



Rye Harbour Sailability (RHS)

Operations Manual

2022/2023

This document is an overall guide to the operation of Rye Harbour Sailability (RHS) sessions. It is important that the Officer of the Day (OoD) is familiar with it. It will be available on request from the Chair of RHS and all volunteers will receive a copy.

1 Organisation and Overall Responsibilities

(i) OoD

The Senior Instructor (SI) will be experienced, trained and currently qualified to the equivalent of RYA assessed SI, for instructing in dinghies, (keelboats or multihulls) and include disability awareness training. The SI will assess and be satisfied as to the competencies of Skippers and crew involved in the session and as recorded in item 12 Competence Assessment. The (SI), the designated OoD, is responsible for the organisation and communication of procedures and safety management of the event activities in liaison with the Safety Boat Skipper and the Sailing Boat Skipper. Decisions will be taken with due regard to the weather, water conditions, the competencies of the volunteers available and sensitivities to the needs of the sailors and crew.

An SI as OoD shall be present at all Sailability sailing sessions.

(ii) Safety Boat Skipper

- The Safety Boat Skipper is responsible for the safety of sailors and boats on the water.
- The Safety Boat Skipper, in liaison with the OoD and Sailing Boat Skipper will sign the daily Risk Assessment. All three shall have a veto against the session if any of them feel that the conditions are unsuitable for the experience of helms, crews, participants or equipment.
- All instructions or requests by the Safety Boat Skipper and OoD must be complied with by the sailing crews.

2 General Requirements

(i) Candidate Registration

- All people with disabilities and their carers who want to sail must complete a booking form on their first visit. This form will include information on their disabilities. A summary of this information for all sailors will be available to the Sailing Boat Skipper.
- New sailors and their carers will also need to fill out a membership form. This membership expires after 2 months or after a second sailing session and enables one free try sailing session after which there is a charge of £10 for one further session. If the sailor then joins RHS as full members, the £10 will be deducted from their joining fee. After becoming members there is a charge of £14.00 per sailor at every sailing session they attend.

(ii) Volunteer registration and development

- On their first visit volunteers will be asked to give an outline of their skills with emphasis on RYA qualifications. RHS policy is to encourage all volunteers to gain appropriate RYA qualifications and undertake Disability Awareness

Training. RHS may request that volunteers either provide a DBS certificate or agree to obtain a DBS certificate through RHS. To be covered by RHS insurance volunteers will be asked to join RHS (at present £5 p.a.)

- Training/course attendance with certificates and/or certificates of competency where issued should be made available on request.
- Informal assessments by the OoD are made of all those who are to skipper a boat with a crew under their control.
- RHS are planning to use the RYA Sailability log book scheme for regular candidates wishing to progress. The training for which will fall under the remit of a SI.

(iii) Carers registration

- Carers should register on their first visit. Carers continue to have responsibility for those under their care both ashore and on the water and are encouraged to participate in the activities.

3 First Aid

- The duty qualified First Aider will be identified and named on the sailing board and advised to all in the briefing session They will take care of any injured person. If the emergency services need to be called there is a phone in the Clubhouse.
- There is an accident book in the Clubhouse in the cupboard in the plant room. All accidents must be entered in this book.
- **Note.** First aiders are identified on a published list on the noticeboard in the club house. All safety and sailing boat skippers shall be qualified first aiders.

4 Pre-Session Organisation

(Volunteering levels and competencies)

- Volunteers shall be divided into 4 teams:
 - Safety Boats
 - Sailing Boats
 - Riverside
 - Shoreside

Each team will be made up of the following minimum number of volunteers.

(i) Safety Boats

- Safety Boat Skipper shall be RYA Safety Boat qualified with Power Boat Level 2 and shall hold a current First Aid Certificate and have undertaken Disability Awareness training
- The Safety Boat Skipper shall be supported with a minimum of one

experienced crew member preferably with Disability Awareness Training and a First Aid Certificate. Power Boat level 1 would be advisable. Crews must be prepared to enter water.

