

Banff academy



Deveron coastal rowing club Whitehills to Banff Harbour



The Deveron Coastal rowing club was formed in 2015. It is a very unique Scottish Coastal rowing team as it is essentially a school rowing team, made up of mainly all juniors with a few very helpful parents thrown in. Our clubs first skiff was built and launched in 2014 at The Scottish Traditional Boat Festival in Portsoy. The build of this skiff took place in Banff academy. The school is lucky enough to be one of the only schools in Scotland to offer boat building as a timetable subject in their curriculum. The boat was built by a group of 15-17 years old who were led by our volunteer Boat builder Pete Danks. The boat was named the Banac (**Banff academy**) and was painted white with a blue gunnel to represent the school's colours.

In 2018 the school and rowing team decided to build a second St Ayles skiff which was also launched at the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival. This boat was named 'Róisín' as a very moving, surprise tribute to our team captain.





Beginning our row

It's just under 3 miles from Whitehills to Banff Harbour. Whitehills harbour doesn't have a working slipway for us to launch, so our good friend Mike from Portsoy offered to tow us over, using his boat the Soy Lassie. As our club is made up of all juniors, we are very lucky to have the support of Mike as our safety boat for our longer trips, school activity days and youth regattas. Coming out of Whitehills harbour we head east towards the Banff Links beach. Often this beach is full of windsurfers and open water swimmers and today was no different. Our club loves to train but we also like to take the boat out and sit and relax, taking in the views. We decided this was a good spot for us to take a little break and discuss rowing. Here are some comments from our youth crew.

How do you feel when you are out on the water?

"It's a great form of exercise but at the same time it relaxes and calms you"



"I feel happy and I like that I get to socialise with different groups of people that I wouldn't normally socialise with at school"

Who got you into coastal rowing?

"We had a Mental health and well-being day at school where different local clubs attended, and I got information about an open day"

"our teachers"

"a friend from school"

What do you love about these coasts and the waters?

"You get to see lots of different wildlife like Dolphins and seals"

"You get to see the town from a different perspective"

We then move on to the second half of our short journey heading into Banff harbour. Before we headed into the harbour, we stop to look out for dolphins in Banff bay. Banff bay is situated between the towns of Banff and Macduff and is where the river Deveron flows into join the sea. Banff bay is an excellent spot to see the dolphins especially at this time of year. We then made our way into the harbour where we pass the baton over for the next stretch from Banff Harbour to Gardenstown tomorrow.

