
West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Cookie-Monster - 2003/08/25 11:22

This is a cry for help.....!!!!!!

Right there's no point moaning about whats going to happen but we do need to get our heads together and see if we can head the Wirral Rangers off at the pass so to say.

I've written to the Head Coastal Ranger to voice my concern that we have not been consulted and if as many of you can do the same then we may at least be given a voice, if we say nothing then we cannot complain about what will be forced upon us.

The Head Ranger is Adam King, email: coastalpark@wirral.gov.uk

What I need now is arguments as to why we should be allowed to continue as we have done for years. Ideas so far are:

1. The Mersey is also important for wintering birds and planes land at Liverpool ariport all the time, do they look like giant birds of prey or have the birds just got used to them?
2. Safety, where do we all launch, depth of water, rip tides (further out), not good for beginners...
3. The study this is based on is full of holes should we not have a longer study period to better understand the problem if there is one.
4. Other beach users, dog walkers, horse riders, kids flying small birds of prey (sorry kites).

Any further ideas or stuff to flesh my stuff out will be great, I'll put this all together and lets see what we can do. If we say nothing then we have to live with the restrictions so lets shout and be heard.

Cookie Monster

edited by: Cookie-Monster, Aug 25, 2003 - 02:46 PM

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Cookie-Monster - 2003/08/25 14:45

It looks like the Bird Watchers haven't had it all their own way the zone that we can sail in is not as bad as it might have been.

It is as follows:

We cannot sail further north than a line of buoys that runs from the end of Riversdale Road to 100m off the south end of Little Eye but we have to launch from the slipway they haven't built off the carpark (its on the plans though) and cannot go further inshore than this.

Still write in, if we don't show them we have voice then who knows how it might change.

happy sailing.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Ernie - 2003/08/26 11:11

Quote:3. The study this is based on is full of holes should we not have a longer study period to better understand the problem if there is one.

The last two years have been unseasonable, both hotter summers and colder winters, this surely would have a greater effect on bird numbers than wind powered activities on the occasional windy day !

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by MRG - 2003/08/26 13:22

Certainly include something about the report not taking into account other factors which might impact on bird numbers (surely weather has a considerable impact on bird numbers which isn't even looked at in the report).

The use of statistics in the report and the way they have been interpreted is nothing short of absolute \$hit.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by TrustNoOne - 2003/08/26 13:25

If ever there should be impetus for the formation of a West Kirby Boardriders Club, surely this is it.

Which is Riversdale Rd?

Surely a "channel" could be marked up with boys that could allow us to run between the islands and the lake/golf course/red rocks coast. Even if an out of bounds area was marked with bouys allowing 100 m of space before you ended up on a bird "area", we would still have a huge sailing channel running up the estuary.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Freebooter99 - 2003/08/26 18:22

Marking a channel with "boys" is surely sexist ??

and as for the "Just Blxw me" tag line

LOL

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by TrustNoOne - 2003/08/26 18:44

.....and I got "bird" in there as well!

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Cookie-Monster - 2003/08/27 13:34

Getting back to the point...

I've been in contact with the RSPB with a few questions and here are the answers.

Q. I'm interested in find any information relating to how wintering waders are effected by disturbances such as planes, kites, dogs, windsurfers, horses and any other lesiure activities. Could you please point me in the right direction to any relevant information relating to the above.

A. This is a question I have encountered before and I am not aware of any research on this subject. I know that air traffic is only a problem if pilots are not honouring height restrictions. Our wardens at Rye Meads are always complaining about microlights flying too low over the reed beds. However, the problem is mostly one of summer activities impacting on breeding birds rather than disturbance to wintering birds. Windsurfing activities would largely be away from habitats favoured by wintering waders. Indeed exercising dogs and horses would possibly be much more likely to

cause disturbance at high tide roosts rather than the feeding areas, which are mostly on soft substrates.

Q. I have been told by some bird watchers that the birds will fly around until they are exhausted and then die or will they just find another roost? How much energy is lost and is this detrimental to the birds survival?

A. The birds would not fly around until they are exhausted but there is a chance that they would abandon traditional wintering sites with continuous disturbance. The species that you are considering are large scale migrants and they are capable of moving onto other areas although this could increase stress on the environmental resources. Disturbance could potentially cause a waste of energy that would be critical during a harsh winter although that rarely happens. All this does not say that disturbance is acceptable or that we should be inflicting this on the birds.

Q. In your opinion do you think that a wadding bird would mistake a very large kite for a bird of prey? and do birds become de-sensitised to such disturbances?

A. It depends on the shape of the kite and the direction it is travelling in. Research showed that birds would react to a general shape of wing forward and tail behind because of the resemblance to a raptor. However, the same shape travelling in the other direction was reminiscent of a goose and this did not invoke a reaction. A standard kite design probably would not cause any reaction.

Well from all that I don't think the wardens can really say that the occasional disturbance from windsurfers or kitesurfers is really going to effect in the long term the migratory birds that roost on the beach at West Kirby.

Should we now push for the channel as suggested armed with this information?

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Ernie - 2003/08/27 13:41

Excellent stuff Mr Cookie Monster !