(ii) Sailing Boats

- The Skipper will assess the suitability and condition of the boats, rigging and equipment for the session and report to the OoD.
- A sailing boat crew will be made up of an experienced Skipper with Disability Awareness training. The Skipper shall be supported by at least one experienced crew member preferably having undertaken Disability Awareness Training.
- Any queries or concerns must be voiced immediately to the OoD.
- Sailing boat skippers will be experienced in the sailing boat that they oversee and will be members of RHS. Both skipper and crew will be assessed as competent by the SI.
- Skippers and crew are to ensure that they attend the boat yard in sufficient time to contribute to rigging and launching and to complete registration formalities to meet the launch timings and the skippers pre-launch riverside checks. This may include last minute repairs, replacements/adjustments to equipment.

(iii) Riverside

- One or two volunteers to assist in launch and recovery and to escort sailors and carers to the slipway and use caution on the slipway.
- All members, carers, volunteers and sailors must always wear a buoyancy aid or lifejacket by the slipway and quay.
- One volunteer to man the new gate on the rail adjacent to the slipway and check that the gate is secured closed in between use.
- Riverside crew to ensure that pontoon fenders at the gate are in place with boat hook.
- Access to launching trolleys for oiling and greasing is best carried out after launching and before recovery.
- At the end of every sail boats to be tied down in the boat park and all nuts and bolts and moving parts on the trolley to be checked if oiled/greased.

(iv) Reception

A minimum of 5 volunteers are needed for the following duties;

- Registration of booked sailors and checking of membership status
- Checking of waterproof clothing and candidates' accessories for sailing for example hats, gloves and suitable footwear.
- Fitting of Buoyancy Aids or Life Jackets
- Monitoring of the Radio.
- Galley cover
- Establish if any residue COVID related issues need to be recorded/promoted

5 Membership Attendance

RHS will encourage members to pre-book sessions by contacting the Chair either by email at trustees@ryeharboursailability.org or by calling 01797 223112. All publicity prior to the event will advertise contact details. Those who have pre-booked need to be encouraged to warn of any delay to their arrival on the day.

6 OoD Pack

The RHS Chair will produce an information sheet for the Sailing Boat Skipper and OoD. This will contain:

- Volunteers' abilities, qualifications and phone numbers.
- Details of the sailors' disabilities
- List of volunteers signed up for the day
- Names of Duty First Aiders also posted on the sailing board
- Location of Keys
- Updated attendance lists including Carers
- Allocation of Radios

7 The OoD

(i) Planning

- Each Sailability Session will be supervised by the OoD.
- The OoD, in liaison with the Safety Boat Skipper and Sailing Boat Skipper and the lead in reception will plan the activities for the day taking consideration the weather, tide and the resources available. The OoD must ensure that the Risk Assessment for the session is completed and signed and a session briefing is presented. The planning will be overseen by OoD.
- Recommend slipway versus adjacent quay for embarking and disembarking sailors and crew between each sail.
- Review the use of buoyancy aides versus lifesaving jackets regarding swimmers and non-swimmers.
- Sailors to always wear helmets whilst at sea. If they choose not to sailors must be reminded that it is at their own risk.

(ii) Briefing

- Following confirmation that the sailing will go ahead, the OoD will collect all the volunteers, carers and members together 30 minutes before launch to give a briefing covering; allocation to boats; the sailing area to be used to include the position of the Safety Boat; advice on any commercial traffic movements; any issues with wind or tide; allocation of VHF radios; identification of Duty First Aider and emergency communication procedures should radio communication fail.

- Reference to the Sailability Session risk assessment will be made with an outline of any exceptional risks particular to the session such as commercial or other large vessel movements. The OoD should remind helms to carry out the pre-launch checks but shall be responsible for final checks.
- The OoD will initiate a post session de-brief with safety boat and sailing boat skippers and the Chair of RHS and ensure any incidents are recorded and lessons learned.

(iii) Risk Assessments

- As well as the Sailability session risk assessment, risk assessments for the boat and the clubhouse are in the OoD Information pack and should be used for guidance.

