The Scottish Surfing Federation

Affiliated Boardriders Scheme

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The Scottish Surfing Federation

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# Foreword

In some of the harshest sea conditions in the world the Scottish Surfing Federation have safely navigated the sport of surfing around Scotland’s coasts for nearly 4 centuries.

There is recognition that many of the learning’s and past history of the SSF have become entrained in those whom have directed, pioneered and steered its course.

Capturing such details in one place will hopefully act as a useful reference for future adventurers.

This manuscript sets out to document the SSFs course identifying pitfalls, achievements and milestones which have mapped its journey around Scotland’s seas.

The historic account plots the flood and ebb of the SSF over the years with information supplied from Iain Masson, Peter Strachan, Malcolm Findlay, Sam Christopherson and Andy Bennetts to name a few of the early buccaneers.

The more recent history has been accounted for by William Watson and Chris Noble both of whom served at the helm of the SSF committee between 2006 and 2012.

It is hoped such a reference document may benefit future adventurers and enthusiasts alike, lighting the way to successfully guide the SSFs course in the years to come. Tales of treasure, treachery, bar brawls, looting and other piracy crimes shall remain reserved to the seafarers whom are fortunate enough to have sailed on the voyages to date.

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# History of the Scottish Surfing Federation (1975 – 2006)

## The Early Pioneers (1960’s-1975)

Surfing first started in Scotland on the East Coast in the mid to late 1960s with small groups of surfers forming around the Fraserburgh, Aberdeen and Edinburgh regions. Of the earliest surf club developments there was a "Scottish Surf Club", run by George Raynes based out of Glasgow followed by a thriving “Pease Bay Surf Club”. From these early surfers Scotland had teams at the Eurosurf 1971 (Jersey) and 1973 (Woolacombe) events.

The first Scottish Championships were held at Bettyhill (near Thurso) in 1973 which was mainly attended by the ‘Pease Bay Surf Club’. Two years later in 1975 the Scottish Surfing Championships were held at Fraserburgh and the event attracted competitors from all over Scotland.

With an aim of maintaining links with other likeminded individuals from across the country the decision was made to form the a national association and the 1975 Scottish Championships set the cornerstone for the development of the Scottish Surfing Federation (SSF).

## The Golden Era of Exploration (1975 – 1985)

The Scottish Surfing Championships began to "rotate" from 1976 between Fraserburgh, Pease Bay and Thurso. When the event came back to Fraserburgh in 1978, there was the top surfers in Europe at the time up as judges (Nigel Semmens and Steve Daniel to name but two) and the surf photographer, Alex Williams wrote an article for Atlantic Surfer, the UK surfing magazine of the era.

The Scottish Surf Team to Eurosurf 1975, in France had representation from across Scotland. After that, Scotland was properly represented at every Eurosurf until 1995.

Between 1975 and 1989, the Scottish Surfing Federation was largely run by older and experienced people, notably Billy Batten, Andy Bennetts, Ian Wishart from ‘Pease Bay Club’, Davie Long and Brad Robertson from Kirkintilloch, Malcolm Findlay, Billy Duncan, Iain Masson from Fraserburgh, Pat Keiran, Barbara Wilson, and Sheila Finlayson from Thurso. Meetings were held quarterly with there being a President, Secretary, Treasurer and representatives from the North, North East, South East and South West.  Scotland was always represented on the British Surfing Association (BSA) Executive Committee.

The "Golden Age" of the SSF was during the late 1970s and early 1980's. Membership grew; there was a lively, regular and well-organised regime of events. Scotland hosted a very successful Eurosurf in 1981, under the presidency of Bill Batten who was a superb President (as well as an international standard surf judge).

## Stormy Waters (1985 – 1999)

By the mid 1980s many of the early pioneers of the SSF had run their course. They had been at the helm several years, overachieved what they had orginally set out to do leaving Scotland punching well above its weight amongst European surf communities. Gradually family, personal and business reasons grew in priority and as such many decided to take a back seat from the SSF ship wheel.

A number of younger people put themselves up for important tasks in the Federation after that and much of the accent shifted from the South East to the North East. David Long from Kirkintilloch was the exception, acting as President into the early 1990s. Iain Masson valiantly took on the job of running the British Championships in Fraserburgh in 1992. Sponsors were found for the event and though the surf wasn't great, the event was successfully run.

Scotland took on the job of running Eurosurf in 1993. A key player was Gordon Wheeler, who worked tirelessly during the event to make it work. A Managing Committee was formed and a company set up to run the event. Conditions for the event were atrocious, the car park became a mudbath and the surf was generally messy and poor quality.

Communication began to break down (during the 1980s there was regular newsletters) and the Federation income declined. Many of the broader activities that the Federation had been involved with gradually eroded throughout the late 1980s and 1990s which in turn reduced membership interest. By the late 1990s, the last of the older experienced individuals had run their course and the management of the Federation moved towards a few enthusiastic younger surfing individuals. As the SSF had expanded over the years it developed financial commitments. Financing surf teams to compete at British and international competitions took a significant load on the SSFs finances, this resulted in the same ‘elite’ benefiting from the SSF but the broader surfing population having little in return.