My initial reaction is to tell them to stuff it and for us to sail wherever we want, however the pragmatic solution would be to offer some sort of self regulation and offer 'a designated channel'. I'm glad that the RSPB answers where in line with my Dad's responses on the same subject. All add's weight to the argument.

We still however need to provide a united front and to contact the warden...etc. I tried on the e-mail you suggested the other day and got an error. Is it correct ?

Ern.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by TrustNoOne - 2003/08/27 16:48

Would it be feasible to put together a club through people signing up on here? That would probably be the quickest way of getting together a representative group of riders from both sports.

It seems that the twitchers have stolen a bit of a lead on us through putting together this report (I use the term loosely) without any talks or negotiation with us. If we are to be effective we must act soon, or we could possibly end up with the type of ban that has been proposed, while the Council "reviews" the situation.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Cookie-Monster - 2003/08/27 17:02

To answer Ernie first yeh I got the same error so I'm going to ring up when I get a chance and find the real e-mail address.

As to the second question from TrustNoOne, well over to you Bert and Ernie would it be possible to put a place on this site where people can simply sign up to show that they are interested in providing a united front to this problem. I'm not saying either of you should be involved organising it further than that.

I will send a letter however to start the ball rolling suggesting a channel for us to use on big tides and South westerlies and use the information provided by the RSPB to back this argument up. Any further suggestions would be very welcome.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Bert - 2003/08/27 18:15

I'm sure we can arrange something on the site quite quickly - I'll put my thinking cap on.

It could be as easy as creating a new forum area and everyone who wants to 'sign the petition' make a post saying so - or do we think something more bespoke is required ?

I can't help feeling though that we should get something a little more concrete like a proper petition (i.e. bits of paper) or similar. Does anyone have a timescale on this - would the car boot sale coming up in two/three weeks time be OK ??

Let me know your thoughts,

Bert

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by johnny - 2003/08/27 22:03

I know when the buggy restrictions came in last year at Hoylake, the club there had emails from all over the country. Guys were recording their details in case numbers were restricted (you have to be a club member to buggy now!!)

Has any notice been placed on the flexifoil web site as this would be a great way to increase petition numbers, kite flyers all over the country would add weight to the argument. Who says it has to be a local issue??

safety in numbers!!

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by boardy - 2003/08/27 22:59

As stated in another forum, if someone can provide the design, I could arrange for printing of some flyers advertising / recruiting for the formation of a club or petition sheets for use at the car boot sale.

I to asked a question to the RSPB regarding West Kirby.

Q. I have been looking at your web site for nature reserves in the Wirral area. Your site lists Gayton Sands at Parkgate as your recognised site. I would like to ask the question, does the coast of West Kirby have any recognised bird protection such as those list on your website?

A. There is the Burton Marshes reserve although this is not widely publicised because there are no parking facilities. The next nearest RSPB reserve is Marshside at Southport and I can testify to this being an excellent site.

Perhaps this isn't relevant to the situation and West Kirby is classified elsewhere, but I have not been able to establish another listed classification for the area.

Hold on a min am gonna edit this, I've just had a thought, have the birds from West Kirby possibly gone to Gayton Manor just a little further up the river?? Perhaps this area is the officially recognised RSPB because the bird numbers are high and the enviromental conditions there are more suitable to the birds!!

edited by: boardy, Aug 27, 2003 - 11:05 PM

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Ernie - 2003/08/28 08:56

As stated in another forum, if someone can provide the design, I could arrange for printing of some flyers advertising / recruiting for the formation of a club or petition sheets for use at the car boot /quote]

OK I'll knock something up at lunchtime and send it to Boardy. I'll distribute these leaflets at the car bootie and also ask Sparky,Yoda and Stu et. al. to distribute down at the lake - along with Car bootie publicity (!)

If any body has any further ideas on club name (other than Dee Esuary Boardiers Club)please give me a shout.

Cheers,

Ern.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Cookie-Monster - 2003/08/28 09:43

To my knowledge the Beach at West Kirby is a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), now I don't know if this was because of the birds or because of the very rare Knatterjack Toads that live there, it would be worth finding out if the SSSI status has anything to do with the birds.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by DARKSIDE - 2003/08/28 12:48

Kiters have known about the proposed restrictions for some time and we have posted our concerns on this and on the BKSA web sites .

I have also approached the Beach Patrol with some suggestions and also asked for help from the B.K.S.A on how to set up a Kiting club and also how best to approach this situation ,which has already happened at Hayling Island.

One of my concerns with the proposed sailing area is that,now all the learner kiters are going to be forced into the same area as the windsurfers and more experienced Kiters,with all the potential dangers and hazards that ,that will produce.

I'm sure that if we all work together ,as previously suggested by Bert or Ernie we can hopefully work with the Ranger / twitchers e.t.c ,to come to a ammicable agreement.

Although ,up to now ,the council haven't been the slightest bit interested in meeting with us or hearing what we have to say !

