

Safety Guidance & Sailor's Responsibilities

Before starting a sailing session

- Check the weather forecast for the area and time you will be sailing. Ensure that you are aware of forecast wind strength and direction.
- Make sure you know the time of high and low tide, and the direction that the tidal stream will be running while you are afloat.
- Be aware of the sunset time

Personal Equipment

- Ensure that you are wearing clothing and footwear suitable for the anticipated conditions. If conditions are likely to change, bring suitable additional kit.
- You must wear an approved life jacket, which should be properly worn, with the crutch strap secured. Regularly check your lifejacket:
 - (a) For signs of wear,
 - (b) to be sure that the CO2 bottle is properly screwed in, and shows no sign of corrosion
 - (c) the self-inflation capsule shows no signs of damp exposure signs damage. (Non-Swimmers must wear a self-inflating jacket.)
- You have adequate food and water for your planned trip. Consider whether you need to take sun cream, sunglasses, a hat, or any medication such as an inhaler which you may require while you are afloat.
- If you have a mobile phone carry it in a waterproof pouch and ensure you have the numbers for the Yacht club bar, the boatman, and the emergency services in your contacts list.

Boarding launch and transferring to the Sailboat

- Take care on the slip – the surface is uneven and may be slippery.
- Only board the launch after the boat man has indicated it is safe to do so.
- Board the launch through the proper opening in the launch rail.
- Take care when loading equipment (sails etc) onto the launch. Two crew members are usually required
- When the launch is underway remain seated, always follow the boatman's instruction.
- Do not attempt to transfer to your boat until the boatman tells you it is safe.
- Hold the shrouds of the sailboat while stepping across from the launch.

On board the sailing boat

- Decks and other surfaces are likely to be wet and slippery. Use hand holds wherever possible when moving about, particularly if you are not in the cockpit.
- On boarding the boat check for damage and check that all safety equipment is on board and functioning
- Always follow the helm's instructions.
- Do not leave the cockpit unless asked to do so by the helm. When on a mooring leaving the cockpit will be necessary for rigging, and derigging the boat, casting off from the mooring, or flying the Ensign. When under sail it will only be necessary during specific operations such as picking up a mooring or flying a spinnaker.
- Take care not to be hit by the boom when the boat is going about, or especially during a gybe. The boom may cause head injuries and can knock a person overboard.
- Be aware that the helm's view of the boat's surroundings is often partially obstructed by the sails. When you are crewing keep a watch for possible obstructions and hazards, such as other vessels, large waves, or a wash, approaching gusts of wind or squalls, and advise the helm of all hazards, even if you think he is already aware of them.
- When you have the helm, before making any manoeuvre make sure that it is safe to do so and that you are not placing your boat, or any other users in danger.
- In an emergency contact the Yacht club and other boats using the radio. If this fails contact the clubhouse and the boatman by mobile phone, and the coastguard by calling the emergency services number (999 / 112) and asking for the coastguard. If a crew member goes overboard follow MOB procedures. **YOU MUST SEEK IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE IN CASE OF A PERSON OVERBOARD OR SOMEONE BEING INCAPACITATED.**

Collision avoidance

- Make sure that you are familiar with the 'Rules of the Road' and observe them.
- Remember that in the shipping channels large vessels (Cruise liners, tankers, container ships) will not be able to take avoiding action. It is up to smaller craft to avoid any risk of collision.
- Keep a look out for all other boats and ships and other hazards and keep your helm informed.
- Ensure that your intentions are clear to powered vessels. If you are approaching a powered vessel, make your intention clear as soon as possible. Course alterations must be positive, made in good time, and be unambiguous.

Health / accessibility issues

- If you feel cold, become too hot, or are suffering from sea sickness inform the helm. If you wish to return to the shore for this or any other reason, make sure he/she is aware.
- If there are any tasks or activities that you feel you are unable to perform ensure that the helm is aware of them before going afloat.
- Similarly, if you have restricted vision or hearing, or any other relevant disability let the helm know.
- You must not attempt to board a club boat when under the influence of alcohol or drugs.