8 Responsibility of the Reception Team

(i) Disabled Sailor, Volunteer, Member and Carer Sign in

- Members, new sailors, volunteers and visitors must be signed in using the pre-prepared registration sheet. If sailing for the first time, sailors and carers will need to fill in a booking form and a temporary membership form. If sailing their names will be added to the sailing board. Those who have sailed once must be reminded that there is a charge of £10 for the next two sessions which will be deducted from their annual fee if they join RHS as full members.
- Those who have pre-booked need to be encouraged to warn the reception team of any delay to their arrival on the day.
- A visitors book will be provided for feedback

(ii) Galley

- The team in the galley will ensure hot drinks and snacks are ready when the session starts. Meals or BBQ will be ready after sailing. Galley to be in liaison with safety boat coxswain and OoD/Riverside lead as to timings.

(iii) Boat allocation

- Once the plan of activities has been agreed the sailing boat skipper, in liaison with reception and the OoD, will allocate disabled sailors and carers to boats. This allocation should take into account the wishes and competence of the sailors.
- Boat allocation and order of sailing will be displayed on the sailing board.

(iv) Equipment allocation

- The reception team will ensure that all sailors and carers have suitable buoyancy aids or lifejackets and weatherproof clothing before they sail. A valid full self-righting life jacket must be offered to those identified as needing it. Chair RHS to be liaison with RNLI for safety checks
- The Reception team will ensure that VHF radios are allocated as determined

by the OoD, in liaison with the Safety Boat skipper and Sailing Boat Skipper and that these have been tested with batteries charged. Safety boats and reception must have permanently mounted radios. Only Radio Channel M1 to be used.

9 Responsibilities of Water Based Teams

(i) Boat preparation - Rigging

- Boats, which are required for the session, should be rigged under the supervision of the boat crew. Sailors will be encouraged to do as much of the rigging as they can.
- The rigging of the boats must be checked by the Sailing Boat Skipper before launch
- Skipper to check correct tyre pressure in launching trolleys/trailers
- As determined by the skipper ensure that, if deemed appropriate mainsail reefing is applied before launch
- Ensure transom scuppers and self-bailers are closed as well as bungs in place
- Availability of launching and recovery on-board fenders
- Before every sail ensure that the outboard is always secured ready for lowering and fuel tank full
- Fire extinguisher as required
- Signalling flag on board
- Prospect of inclusion of anchor and chain for the Lugger.
- Fully charged VHF radio or mobile communication ready to be allocated to skippers
- Boats will be ready to sail in line with the times on the sailing board.
- A strap must be provided to secure the lowered keel in position when sailing.
- Sailors will be asked to arrive at least 45 mins before launch time.

(ii) Launching

- The sailing boat skipper will be responsible for carrying out a riverside prelaunch brief with his crew.
- Lugger to be launched by using the painter and mooring lines to ensure a slow, controlled slide off the trailer. The winch hook must be disconnected prior to launching to avoid the winch handle flying. OoD to supervise.
- The skipper of the sailing boat will be responsible for checking the sailing boat condition and proper rigging of the boat and if concerned must seek advice from the OoD

- This should include checking; paddle(s), bailer or bucket, painter (spare tow rope), security of bungs, rudder retaining device, and the availability of a knife and the Velcro strap to hold the keel in place when lowered.
- Before leaving the quay the skipper to check that the lowered keel is held safely in position with the Velcro strap

(iii) Safety boats

- Safety boats should be in the water at launch time. (approx. 45 minutes before HW).
- Safety boat skipper to carry out launching checks.
- The Safety Boat Skipper as agreed at the briefing, must ensure that the boats all stay in visual contact with him and with each other. Procedures for communication with the dinghy helms should be defined.
- The sailing area, including seaward limits must be such that the Safety boat can reach any boat in less than one minute.
- At the end of every sailing event the Coxswain of the rescue boat shall check that all Sailability boats are tied down and secure at their berths.

(iv) Safe Sailing

- See the Risk Assessment on pages 8 and 9 at the end of this document.

10 Radio procedures

- The OoD is to ensure that, Safety Boat and the Sailing boat skippers are experienced in the use of the VHF radios and correct procedures for testing prior to launching. Channel M1 must always be used.
- Safety boats and the club house must always monitor this channel.