## Shipwrecked (1999 – 2005)

With a declining membership the money starved SSF were struggling to finance competing in the European Surfing Federation. The SSF needed to go professional to support such financial demands therefore it required more members and more sponsorship. The SSF couldn't afford it and had a choice to go the route of Ireland surfing and welcome the likes of Guinness as the sports backers and its mainstream popularity or say no and withdraw. Sam Christopherson, the SSF president at the time, proposed the various options in 1999 at the AGM and the overall consensus at the time by the members was that the sport would benefit from further development on a local basis.

Indeed between 1999 and 2005 the wave of change came and the sport of surfing developed growing significantly at each of the main Scottish Surfing destinations. Influences through the UK media, surf competitions, surf videos, surf photos, surf shops, surf schools, surf clubs, surf websites, surf guides, better wetsuits, word of mouth and probably the biggest advance the internet prompted accelerated growth albeit there just has no organization guiding its growth nationally. By late 2004 given the growth that had been seen and lack of national direction it wasn’t long before surfers from areas such as Thurso, Fraserburgh and Edinburgh once again began to review the status of the SSF and investigating the possibility of whether it may be restarted.

## Rebuilding the boat (2005 – 2006)

In August 2005 a newly formed surf club in Banff hosted the first Scottish Championship in over 5 years. Due to the swell conditions the Open, Ladies and Longboard events were moved to Thurso and held in 3-4ft challenging surf. The event attracted a lot of attention and it was an excellent opportunity for surfers across Scotland both old and new to meet up.

In a similar fashion that had been noted in the early 1970s. After the Championships many of the surfers who took part from across Scotland re-established common networks. It was agreed by all that there should be a Scottish Surfing Team Event where the Scottish surfers unite, compete, socialize and discuss the future of the sport in Scotland together - and so it was decided to hold “Gathering of the Clans 2005”.

The Gathering of the Clans was created to do just that, unite the Scottish Surfing Communities through a surfing community to decide the future fate of Scottish Surfing. The competition was pulled together at short notice with the help of the ‘Broch Surf Club’ and attracted some 70 competitors from across Scotland, sponsorship was offered directly by Granite Reef who also had built and donated the memorial Highland Quiche for the winning clan.

The meeting held at the Gathering of the Clans event took place in Cheers Bar Fraserburgh (November 2005). William Watson gave the background of the event and outlined what developments had taken place in Scottish Surfing since the 6 years previous. It had been rumoured at the time that O’Neill were looking at holding a World Qualifying Series event in Thurso, at the time there had been no event of such scale held within Scotland. A decision was presented to the surfers at the meeting as to whether the Scottish Surfing Federation should be restarted or closed down completely.

The vote was in favor of the reformation of the Scottish Surfing Federation. Damon Hewlett, Chris Noble and William Watson represting the South East, North Coast and North East regions respectively were voted forward to establish what would be needed to reform the SSF and make contact with those planning to organise the WQS.

The World Qualifying Series event was held by O’Neill in April 2005. In May 2006 the Scottish Surfing Championships were held at Fraserburgh. At the event Chris Noble, Damon Hewlett and William Watson were officially swore in as President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Later that year the Gathering of the Clans event took place in Thurso – a further successfully held and well received contest by all Scottish Surfers present. By this point the SSF was once again water tight and was ready once again to set sail supporting the sport around Scotland’s Coasts.

## Setting Sail on a new journey (2006 – Today)

Since 2006 the SSF has went from strength to strength. The SSF have been supporting the Scottish surf communities on a number of areas from beach clean ups, acting as an environmental stakeholder through to youth and surf school development. The two events the SSF aim to hold on an annual basis ‘ The Scottish Surfing Championship’ and ‘The Gathering of the Clans’ have also helped bind the national surfing identity and allowed the SSF to carve out its role as the main focal point for the sport within the country.

# The SSF Today

The SSF has been run voluntarily throughout its history by the Scottish Surfers who have a passion for the greater good of the sport within Scotland. From this passion those at the helm have etched out the vision for the SSF as well as the aims which the organization sets out to achieve.

***“The overall vision of the SSF is to represent the interests of Scotland’s surfers and protect the Scottish Waves”***

The SSF aims can be sub divided into the following 3 key areas: Manage, Support and Develop.

Manage

Develop

Support

## 

* The management committee at the helm, steer and guide the course and direction of the SSF.
* Some of the SSF members and committee members feel passionate about specific surf disciplines which they want to promote and develop on a national basis.
* Without the support of its members the SSF wouldn’t exist and in turn the SSF want to support the local surf communities develop the sport best as they see fit in their area.

## Manage

The SSF is managed by a committee selected by the members; here are the main aims the Management committee strive to achieve.

* To act as the focal point to manage and administer, in an effective manner, the sport of surfing on a Scotland-wide basis.
* To unite existing Scottish surf clubs and Scottish surfers under the administrative umbrella of the SSF.
* To act as an advisory body on all matters appertaining to a practice of surfing in Scotland.
* To manage the rules and regulations of the sport within Scotland.
* To liaise and affiliate where appropriate with recognized British, European and International Surfing Bodies.
* To communicate the views of SSF Members to national and international authorities and to the public as and where required.
* To provide a focal point for Members by holding regular contests and social events when and where agreed.

### Executive Commitee

All management positions within the Scottish Surfing Federation are completely voluntarily fulfilled.

