

PRESS RELEASE: July 2017

****WORLD EXCLUSIVE****

ANNOUNCEMENT: SUP Boarding In Snowdonia's Dark Sky Reserve Arrives



Sick of deadlines, mobile phones and newsfeeds? Leave the office, grab a head torch, leave the phone at home and head to North Wales. Psyched Paddleboarding (North Wales's leading stand-up paddleboarding provider (SUP)) announce a brand new adventure as they take their SUP experiences into the deepest, darkest depths of North Wales – literally. Snowdonia holds International Dark Sky Reserve status – one of only eleven in the world.

Sian Sykes, founder of Psyched Paddleboarding, is offering the chance to take some time out, de-stress and reconnect with nature – discovering a world of great natural beauty, unusual wildlife and Welsh folklore along the way. In a beautiful remote setting, travel across lakes in the dead of night, with the moon and stars to guide you.

Sian's mission is to inspire others and to offer high-quality and truly memorable stand-up paddleboarding adventures and these experiences are for everyone, even complete beginners. Since Snowdonia gained Dark Sky Status in 2015, Sian knew that combining SUP with the magic and mystery of the dark would provide a genuinely mesmerising and unique experience. She explains how it all works:

"I confirm a location the day before. We get people kitted out in their wetsuit, rash vest and jacket to keep them nice and toasty and we set off on our adventure at dusk, our paddle journey. We can see bats flying over our heads as we make our way to a secluded bay."

"We land our boards and drink hot chocolate or Pukka Nighttime tea and enjoy biscuits and homemade cakes. We sit on the little beach just watching, waiting, and enjoying the moment. We can hear owls overhead and the stars start to fill up the dark sky. It's a beautiful and tranquil experience."

"Some people are a bit cautious at first so they put their head torches on straightaway when we set back off on the water. The team and I have lights on our boards so people know who the instructor is and after a while, once they've relaxed, they switch them off. Some people lie down on the boards. It's just magical. All you can hear is the sound of the lapping water."

"We've been fortunate to paddle when there's been a full moon and people just lie on the board and look up to the stars. That's when they have their solitude time. It's very meditative and really special."

"It increases confidence, and it's a fun time out on the water. A time to enjoy getting away from it all, to leave the phone at home, to pause and catch our breath, and to reclaim a bit of ourselves after letting it slip due to daily pressures."

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Some more about Sian and Psyched Paddleboarding

Psyched Paddleboarding provide various SUP packages in North Wales: Introduction to SUP, SUP Safaris, SUP Adventure Days, SUP Holidays, SUP Retreats, SUP Micro Adventures and SUP Safety & Awareness course. They also offer exciting holidays such as SUP retreats in Anglesey, North Wales, to the West Coast of Scotland and further afield.

Sian and Psyched Paddleboarding have been featured on ITV Wales, Coast Magazine, SUP International, SUPBoarder Magazine, SUPConnect, Limitless Pursuits and several blogs.

Sian loves a SUP challenge! Sian was part of the first team to cross England on a paddleboard, she was then the first person to ever SUP, solo, the three British lakes: Llyn Tegid, Lake Windermere and Loch Awe in three days, all unsupported – a mighty total of 69 km was covered. Sian was also the the first person to circumnavigate Anglesey, her home town.

Sian, originally from Wales, used to work in creative media in London and Manchester, but after enduring gruelling eighteen-hour days for fifteen years, she had enough:

“I longed to be back by the sea and the mountains and I retrained as an outdoor instructor. I would do six months in the winter back in advertising and then six months in the summer back in Wales. I’m now in Wales again full time.”

“People are very surprised when I tell them what I do. They can’t believe I left a well-paid office job and what I’ve achieved by paddling around Anglesey and my other challenges. However, they feel truly inspired and they love following my adventures and love my lifestyle.”

Traditionally outdoor activities are dominated by men but Sian feels this is changing:

“We have more female clients than male for SUP. Recently I’ve seen more females and I think this is to do with inspiring female role models and the This Girl Can campaign.”

“I’ve embraced being a female instructor. When I first started out I felt it was a bit elitist being in the outdoors and slightly overwhelming. I’ve created a good network by collaborating with other females. We all offer unique experiences to compliment well-being and it’s great to see lots of inspiring female role models working together.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

For more information, high-res images or even to come and experience the adventure yourself, go to www.psychedpaddleboarding.com or email Sian@psychedpaddleboarding.com

Photo credit: Two For Joy Photography

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