11 Recovery and de-rigging

- As boats return at the end of the session sailors with disabilities and their carers should be encouraged to assist in recovery, hosing down before berthing, derigging and stowage of sails, fenders, rudders, paddles and outboard (and fuel tank), as well as tying down.
- Any comments on the state of the boats or on operational issues should be reported to the OoD and be noted in the maintenance log book (green).
- The shipper will check that the boat has been tied down with coverings and the oiling/greasing of trolley wheels has been carried out.
- The buoyancy aides, life jackets, helmets and radios must be returned to the reception desk

12 Competence Assessment

- The sailing boat skipper should make notes on the developing competence of sailors and send these comments via email to the RHS Chair trustees@ryeharboursailability.org so that records can be kept updated.

- Sailability sessions are not to be considered as formal training as RHS operate to give sailors the experience of sailing in a dinghy with an experienced skipper and crew who cannot be considered as RYA instructors.

13 Degree of conformance

- These procedures have been developed as a guide for the efficient operation of Sailability sessions but the decision of the OoD, (and if necessary, in liaison with Safety Boat Skipper and Sailing Boat skipper), is always to take precedence.

13A RHS Emergency Action Plan is available and will be distributed to everyone separately.

14 Rye Harbour Sailability (RHS) Session Risk Assessment

A risk assessment shall be carried out by the OoD in liaison with Safety Boat Skipper and Sailing Boat Skipper. Use this document as a guide. Parts 1 – 4 should be completed prior to the start of sailing and remain under constant review throughout the session.

CRITERIA FOR RISK ASSESSMENT

General Guide (in fair weather, not particularly cold or wet):

LOW RISK	Wind (Forecast and Observed) under F3 steady, up to F4
MEDIUM RISK	Wind (Forecast and Observed) over F3 steady or F4 gust, but under F5 steady and up to F7 gust
HIGH RISK	Wind (Forecast and Observed) over F5

The Sports 16 must always have a skipper and one competent crew. The max number on board is 6 persons in F1 to F3 and be reefed above F3. Max number on board is 5 persons in F3 gusting to F4 and 4 persons in F4. At least one member of the crew should be competent in lifting and lowering the keel.

Similar criteria will be used for the Sport 16 being used by RHS dependent on the experience of the crew and sailor's ability and overall weather conditions, including air and water temperature.

Note that under some medium risk conditions, it will be decided that the Sport 16 may not be used.

The Drascombe Lugger. To maintain the safety levels required by the Recreational Craft Directive for design Category C, it is necessary for the mainsail to be reefed in winds of more than Force 4. Force 5 starts at wind speeds of 17 knots. Reefing points are fitted to the mainsail so that it can be reefed to suit prevailing conditions. Ultimately, it may be dropped completely & the boat sailed under jib and mizzen.

Boats to be used today	Approx Number	Any Medium Risk Restrictions (including reefing to be applied)
Sport 16	1	Reduced sail
Drascombe Lugger	1	Reduced sail

14a Rye Harbour Sailability Session Risk Assessment Form

OoD (Print name).....Date.....

Emergency Action Plan Co-ordinator and deputy.....

RISK	COMMENT/DECISION/ANSWER
Weather – Wind strength and direction forecast	
Wind strength and direction observed, including gusts	
Impact on launch ramp departure/arrival	
OK to sail (YES/NO?)	
1. Safety Boat - Helm Print Name	
Crew – Print Name	
2.Sailing Boat Skipper – Print name	
3.Other on water activities	
<i>Changed navigational hazards</i>	
<i>Confirmation of commercial vessel movements from the Rye Harbour Master (YES/NO?)</i>	
<i>HW and LW times</i>	
<i>Latest slip recovery times</i>	
What is planned?	
Impact on RHS activity?	
Other organisers aware?	
2. The Risk associated with Sailability sailing today is (tick)	
Low – planned activities can take place Note 14	
Medium – some activities can take place with restrictions as shown in Note 14	
High – there will be no sailing	

Safety Boat Skipper

SignedTime

Sailing Boat Skippers

SignedTime

Signed.....Time.....

OoD

SignedTime