As of 2012 the management committee consists of the following:

* President – William Watson
* Secretary – Ross Kemp
* Treasurer – Chris Noble

Further Committee Members:

* Mark Boyd - Head of Coaching and Team Management
* Allyn Harper – Head of Media
* Dee Ripoll – Ladies Representative

### Management Systems

#### Filing system

Historically key documents and files were held and stored by those in the committee at the time of operation. In 2012 the SSF went towards web –based cloud storage for key information files using the tool ‘Dropbox’ each member of the committee can access the relevant documents this has vastly improved information flow and exchange across the SSF management committee.

#### Membership process

In years gone by members cold join at an SSF event or by completing a membership form (attached to the Hardcore). There was also area reps allowing Surfers to join one of the appropriate clubs who were in turn affiliated to the SSF.

Attached in this area you can find the approved documents that the SSF operate under:

#### The Constitution

The original constitution which was in use pre 1999 has been the main governing document for the sport within Scotland. This has under went several updates and any changes formally sanctioned by the members at each AGM.

A major revision took place in 2012 to make this clearer cut and less ambiguous which will be presented to the members at the 2013 AGM. When put under close scrutiny there was:

* Repeatability (likely additional clauses added in over the years)
* mixture of terms used ‘honorary office bearers, office bearers, committee and executive committee.
* There was also recognition that some of the clauses were suited to an administrative system within the 1970- 1990s but technological advances offered better management solutions.

#### Child Protection Policy.

A child protection policy was first produced in 2010 after recommendation from SportScotland to support the NGB application.

#### Complaints Procedure.

A complaints policy was first produced in 2012 after recommendation from SportScotland to support the NGB application.

#### Anti-Doping Policy.

The Anti-doping policy was first produced in 2010 after recommendation from SportScotland to support the NGB application.

#### Competitive Surfing.

Unless otherwise stated all SSF sanctioned Scottish surfing competitions will adhere to the format and requirements as outlined in the most current version of ISA (International Surfing Association) Rulebook.

As far as competitive surfing goes as per the ISA guidelines (REVISION Jan 2013) the following categories are recognized:

Open Men: Male of any age.

Open Women: Female of any age

U18 Junior: Boy or Girl 18 years and younger

U16 Junior: Boy or Girl 16 years and younger

Senior: Male or Female 28 years and older

Master: Male or Female 35 years and older

Grandmaster: Male or Female 40 years and older

Kahuna: Male or Female 45 years and older

Grand Kahuna: Male or Female 50 years and older

− Special note: Ages are taken from January 1st in the year of participation.

LONGBOARD Design: Length is a minimum of 9 feet from the tip of the board in a  
straight line along its length. Width dimensions to be a minimum aggregate of 47  
inches. That is the total of the widest point, plus the width 12 inches up from the tail  
and the width 12 inches back from the nose.

#### Financial System

Bank Account Details areas follows:

Bank: Lloyds TSB

Account Name: Scottish Surfing Federation

Account Number 00798088

Sort Code 30-10-01

The year 2007 saw the reform of Scottish Surfing finances which have grown gradually since.

Currently the SSF operates with a cheque book and this requires two signatures on each cheque to approve funds.

### Affiliation

There are a number of Official Bodies that the SSF are associated with:

* Sportscotland formerly the Scottish Sports Council, is the national agency for sport in Scotland.
* The European Surfing Federation (ESF).
* The International Surfing Association (ISA).
* Historically the SSF was affiliated with the British Surfing Association (BSA), since going into liquidation in 2010 and a new body has been developed – SurfingGB.

#### The British Surfing Association and SurfingGB.

The British Surfing Association (BSA) was founded in 1966 to promote the sport of surfing and represent the interests of all surfers in Great Britain.

Historically (pre 1999) the Scottish Surfers could join either the SSF direct or join an affiliated Scottish surf club, once they joined they became a direct member of the British Surfing Association. For numerous years previous to the 1999 stagnation the SSF had been represented on the British Surfing Associations board up until 1995.

Following the re-establishment of the SSF, the president at the time (Chris Noble) contacted the BSA to notify of the SSF status and re-establish a communication line between the BSA and the SSF.

Unfortunately an internal feud formed within the British Surfing Association administration.

A three year court battle ensued between 2007 and 2010 which crippled what was the British Surfing Association.[[1]](#endnote-1) Cash strapped the British Surfing Association went into administration then final liquidation in January 2011 from which point a new group was created “SurfingGB.”[[2]](#endnote-2)

The first official correspondence the SSF received from Surfing GB was on the 22nd of February 2012.[[3]](#endnote-3)

From the limited correspondence so far it appears SurfingGB are heading in the right direction, they have an impressive website and a team working to develop the organization.

If done correctly it is felt the Scottish Surfers and Scottish surfing could benefit from a united front with SurfingGB on development areas potentially in the future.

To date there has been a lot of promises but a lack of actual support. The Scottish Surfing Federation will continue to solely administer the sport of surfing within Scotland as it has done throughout its existence.

Given the infancy and the recent history with the British Surfing Association (BSA) the new organization still has a long way to go before an adequate relationship level reached to allow the SSF to recognize SurfingGB as the governing body for the sport in the United Kingdom.

#### European Surfing Federation

The SSF were members of the ESF for a period of over 20 years between the 1970s and the 1990s, they had representation at the majority of Eurosurf competitions throughout this time and also successfully hosted two Eurosurf competitions.

