximum degree possible without compromising organisational growth	
6	Re-establish the Audit Committee	1	Review and update the Audit Committee Policy and Terms of Reference	Oversight of Board and management activities in key financial and operational areas
		2	Maintain an Audit Committee in place in accordance with adopted policy	

*“The secret of change is to focus all your energy,
not on fighting the old, but on building the new”*

Socrates



6 Bringing this strategy to life

This strategic plan will be implemented through a succession of Annual Operational Plans (AOP'S) produced devised by management and approved by the Board in September of each year to coincide with our core funding application to Sport Ireland. The AOP will be published on the Canoeing Ireland website and will be geared towards progressing our strategic goals and objectives through specific actions, timelines and KPI's against which our achievements will be measured.

AOP's will be developed and published at Board and technical committee level and progress will be monitored on a quarterly basis with achievements against the planned programme reported. Staff work plans will fall from the AOP and will form the basis for biannual performance review.

An annual report will be presented to the AGM of Canoeing Ireland and each technical committee on the forward plan and achievements over the previous year for review by the membership. The strategic plan will be reviewed annually by the Canoeing Ireland Board, management and staff to determine the status - not started, in progress or complete.

The strategic plan is flexible and allows for scope to review the goals, objectives and KPI's each year based on external and internal factors combined with the progress achieved each year. Objectives and actions may be amended, added or removed as necessary to cater for changes in our operating environment.

*“Challenges are what make life interesting
and overcoming them is what makes
life meaningful.”*

Joshua J. Marine

