

VOL. 2 | OCT 2022

IN THE SURF



All the latest surf news from the SurfABLE team.

SurfABLE
SCOTLAND



Front Cover Photo Credits: with special thanks to Sean Corbett

IN THIS EDITION

- Scotland is heading to the ISA World Para Surf Championship - for the first time!
- Para Surf Scotland - Crowdfunder Launch - with a host of great rewards up for grabs!
- Van Appeal reaches £29,560.00
- SurfABLE Inclusive Surf Competition - 22nd October 2022
- Applauding our Epic Fundraisers
- Celebrating our Group Sessions



isasurf

International Surfing Association

The International Surfing Federation - World Para Surf Championship 2022

This year marks an incredible landmark for Scottish Para Surfing. The newly formed **Para Surf Scotland** team will be heading to Pismo Bay, California, later this year to compete in the 2022 World Para Surf Championship, an annual event organised by the International Surfing Association.

In a collaboration between the Scottish Surfing Federation and SurfABLE Scotland, up and coming Scottish Para surfers Jay Edward and Paralympic Champion, Karen Darke have been on a development program towards national and international representation to fly the flag for Scottish para surfing.

After a successful trip to the 2022 English Para Surf Competition, Bristol, in July, both Karen and Jay competed as individuals and made their mark on the competitive stage in their debut competition. In the forthcoming World Para Surf Games, Karen and Jay will launch a long term legacy for Para surfing by representing Scotland for the first time at an international event, showing the calibre of Scottish talent and the developments being made to develop a national pathway for adaptive surfing in Scotland.

A recent newcomer to para surfing is the adventure-loving ex-Paralympic Handcycling champion, Karen Darke, who achieved a Gold medal in the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, silver in London 2012, and more recently handcycling across continents researching 'inner gold' and paths to happiness and wellbeing.



Karen Darke - English Para Surf Comp 2022. Credits: The Wave

Karen states, "It's incredible. I really didn't expect to be selected for Para Surf Scotland and had imagined my competitive life over after 13 years of Paralympic cycling. I'm super excited to be doing something I love and representing my favourite country! It will be an honour and a privilege to represent Scotland for the first time ever in Para Surfing. As a relatively new sport, but progressing fast and likely to be a Paralympic sport soon, it feels important that Scotland has representation.

"All the restrictions of being paralysed or physically limited in any way just disappear."

Having had a fear of the sea and water to a degree, especially given I am paralysed from the chest down and more vulnerable being thrown around in waves, I remember just how incredible to be in the sea after my first go, especially taking it step by step with the help of qualified instructors at SurfABLE. Moving with the waves brings a feeling of freedom and connection with self and nature and the team involved. All the restrictions of being paralysed or physically limited in any way just disappear."

Jay, a quadruple amputee aged only 10, will be attending, officially making her the youngest competing athlete of all nations. Jay, aka 'Shred', an affectionate nickname received when competing at The Wave, loves surfing, skateboarding, being outdoors and anything that has a sense of adventure.

"I don't remember being in hospital, but I'm now a quadruple amputee."

Jay was only two years old when contracting Meningococcal Septicaemia. This life threatening condition resulted in emergency treatment to remove limbs and being hospitalised for 6 months. Jay states, "I don't remember being in hospital, but I'm now a quadruple amputee.

I use a power chair to get to and from school and a skateboard when I'm out playing. At home I scoot around by shuffling on my bum. When I go surfing I feel so happy. I absolutely love it. My mum and dad say it's my 'Happy Place'. I'm not bothered what temperature the water is, as I still love it even when it's freezing. When I was told I was going to be representing Scotland at surfing,



Jay Edward - English Para Surf Comp 2022. Credits: The Wave

I felt like I was going to burst! It's an amazing opportunity that I'm really excited about. There's not many ten year olds who get the chance to do this. I can't wait to meet other surfers like me. My mum said it will be really good to be with other people with different abilities rather than always being the one who is different. I can't wait! I'm so pleased that I can surf, as I really think surfing is for absolutely everyone - The team at SurfABLE make sure that everyone has a great time and that having a disability, or a difference, is never a problem - they always find a way to get you in the water."