#### International Surfing Association.

The International Surfing Association (ISA) was officially formed during November 1976, in Hawaii. From 1976 until 2002, the ISA ran the World Championship every other year.  The International Surfing Association (ISA) is recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as the World Governing Authority for Surfing, StandUp Paddle (SUP) Surfing and Racing, and all other wave riding activities. ISA membership includes the surfing National Governing Bodies (NGB’s) from across the world, as of January 2013 this included 72 countries on five continents. Its headquarters are located in San Diego, California.[[4]](#endnote-4)

#### SportScotland.

Sportscotland formerly the Scottish Sports Council, is the national agency for sport in Scotland. Their stated aim is to help everyone in Scotland enjoy sport's many benefits. The Scottish Sports Council was established in 1972 by royal charter. The body works in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations. As an executive non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government, Sportscotland advises ministers and implements government policy for sport and physical recreation.[[5]](#endnote-5)

#### Atlantic Watersports Games

Formally known as the celtic watersports festival the International Committee of the Atlantic Watersports Games have been holding annual events since 1996. In 1999 the event was held at Scotland with surfing events place on the isle of Lewis.

Scotland had surfing team representation in 1998 at Bude in Devon and also on home turf at the Isle of Lewis.

### Contact Us

To contact the SSF please drop us a line at the email address below:

[scottishwaveriders@gmail.com](mailto:scottishwaveriders@gmail.com).

## Develop

The Development area identifies some of the key focus disciplines (but by no means limited to) that make up the sport of surfing:

* Environmental Development.
* Youth Development,
* Female Development,
* Performance Surfing,
* Big Wave Surfing,
* Water Safety and Instruction Training.

Compared with the many other surfing countries across the world it is recognised some of these areas are still in their infancy within Scotland. Take for example Big wave tow surfing such a discipline is relatively young in development within Scotland but nearby in Ireland teams are pushing the boundary of the sport within this discipline. As far as performance surfing goes Scotland hasn’t had international team representation in some time – countries such as Austria and Switzerland (who don’t have a coastline) are well represented at the ISA World Games and have recognized coaching, beach lifesaving courses where they’re members train at world class training camps in Morroco and Portugal over the summer months).

The SSF provide a means of linking its members nationally who want to progress and help develop the sport in pushing the boundaries of existing disciplines. Where practical the SSF will offer national leverage to assist accelerate development in such disciplines.

### Environmental

On the Environmental front the SSF has had a diverse range of input from helping promote and organizing local beach clean ups across the national support for UV treatment to address pollution issues. More recently the focus has been on consultation as main stakeholders for the planning of marine onshore and offshore developments within Scottish seas.

As the sport of surfing has grown it now finds it is competing in demand for the use of Scotland’s Seas with the fishing, oil and gas and new renewable sectors. The Marine Renewables sector (Offshore Wind, Tidal and Marine) began to take shape with ambitious plans ahead and the ‘Crown estate’ releasing blocks around Scotland’s Coasts for Marine Renewable Development.

The scale of the Scottish Marine Renewable Sector is massive with billions of pounds of investment forecast in the next few years. The renewable sector is fundamentally set to change the shape of Scotland’s Marine Environment.

To date the SSF have worked with groups of surfers and developers alike on the north coast as well as the Scottish Isles to ensure the interests of Scottish Surfers are well represented and new developments have limited impact on the current surf environment.

Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) are also working to tackle the issue of protecting surfing areas through the ‘Protect Our Waves Campaign.’

To raise awareness the SSF have created two documents the first one aimed at surfers to give them an understanding of the scale of Scottish Surfing.

The second to give potential developers an awareness of the surf environment and why the Scottish Surfers are passionate about safeguarding it.

Following the AGM in 2007 it was identified that the Brimms Ness area had been earmarked for a potential Oil tanker docking site. Following the AGM the SSF formed a sub group to identify the current status. The sub group liaised direct with the Highland and Islands Council and involvement at such an early stage in planning helped raise awareness and maintain Brimms Ness as a dedicated surfing site.

The Marine Renewables sector (Offshore Wind, Tidal and Marine) began to take shape with ambitious plans ahead and the ‘Crown estate’ releasing blocks around Scotlands Coasts for Marine Recreational Development.

The SSF were contacted in mid 2009 by Orkney Surfers where a potential Wave development threatened to potentially destroy the surfing environment at one of the islands surfing breaks. The SSF proactively engaged with the Company looking to manage the wave development, providing feedback on their Environmental Impact Assessment as well as recommending modeling that may be considered to identify the impact the new developments may have.

The SSF also supported the local surf community with the framework required to create their local Orkney Surf Club.

Since 2009 the SSF have continued to have involvement with the marine planning process providing feedback on scoping documentation and Environmental Impact Assessments on projects along the North Coast of Scotland (Farr Bay), Western Isles (Siadar), Orkney (Marwick) and Shetland (South Shetland Wave Farm).

Where practical the SSF aims to offer a bridge between local Scottish surf communities and potential developers. It has been identified the earlier that the SSF can become involved with such consultation the more positive the outcome.