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by MRG - 2003/08/28 12:50

SSSI:

English Nature will know why it has been clasified. E-mail: northwest@english-nature.org.uk, Phone +44 (0)1942 820342

Club Name:

How about leave the Estuary bit and the club bit out.

The Dee Boardriders. (DB).

Firstly it makes typing it easier and a two letter acronym is easy to recongnise than a 4 letter one. I doubt Deutsche Bahn will mind is stealing there acronym.

edited by: MRG, Aug 28, 2003 - 01:00 PM

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by TrustNoOne - 2003/09/01 13:11

Speaking to Dave yesterday about any contacts he'd had with the Council. Seems that they are going to impose the restrictions regardless of our opinion. They feel that they can do whatever they wish without the need for consultation. Fun times ahead, all the kitesurfers and windsurfers mixing together in a relatively small area. Any one got the number for that bloke selling the jet ski?

What are they going to do if we sail in the "forbidden zone", take our kit off us, slap our legs, most likely just ban all water sports completely.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by dave - 2003/09/01 15:35

Can you put up working email or even better the old postal system address's for us to write to and give our views.

At least if everyone who has contributed towards these forums regards kiting sends a letter to the same people we will be making a "club" effort to all this nasty business

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by helenc - 2003/09/03 12:29

Hi,

If you are having access problems regarding windsurfing on the sea it may be an idea to report this to the RYA. The RYA do have a legal department that would read your case and determine if there is anything 'wrong' going on. After all, part of the RYA motto is 'protecting the rights of water users'.

If you feel you need RYA assistance or advice first of all you should submit and email/letter to the Windsurfing department.

Hope you are all having fun. I just had three weeks in Tarifa! Was brilliant but my kiting came on more than my windsurfing as the wind was quite light!

Helen

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by stu - 2003/09/03 12:43

Got my reply from DECG:

"Apologies for late (ish) reply to your emails to DECG due to staff holidays.

Firstly I'd like to point out that Richard Smith's report was written on behalf of the Dee Estuary Voluntary Wardens and not by DECG.

A presentation was made to DECG by Richard highlighting the drop in wading birds which he attributed in part to kitesurfing activities. He intended to submit the report to Wirral Borough Council asking that they initiate discussions with kitesurfers about restricting areas to surf. DECG followed that with their own letter to Wirral BC to support the view that discussions were needed to sort out the situation. A reply from Martyn Jamieson (Adam King's boss) dated August 8th says that they 'will review options open to the local authority and then liaise with appropriate bodies - RSPB, English Nature, DEVW, DECG and, of course, Kitesurfers and

Canoeists'.

DECG hopes that these discussions will lead to a satisfactory solution but our principal concern has to be to conserve and protect the wildlife of the Estuary. I'm sure that you're all aware that the Estuary is designated at the highest levels of conservation through European law (Special Protection Area and proposed Special Area for Conservation) and UK law (SSSI) - hence the necessary presence of English Nature at any discussions. These designations reflect the internationally important bird populations on the Estuary. DECG has been concerned at the fall in numbers of some key species -principally Oystercatcher, Redshank and Curlew all of which can be affected by leisure activities close to important wader roosts such as West Kirby,

Yours,

Neil Friswell

DECG Chairman"

Look forward to liasing with the council about this! (Don't hold your breath).

I have spoken to Adam King and expressed my concerns about the designated areas, and asked him if it would be possible to have at least a small channel running parallel with the islands in the shallower area (between the islands and the marsh area) for safety reasons. He said it wasn't worth it, and it would only be workable on certain wind directions. I explained once again for safety's sake, we needed it. His response "I don't have enough buoys." Shows what we're up against really.

Adam King has now left the Ranger Service to become a teacher, so we should now speak to Martyn Jamieson.

Another point that hit me yesterday, with respect to the report that counted birds and disturbances on Little Eye, surely you could only count the birds on Little Eye whilst actually on Little Eye or by some sort of hovering device above the island. Presuming the Voluntary Bird Wardens don't have such a craft they would have to be stationed on the island, thus causing disturbance?

Answers on a postcard, please.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by boardy - 2003/10/01 00:13

Things seem to have gone quiet on this subject, however back in August I contacted the RYA regarding the matter. Today I recieved their responce. Its a positive one, but a bit long to post here. If anyone is still interested then I'll be happy to email it to them if they let me know.

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by DARKSIDE - 2003/10/01 00:35

Believe me , there is still a lot going on concerning the restrictions.

Myself and others have expressed concern over the lack of signs ,aimed at water users,that clearly identify the restricted areas and the possible outcome of repeated violations of these retrictions i.e, a call for a possible, total ban, for both WINDURFERS and KITESURFERS.

I'm sure that once educated ,most people will respect the restrictions.

Also there is a lot of interest in forming a club ,to give all Dee Estuary Sailors a chance to put their views across to the council/park ranger/Bird wachers e.t.c.

I for one, would like to read the R.Y.A'S response.could you please send it to me on:

Dave.Rose@Shell.Com

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West Kirby and the impending restrictions

Posted by Ernie - 2003/10/01 08:48

Boardy,

Send it to me...ernie@iwindsurf.co.uk and I'll post it up on the site in it's entirety

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