Credits: Sean Evans, ISA

Lead Coach, Kev Anderson, states, "It's been an enormous privilege to work with Karen and Jay from the very beginning of their surfing experience, when we first introduced them to surfing and the power it has to change lives. It was clear from very early on that these two athletes, both from different stages of life, connected with the surf and had the talent to progress. The beginning is easy, we surf when we can and the very nature of surfing is to experience the wave and it encourages us to get better, get faster and get into the best waves. The next step was to look for pathways and opportunities to further develop their surfing and compete. It's here that we have found a community of adaptive surfers from across the world, developing and pushing the limits of the sport as the International Surf Association leads the bid for surfing to enter the 2028 Paralympic Games. We hope this year's

team with Karen and Jay as two incredible ambassadors, are the first steps for Scottish para surfing, and that attending the World Adaptive Games in California, Dec 2022, will light a fire for adaptive surfing in Scotland, pushing opportunities for many more to enter the sport."



Credits: Ben Reed, ISA

The Scottish Surfing Federation, stated, "We are extremely excited about Scotland's upcoming debut at the ISA World Para Surfing Championships and are grateful for the hard work SurfABLE Scotland have been doing behind the scenes to progress adaptive surfing in Scotland to a point where we can have Scottish representation on the world stage.

We wish all of the athletes who are selected the best of luck in California."



Credits: Sean Evans, ISA

Para Surf Scotland - Crowdfunder Launch



The team will travel to Pismo, California in December with their coaches and in water support crew from the amazing team at SurfABLE, who are doing so much to push para surfing in Scotland. The opening ceremony will be an amazing experience with a para surfing team waving the Scottish flag for the very first time! The competition starts on the 4th of December for the next 7 days where they will proudly represent Scotland.

Why are we crowdfunding?

We are fundraising to cover the cost of expenses to travel and stay in California for the duration of the competition. The Scottish surfing Federation covers the entry fees and training, but all other expenses are met by the competitors families, fundraising activities, donations and sponsors.

How we'll spend the money raised

The money raised will go towards the cost of flights, accommodation and other expenses related to sending a team to the 2022 ISA World Para Surfing Championships.

PARA SURF SCOTLAND

How you can play your part

There are four simple ways to help us reach our target, and make this project a reality.

- 1. Make a pledge.** Don't delay if you're going to support us because momentum is key to our success! There's also a wave of fantastic rewards up for grabs, but be quick!
- 2. Spread the word.** Share our project on your social media pages and tell the world to get behind us! The more people we reach, the more support we will get.
- 3. Offer rewards.** Get involved if you are a local business by donating things we can offer to our supporters. We will give you a shout out!
- 4. If you want to run your own fundraiser** to support us, maybe a sponsored activity or similar, use the 'contact project' button at the top of our page to let us know. Setting up your own page only takes a few minutes and you won't need any bank details. Just a fun idea!

Crowdfunder Link -

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/first-scottish-parasurf-team-at-2022-isa-worlds>



'We'd love a van that works' - Fundraiser Update

Carried on from our last newsletter, we have great news about our van campaign.

A massive thank you to all who have supported us to this stage. We have been blown away by your overwhelming kindness!

Our current total now sits at an impressive **£29,560.00** towards securing a used replacement van, thanks to both our Crowdfunder, and other donations received. As every day could be our van's last, it's a huge relief knowing we have funds to buy a replacement at short notice. We have so many to thank - see our 'Epic Fundraiser Champions' section, including an sensational **£20,000** donation thanks to **The Colin Weir Charitable Foundation (CWCF)**, to whom we are incredibly indebted to. Starting this funding campaign from ground zero was huge task, made especially more by discovering so limited funding options available to us - albeit, plenty for minibuses.

As we look at ways to safeguard SurfABLE Scotland well into the future, we have made the decision to stretch the current funding campaign with the possibility of raising a further £10k - the amount required for a new van. It's also encouraging to be in talks with a local motor trade retailer and UK wholesaler as a result of them reaching out to us offering their support.

Check out our social feeds for latest updates with fingers crossed!



£29,560.00

raised so far...



Our first 'Inclusive Surf Comp' - Sat 22nd Oct 2022



Para surfing is awesome, and although the now huge para surfing movement is at full steam, there is still some way to go in providing competitive pathways for the neurodiverse community, and people with learning disabilities or difficulties. That's why we made sure that our first event

at competition surfing, and inclusive one, bringing everyone together to provide all our members with an introduction into surfing as a sport, and celebrate the progress and talent being developed, with **1st** and **2nd** place medals up for grabs.





Heats were open in 2 categories.

Group 1 - Judged at mainstream.

Group 2 - Judged inclusive to additional support needs with assistance from coaches available in the water, if required.

Event entries were split into 20 minute heats and surfers were scored on their top 2 waves.

15 surfers signed up, and they smashed it on the day!

Congratulations to Rileigh - Group 1, 1st place and Alejandro 2nd, with Lillie achieving 1st, and Jamie 2nd in Group 2.