### Youths

The Scottish Surfing Federation are commited to ensure youths that want to take part in the sport of surfing can have access to the adequate resources to allow them to continue with the sport. Outwith the local surf schools, noteably to date the largest impact the SSF has had in this area was in 2009 where the Scottish Surfing Federation worked with O’Neill to provide a mobile surf academy. The Surf Academy was ran by 5 proffessional O’Neill sponsored surfers and this toured around Scotland with a dedicated surf school lorry with 50 boards and 50 wetsuits. SSF members helped out on each day and over a 5 day period 250 youths were given the opportunity to try the sport free of charge across Scotland.

Despite the increase of availability and ease of access to the sport the number of youths starting surfing have plataued in recent years. Whereas many will start surfing over the summer months due to the harsher conditions, beach access, facilities and the initial outlay for equipment the majority of youths fail to get through the first winter. Fraserburgh which one had a series of youths saw a dramaticl tail off in the number of youths partaking in the sport in the town after the closure of previous changing facilities.

### Women in Sport

More and more females are also taking to the sport of surfing within Scotland and this has been evident year on year. Founded in 2007 The Joxy Girls (Scottish equivalent of the Roxy Girls) were established to to help promote female participation. Having already held numerous events such as development weekends, shoreline foraging courses as well as surf and skate meet up sessions ‘The Joxy Girls’ have a promising future ahead with significant interest in their activities.

‘Joxy Surf’ hosted a non-profit womens surfing development weekend on the 11th - 13th Nov 2011 for female Scottish surfers to try to get the more intermediate level surfers together for a laugh and to improve their technical aspects of the sport. The weekend involved a skating lesson at the local indoor skate park as well as a yoga session. During the surf sessions coaching was provided as well as surf lifesaving training. On top of all that the group also looked into conservation aspects of the surfing environment as well as having music and fashion workshops.

Most of the girls had surfed for between 5-15 years, 3 of them were Level 2 surf instructors and some of had ranked in Scottish competitions. Cooler magazine and the Scotsman paper is also covered the weekend to help promote women's surfing in Scotland.

The Joxies have also held a summer solstice beach parties in recent year as well as a series of costal plant foraging weekends throughout 2012 in the Edinburgh to Eyemouth area. A fundraiser was also held as a ‘Joxmas Yuletidal Brouhaha!!’ christmas bash in December 2012.

### Performance Surfing

The SSF would like to provide a means for its surfers to improve surf performance and feed where those with the ability and ambition can progress and reach the best standard they can. Historically this has allowed the winners of the Scottish Championships to progress as Wild Card Entries to Professional events such as the World Qualifying Series Cold Water Classic and United Kingdom Professional Surfing Tour Highland Open.

The last international competition that Scotland sent a team to was in 1999 when Scotland hosted the Celtic Watersports. The year previous to this (1998) Scotland had a team present at the Celtic Watersports Event in Devon. Prior to this Scotland was well represented at many of the European surfing competitions.

#### The UKPST (United Kingdom Professional Surf Tour)

The UKPST (BPSA) was formed in 1998 to “Raise the profile of British Surfing across the UK.” Since the early 2000s it has held a regular leg of its events at Thurso normally on a yearly basis – the exception to this being in 2010 where the event was held at Fraserburgh. The management of UKPST also assisted with the planning and gave contest direction to the first O’Neill competition that was held in 2006.

Over the last 10 years the event has saw many competitors from across the world compete on the British Professional Surf scene come to Thurso. The last event was held in October 2012 in Thurso sponsored by Scottish Marine Renewables with Event Scotland, Wave North and the Highland Council supporting the event. At the event a judging course was run by the UKPST for the SSF and local surf community members, also 3 ‘wildcards’ were offered to Scottish participants.

### Competence Training

There are many aspects that make up surf qualifications, as well as the surf instrution there are numerous beach lifeguard and surf lifesaving qualifications present. The Scottish Surfing Federation adhere to the ISA (International Surfing Association) guidelines for competition administration and judging. In 2008 and 2012 ‘Ester Spears’ and the UK Proffesional Surfing Association respectively provided surf judging courses in Thurso for SSF members. The rules associated with competitive surfing are constantly being updated, the regular surf events that the SSF hold allows for such updates to be cascade amongst its members making them aware of the latest requirements.

## Support

Across the nation the Scottish Surfing communities vary in each area from fully fledged, well regulated clubs down as far as a group of friends that simply want to go surfing.

Support works two ways.

Ultimately without the support of the Scottish surfers the SSF wouldn’t exist. In turn the SSF want to support the local surf communities and businesses giving them the national leverage as required to best develop the sport in their area as they see fit.

How surfing develops locally can of course be influenced by many factors:

* Environmental impacts.
* Local Facilities.
* National and International Competitions.
* Surf Culture.
* Surf Lifestyle.
* Surf related businesses.
* Surf Clubs.

Through the different media streams in use – the website, ‘The Hardcore’ and Facebook the SSF hopes to be able to keep the Scottish Surfers updated with what’s happening in the surfing world locally and nationally. As a way of getting together the SSF target two main events per annum – ‘The Scottish Surfing Championships’ and The Gathering of the Clans’. In recent years with the increase in coastal developments the SSF have helped support many surf communities liaise and give feedback on marine renewable developments with the aim of protecting the surfing environment. In some other cases the SSF have also provided support to communities looking at potential national and international competitions.

Within Scotland there are no dedicated surf specific local facilities, many use existing carparks and in some cases areas are fortunate to have toilet blocks close by the surf sites. This has however given rise to parking issues in certain areas as well as poor protection from the elements in other areas for getting changed (as a result many surfers have opted to purchase vans). At some of the world class breaks which generate significant income for the respective local areas there are no local facilities – a simple hot shower on a cold winters day may go a long way to promoting youth development within the sport. The SSF are committed to support the local communities with their facility development needs providing national leverage where required. Ultimately The SSF want to provide the Scottish surfers with a structure that will benefit them and promote the core aspects that make up responsible surfing in their area.

### Media

Media forms the essence of communication with the members. Fundamentally in times of good communication the SSF has saw its member support fold grow significantly. Media ranges from simply emails and surf related articles through to videos, logos, posters, photo competitions, newsletters, websites and social networking updates.

#### The Hardcore

‘The Hardcore’ was historically a SSF newsletter publication. It gave information as to what was happening in Scotland at the time forms part of the Scottish surfing culture.

During December 2012 a new version of ‘The Hardcore’ was issued. It was well received and not only benefits from input from a variety of different contributors but it also acted as a piece of Scottish Surfing Federation memorabilia capturing the characters that were shaping the sport of the time.

#### Website History

A website was first created for the SSF in 2006.

#### Social Networking.

One of the major communication advances in recent years has been with the advancement in Social networking. In 2011, recognizing that the current administration limits the SSF base to members wishing to compete at SSF events the management team set about and created a Scottish Surfing Federation Facebook page. As of December 2012 there were 450 members. In July 2012 it was decided to officially recognize the supporters of the SSF Facebook members becoming officiated ‘non-active’ members of the SSF.

#### Photo Calendar Competition.

A photo calendar competition was held in August – October 2011 which represented Scottish Surfers of the time. The winners of the photo competition went on to form a Calendar for 2012 which gave something back to the members, helped promote the SSF and helped bolster SSF funds.

The calendar featured photographs from Scotland featuring many of Scotland's top surfers as well as surfers from abroad taken by a range of great photographers.  The photos featured in the calendar were voted on by SSF members and the public on the facebook page.

### Events

The SSF normally aims to hold two main events per annum but also supports many locally run events throughout the year. There has also been a plethora of different events runs from Scottish surfing film premieres, to social nights outs, foraging weekends through to beach clean ups.

#### Wave North Beach Day & Scottish Surfing Federation Fundraiser (Spring 2011)

*‘Our Wave North Beach Day & Scottish Surfing Federation Fundraiser was a great success, with over 30 kids attending for surf lessons and others coming down to enjoy the beach games which involved volleyball, cricket, beach flags and a sandcastle competition.  
  
A huge thank-you to those who gave up their day to come down and help us out in particular the staff at Caithness Horizons, Helen, Marion, Joan and Bethany.  Also a big thank-you to local surfers, their partners and Scottish Surfing Federation members who gave a hand too - Pete Fenwick, Roz MacLeod, Ali Coghill, Chris Clarke, Sheila Findlayson, Phil, Tamara, Laura (im sure I've forgotten someone please let me know)*

*And finally another thank you to Michael Heddle of Thurso and also to Idris @ Surf Wrath for helping us out with kit for the day - it would not have been possible without your generosity, and hopefully as a result we have some surf stoked kids in Thurso.  Should any of the kids who attended on the day be interested in trying surfing again equipment can be rented from Mike (obtain contact details from Tempest Cafe) and Idris* [*http://www.surfwrath.co.uk/*](http://www.surfwrath.co.uk/)*.  And if you do go surfing - be safe! ask advice from other surfers at the beach about conditions, don't go surfing without parental supervision and stay within your depth until a sufficient level of competence has been reached.”* [[6]](#endnote-6)

The Wave North Festival raised 260GBP towards the Scottish Surfing Federation

#### [SSF Raffle](http://scottishwaveriders.blogspot.co.uk/2012/11/ssf-raffle.html) held at UKPST Autumn 2012

Mark Boyd held a raffle at the UKPST in Thurso with sponsorship from Newmarket, granite reef, and ESP in October 2012. Proceeds went towards purchasing an SSF event banner.

#### Crave the Caves Autumn 2007

“Crave the Caves” was the redeveloped Scottish Surfing Federation’s first fundraiser and celebration of Scottish surfing. It took part on the 3rd November 2007 in Edinburgh and raised £1521 (profit minus costs) for the SSF. The event was an opportunity for surfers from across Scotland to get together and party the night away.  However far from being an exclusive occasion, the variety of entertainment on offer as well as the unique nature of the event attracted a large audience from all walks of life.

#### Through the Whiskey Barrel Film Premiere

The Scottish Premiere of "Through The Whisky Barrel" by Scottish film maker, Allyn Harper was held at The Belmont Cinema in Aberdeen on Saturday 29th October. The red carpet event was a sell out success and surfers from all over Scotland were in attendance in their kilts and other finery. Live music was provided by Evera, Davy Shanks and Ross Aitkenhead at the after party.  
  
The event sponsors, O'Neill, Staunch, Granite Reef, Oggy Wax, Sutsu and Quiver put forward raffle prizes, which helped raise over £700 for The Scottish Surfing Federation.   
  
The film has been much anticipated in Scotland for some time and is the first Scottish surfing film to hit the big screen. The film has helped to put Scottish surfers back on the map. 