Huge thanks as always to our incredible volunteers, and all those taking part! Special mention to The Boatyard-Hopeman, Morayshire, Moray Trophies Ltd, and the kind person - who we've yet to identify, who left the delicious rocky road cake for our volunteers!

Check out our wee video clip capturing the day <https://surfable.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Inclusive-Surf-Comp-Oct-2022.mp4>



Spotlight on just some of our Epic Fundraisers - 'Thank you!'

Findhorn to Cairngorm - 50 miles road and off-road cycle challenge

Massive thanks to Rachel (pictured, right) and Sophie (below) for their cycle challenge from Findhorn to Cairngorm base station raising **£700** for SurfABLE Scotland and Scottish Autism. With a mixture of road and tracks, the route included the Dava and Speyside Ways.



"Me and Sophie are both autistic and have taken part in SurfABLE surfing lessons which are amazing! We love it and we want to raise money to allow more people to love it to! The helpers are so kind and understanding and we always come away from a session with a big smile on our faces! We love being able to just be ourselves, unmask and feel accepted. It's amazing how happy a session makes you feel!", says Rachel.

"We both went undiagnosed autistic for many years because unfortunately this is how it is with women and girls. The signs are different to boys, and girls tend to mask their traits. Scottish Autism is playing a key role in helping educate everyone on the signs of autism in girls. This allows many more girls and women to get a diagnosis and support as early on as possible. The longer a diagnosis is left the worse mental health gets, leaving girls flying under the radar."



Although Sophie was unable to attend the north run, she is completing the challenge in her home area of Fife.

Congratulations girls and see you in the surf again soon! From all the SurfABLE team, **thank you!**

Caorann Fosbrooke - 'My 100 mile prone paddle through the Scottish Highlands'

In September, Caorann embarked on a 100-mile prone paddle through the Scottish Highlands. Over 4 consecutive days he paddled between Port Appin on the West coast, to Nairn on the East coast, through the Caledonian Canal to raise funds, in Caorann's words, 3 of the leading and most influential surf therapy charities in Scotland – SurfABLE, Wave Project, and Groundswell.

Caorann, 27, is an engineer and aspiring surfboard maker, born and raised in the Scottish Highlands. We're also lucky to have him as one of SurfABLE Scotland's volunteers.

"My reason for doing this challenge has many layers. It started with a desire to do something really physically challenging but also something new and a bit different - I had never prone paddled a board like this until a few months ago. I also wanted to spend more time in the ocean to overcome fears and feel more confident in its vast expanse. Along with that came the idea to raise money for charity as well as a desire to learn more about the amazing Scottish surf community, and it has snowballed from there.

On top of that, surfing has led me through challenging times in my own life, where I have battled with stress, anxiety, and emotions. I now feel I'm in a place where I want to channel more of my energy towards giving back to the surf community as best I can.

"Hearing transformational stories and seeing the smile on someone's face as they catch waves and grow in confidence is heart-warming and inspirational."

Recently I have also been lucky enough to get to know the people behind these charities, do some volunteer training, and experience some sessions first hand! Hearing transformational stories and seeing the smile on someone's face as they catch



waves and grow in confidence is heart-warming and inspirational.

Surfing is a sport super special to me, and for years I have been lucky enough to experience the mental, physical, and social benefits of being in the ocean and outdoors. This is why these charities have been selected - to help them spread the joy, benefit, and stoke of surfing to people who really need it, or have not had the opportunity to try it.

By selecting these charities, I also hope it can promote collaboration or integration of their different experience and specialties.", said Caorann.

Caorann's journey equated to 26h 14m of moving time, burning 12633 calories, to cover 100.14 miles by paddle power, and an incredible £5,038.00 raised! Caorann, you are a prone paddle legend!

Check out Caorann's pre-challenge video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRCFy48QYcQ>

Sunflowers by the hundreds, and a Lossiemouth High School YPI winning presentation



For those who don't know Gregor Morris (pictured left), he's a bit of a legend - and the reason why the Friendly Access came about - the same charity which provides our SurfABLE Scotland project.

Over the last few years, Gregor has been busy growing sunflowers from seed, averaging a whopping 300 each year, and selling them on thanks to Allaburn Farm Shop, Elgin.

He's always wanted to money to go to good causes, and with 3 years accumulated equalling £900, we suggested a Tillett seat - costing the same, for our 2nd brand new custom made seated tandem board. This year, Gregor's sunflower fundraising efforts went to help displaced Ukrainians living in Scotland.

Thanks to Lossiemouth High pupils, Abigail and Sophie, their winning Youth and Philanthropy

Initiative presentation from last year resulted in them scooping £3000 to purchase our 2nd custom made seated tandem board. To Gregor, Abigail and Sophie, thank you so much!