#### East Vs West Contests (Spring 2008 & 2009)

In the spring of 2008 and 2009 C2C Adventures hosted an ‘East Vs West’ competitions.  
The second contest was held in nice 2ft offshore surf at Belhaven beach Dunbar. Unlike the first competition where there was 8 teams (3 West and 5 East) the second event struggled to get any teams from the west to come through due to the Universities having a big bash in Tiree on the same weekend however those that did arrive from the East made the competition competitive and fun.

#### Scottish Lowland Longboard and Junior contests (2011 & 2012)

The Scottish Lowland Longboard and Junior competition took place in the late summers of both 2011 and 2012.

The 2012 event was held in lovely waist to shoulder high surf at Belhaven.

#### Granite Reef Open

Granite Reef held the granite reef open during 2005 and 2011 coordinated by Granite Reef businessman Gordon Forbes. The membership generated from entry funds (95 GBP) to the 2011 Open went towards the SSF

**The Scottish Surfing Championships**

The Scottish Surfing Championships is the main competitive event held on a nationwide basis and marks the pinnacle of performance surfing within Scotland. The event is normally held annually in the spring allowing the best Scottish Surfers to compete in the best Scottish waves. Many candidates train relentlessly through the winter months where each competitor battles it out for recognition across numerous categories. The Scottish Surfing Championships have been in existence since 1973 and year after year competitors battle it out for their name etched into the sacred ‘Bill Batten’ Trophy.

Scottish National Championship Open Winners

1973 Bill Batten ESC

1974 Bill Batten ESC

1975 Andy Bennetts ESC

1976 Bill Batten ESC

1977 Malcolm Findlay FSC

1978 Malcolm Findlay FSC

1979 Ian McKay ESC

1980 Eric Davies

1981 Eric Davies

1982 Malcolm Findlay FSC

1983 Ian McKay SSC

1984 Ian McKay SSC

1985 Ian McKay SSC

1986 Malcolm Findlay FSC

1987 Ian McKay SSC

1988 Peter Strachen BSC

1989 Stephen Clelland

1990 Iain Masson BSC

1991 Iain Masson BSC

1992 Iain Masson BSC

1993 Iain Masson BSC

1994 Neil Harris

1995 Malcolm Findlay

1996 Iain Masson BSC

1997 Iain Masson BSC

1998 Iain Masson BSC

1999 Mark Cameron BSC

2000 N/A

2001 N/A

2002 N/A

2003 N/A

2004 N/A

2005 Chris Noble CBR

2006 Mark Cameron BSC

2007 Chris Noble CBR

2008 Mark Cameron BSC

2009 Mark Cameron BSC

2010 Mark Cameron BSC

2011 Chris Noble CBR

2012 Mark Cameron BSC

2005 – Held at Brimms Ness (Open- The cove, longboard & ladies at melvic), Junior and Masters at Banff

2006 – Held at Fraserburgh

2007 – Held at Thurso (Brimms Ness)

2008 – Held at Thurso (Thurso East)

2009 – Held at Thurso (Thurso East initially then moved to Melvich on Sunday afternoon)

2010 - Held at Thurso (Thurso East)

2011 – Held at Thurso (Thurso East)

2012 - Held at Thurso (Thurso East)

**The Gathering of the Clans**

The Gathering of the Clans events main purpose is to unite the surfing communities from across Scotland. The format traditionally follows a surf competition during the day with a social event in the evening. Unlike traditional surfing competitions each surf community competes as a team comprising of competitors across 5 divisions - typically the Open, Seniors, Longboard, Ladies and Junior events where each competitor earns points towards their respective ‘Clan’. Whereas with the Scottish Surfing Championships there is a large focus on the ‘Open’ category the other categories score just as much points as the ’Open’ and hence this style event has helped push performance in all respective areas as well as giving a form of competition to strengthen the Scottish Surfing Communities.

2005 – Held at Fraserburgh

2006 – Held at Thurso

2007 – Held at Fraserburgh,

2008 – Held at Fraserburgh

2009 – Cancelled due to poor conditions

2010 – Held at Fraserburgh

2011 – Held at Fraserburgh

2012 – Cancelled due to poor conditions

### Surf Schools

There are many surf schools scattered around the country offer different levels of training and different training packages.

The SSF want to make sure newcomers to the sport have as a good an experience as possible for their first time under the right instruction with the right equipment hence its important to ensure the surf school of choice has the right surf qualification as well as current water safety and lifesaving qualification.

There are three official surf school qualifications:

* International Surfing Association (ISA).
* Academy of Surfing Instructors (ASI).
* BSA (British Surfing Association) – the former national governing body.

Each of these qualifications offer similar levels of qualifcation:

* Level 1 Surfing Instructor
* Level 2 Surfing Coach
* Level 3 Surfing Coach
* Level 4 Master Surfing Coach

### Students

The student surf scene has played a significant role in the development of the sport and has also gradually grew in recent years. In many ways the future of the country the student scene represents a window for some of the largest groups of newcomers to the sport. The university surf clubs are well organised, consisit of frequent events and the Scottish University teams often punch well above their weight at the annual UK Student Surfing Championships.

### Responsible Surfing

There are many aspects that involve responsible surfing – Ettiquette, Health, Fitness and Travel to name but a few.