Epic Fundraising Raffle

A huge shout goes out to the Gordon Crew - Shelley, Dunc, Travis and Carter!

Over summer, Shelley jumped in with a brilliant idea in offering to organise a raffle, and local stalls, to help raise money for our van fund campaign. It was a huge success reaching an epic total of £1735!

Thanks to everyone who purchased tickets!



We trawled our way through the usual social media channels for pics of Shelley, but it appears she is camera shy! So we posted a pic of her awesome lads, Travis and Cater.

Massive thanks again to the Gordon fam from all the team at SurfABLE. You guys rock!



The Junior School Highland Games at Gordonstoun School

When we were contacted by Junior Highland Games, we were uber excited to have been chosen as one of two charities they were supporting at this year's games.

This was a return of the games since the pandemic, and it was a fantastic day. With heavy rain forecast, the day was basked in sunshine for the majority of it.

We cannot thank the organisers enough, and their team efforts paid dividends on the day with a monumental £2700 raised for SurfABLE Scotland. Congratulations to everyone involved! ~ 'Plus est en vous'



The Junior School Highland Games
at
Gordonstoun School

Saturday 30th April 2022

- TOSSING THE CABER
- HURLING THE HAGGIS
- SCOTS WELLIE BOOT TOSS
- SLIPPERY POLE
- TUG O' WAR
- RACES
- OBSTACLE COURSE
- HIGHLAND DANCING
- EIGHTSOME REELS
- PIPING, CHANTER & DRUMMING COMPETITION

CHARITY EVENT
All proceeds will be donated to the local charities:
-SurfABLE Scotland
-Loch Park Lifeways Centre

PLUS MANY STALLS, FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT
juniorhighlandgames.co.uk

Opening Ceremony: **12.00**
Field Events Begin: **12.15**
Close of Games: **17.00**



Delivery through our Group Sessions

Our focus is, and always will be, to ensure every surfer takes away a positive experience.

In 2022, we experienced a growing number of support organisations wishing to share this experience, and it continues to be our privilege to welcome new groups and observe their development with social and water confidence.

Here's some of the feedback we received from the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Hub Scotland provided by Adoption UK.

"Really helped with social confidence. She loved the no pressure approach and the great support the guys gave. Being able to relax in the social group (where she knew all the other kids had similar issues to herself) really helped her engage with the activity."

"Love the ethos of the company. The guys are really friendly and down to earth. They understand children and tailored the sessions to their skills."

"I was so impressed by how the classes were run. The staff were skilled in knowing how to keep the children engaged and focussed. There was team building from the very first session and friendships between the young people made because of this."

"Increased self-esteem, improved communication skills and generally a happier summer holidays."



Carer Support
Service (Moray)



MORAY
wellbeing
HUB



If you are part of a group where you think SurfABLE Scotland would be of benefit, feel free to pass on our details. We'd love to connect with them.

Groups include, Cub packs, Quarriers Carer Support Services - Young Carers, Moray Wellbeing Hub, Grampian Disability Sport, to name a few.

SurfABLE Scotland relies on kindness

Only through your kind donations, and many a late hour Glyn and Kev are seeking out and filling in funding applications, are we able to continue delivering our surf adventures and vision.

The harsh reality, including the current cost of living crisis makes things even tougher for most. With low unrestricted funds, donations of any amount really do mean so so much to us.

We've teamed up with BOPP, making it easy to donate, and welcome any of your wonderful ideas from racing grand pianos on a mountain pathway - yep, it's been done by one of our team members, to swapping out Christmas cards for a donation instead.

Donations will be linked to our 'Friendly Access' account with 100% directed to support our SurfABLE Scotland project.

If you are a UK Taxpayer, your donation is worth another 25% by completing the Gift Aid section.

<https://bopp.app/link/2tvvr>



Volunteering

Working as a team, we're really proud of our awesome volunteers who are at the heart of SurfABLE Scotland.

SurfABLE volunteers provide invaluable support through person-centred coaching and allow us higher ratios to create positive experiences for all our surfers.

There's no hard commitment, and we appreciate any availability you have. Volunteers are supported throughout sessions by experienced surf instructors, packed with training opportunities, from learning good practice for inclusion, through to accessing Surf Life Saving awards through the brilliant crew at Lossiemouth Surf Life Saving Club GB.

If you share our passion to make life-changing differences and promote surf adventure, then you've arrived at the right place.

Get in touch by dropping us an email - surf@surfable.org.uk or call Kev, Lead Instructor m. 07938 214165



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