As the waters around Scotland have became busier and a lot of newcomers to the sport have been introduced. The SSF feel its important each beginner receives a decent grounding in water safety and etiquette to ensure they do not become a hazard to themselves or other water users.

The sport of surfing naturally keeps its participants fit. To reach and maintain a high standard of surfers have to keep themselves in shape with both strength, cardiovascular and flexibility training being part of course.

Health plays a significant factor in the surfing world and there are numerous studies which identify the benefits both physically and mentally that surfing, in particular in cold water can offer.

Many of the Scottish Surfers opt to travel to warmer climates occasionally and experience conditions elsewhere. Through the extensive network that can be reached via the website and ‘hardcore’ and social network groups others have benefited from post trip reviews and feedback from one another’s expeditions.

The Website and the Hardcore Newsletter have been instrumental in the sharing of such knowledge relating to responsible surfing.

The SSF promoted water etiquette through a poster to educate beginners to the sport which was published through the website in 2008-2009.

In 2012 the SSF arranged for the Scottish Open and Junior Champions Mark Cameron and Jamie Bain to support a TV show which actively looked to promote health within Scotland taking a Scottish Family and introducing them to the sport.

World Surfing Updates – Through the website and more recent facebook community regular world updates are maintained and discussed across the SSF member base. The SSF committee manage a ‘Fantasy Surfer’ which is open to all Scottish surfers which in itself keeps the membership fresh with the international scene.

# How to Join

### Membership Types

There are two general types of Membership:-

* **Active Membership** and **Non-Active Membership**.
* **Active Membership** – Describes individuals who support the SSF and wish to be kept abreast of associated SSF and Scottish Surfing developments and also wish to have active role in the future development of the sport. These members may attend the AGM and have full voting rights.
* Non-Active Membership – Describes individuals who support the SSF and wish to be kept abreast of associated SSF and Scottish Surfing developments but do not wish to have active role in the future development of the sport. A Non-Active Member may attend the AGM but in order to have full voting rights they must notify the executive committee 3 full days in advance of the meeting.
* *NB – The term “****Non-Active Membership****” was created as it was recognized through communication advances of the internet and social media there are many supporters of the SSF who wish to be kept informed of the SSF developments but are not currently direct members.*
* *The SSF Non-Active membership can be obtained through requesting to join the SSF Facebook site.*

Categories of **Active Membership** will be:

* INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP shall be open to individuals on or over eighteen years of age on 1st January in the year of joining.
* JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP shall be open to individuals under eighteen years of age on 1st January in the year of joining.
* HONORARY MEMBERSHIP shall be conferred annually on individuals who have given outstanding service to the sport of surfing by the unanimous decision of the Annual General Meeting.

As of Dec 2012 there was the following Honorary Members.

* Iain Masson
* Andy Bennetts
* Bill Batten
* Ian Wishart
* CLUB MEMBERSHIP shall be open to members of a properly constituted surf club.
* NB Potential Surf Clubs should contact the SSF Executive Committee for further information.

Active Membership will run for one full year from the date the applicant joined.

### Member Benefits

The privileges of SSF Active membership shall include:-

* The ability to compete in all the SSF contests whether run by the SSF or in association with other organizations.
* Inclusion in SSF sponsorship, discounts and other social events.
* Eligibility to participate in SSF organized courses such as judging and instructing.
* The ability to attend SSF meetings, speak, present motions and vote on motions at such meetings of the SSF.
* Playing an active role towards protecting Scotland’s surf breaks.
* Playing an active role in the future of Surfing in Scotland.
* Becoming part of the movement to improve the infrastructure for the next generation of Scottish Surfers.
* Eligibility for support and funding sourced to help develop diversified areas of the sport of Surfing within Scotland.
* Eligibility as an athlete to compete in Scotland’s national squad.
* Eligibility to become an elected official of the SSF.
* Junior Members shall be entitled to participate in all activities of the SSF except social events which take place at licensed premises and/or which involve the consumption of alcohol.
* *For the avoidance of doubt, Junior Members may participate in activities of the SSF which take place on non-licensed premises which involve the consumption of alcohol by Members, but on no account is any Junior Member to consume alcohol during a SSF activity.*
* Notifications and updates on SSF and Scottish Surfing related information.

The privileges of SSF Non Active membership shall include:-

* Notifications and updates on SSF and Scottish Surfing related information.

### How to become a SSF Active Member

The membership year has historically run from Spring to Spring marked where entries are taken to the Scottish Surfing Championships or the Gathering of the Clans.

### Active Members Liability Insurance.

In previous years 3rd party liability insurance was provided by the BSA.

### Affiliated Surf Businesses Discounts.

Between 2006 and 2012 no discounts were offered by surf shops.

# APPENDIX 1 - List of References

1. ‘Former surf group director 'relieved' as case is settled’ <http://www.thisiscornwall.co.uk/surf-group-director-relieved-case-settled/story-11394191-detail/story.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. ‘British Surfing Association goes into liquidation’

   <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/other_sports/9336710.stm> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Email from Phil Williams at Christian Surfers to Chris Noble ([scottishwaveriders@gmail.com](mailto:scottishwaveriders@gmail.com)) ‘An introducti​on to surfing GB and how we can best work alongside the Scottish Federation’ 22 Feb 2012. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.isasurf.org/> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sportscotland [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Posting from Mark Boyd post event on SSF webpage [↑](#endnote-ref-6)