



## Wealden Sailability

Charity number: 1125286. AALA Licence number: L11101/R1599

Address: c/o Chipstead Sailing Club, Chipstead TN13 2SD

### VOLUNTEERS WELCOME PACK

Firstly, thank you for offering to become a volunteer for Wealden Sailability (WS). Without our volunteers Wealden Sailability would not be able to operate. WS is a charity that commenced in 2008. Although an independent charity, it also operates under the umbrella of the nationwide Sailability programme run by the Royal Yachting Association (RYA). WS is managed by a trustee board all of whom are active volunteers.

WS is one of the larger Sailability charities in the UK consisting of 27 boats of varying type and size. We operate every Tuesday and Thursday, weather permitting, during the sailing season and offer fantastic club facilities thanks to the generosity and kind support of Chipstead Sailing Club.

Our client sailors are encouraged to participate in sailing or gently motoring around Chipstead Lake regardless of disability or age. They pay £5.00 per session; carers attend free of charge. People are asked to give a donation towards tea/coffee and homemade cake.

For more general information and photos of our boats volunteers and clients, please go to our website – [www.wealdensailability.org](http://www.wealdensailability.org). You'll also find our policies on safeguarding, safety, etc which we encourage you to read. You can also follow WS on Instagram and Facebook.

**A DAY AT WEALDEN SAILABILITY:** WS operates most Tuesdays and Thursday's weather permitting from April to the end of October. A typical day looks like:  
Before 8.00 the Session Manager (the boss for the day) assesses the weather conditions and decides if there will be sailing. He/she inserts a message onto the website home page before 8.15 to say if there will or won't be sailing on the day.

- 8.30 Volunteers arrive to rig and launch the boats for the day.
- 9.45 There's a briefing for the day for all volunteers. It covers the weather conditions for the day, safety matters and client sailors attending.
- 10.00 Client sailors start arriving. They register their attendance at the entrance to the Clubhouse.
- 12.00 Lunch. Please bring a packed lunch.
- Back to sailing
- 2.45 – 3.00 Boats come off the water to be derigged and put away
- 3.30/4.00 Hopefully head for home. The precise timing depends on the weather and number of boats used during the day.

Tea/Coffee, biscuits and homemade cake are available all day from the Clubhouse.

We ask volunteers to attend when they are available. An email will be sent to you each week to ask if you are able to attend either on the Tuesday, Thursday or both the following week. If you can only attend for a few hours or half a day, then that is no problem as we appreciate the time you are giving to WS.



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**DBS CHECK:** We require that all volunteers undergo a DBS check. We have clients who include vulnerable children and vulnerable adults for which we require an Enhanced DBS check. If you already have a current enhanced DBS certificate, please bring it so that we can take note of the number for our records. Until the DBS check has been formalised you will be required to be supervised while dealing with vulnerable adults and children.

If you require a DBS check to be carried out:

- We need to see a copy of your passport or photo driving licence and a recent Council tax or utility bill to confirm your home address. We will apply for a certificate on your behalf free of charge through the RYA (Royal Yachting Association).
- Once WS has applied for a certificate on your behalf, you will be emailed by the RYA informing you that the application has commenced and invite you to complete the online form with the requisite details - passport number and driver licence number.
- When you have completed the form, WS. Registration officer will be informed by the RYA requesting a verification of the information you supplied. A certificate will be sent to you directly. Wealden Sailability will be notified of your certificate number.
- The certificate is renewed every 3 years when a new certificate will be required. This can be set up to occur automatically.
- Once a DBS certificate is generated all your documentation will be deleted from any WS database. No DBS registration officer is able to see your information on the RYA website platform once registration has been completed.

Should you require a DBS certificate for any other activity you may do, this certificate can be used, subject to the extent of the activity.

**SAFEGUARDING:** If you have any concern about safeguarding, please contact Helen Fairfax, Trustee responsibly for safeguarding (mobile: 07875337388 email:lottiehelen@gmail.com)

**SESSION MANAGER:** The session manager is the “boss” for the day, with overall responsibility for safe operations. When you arrive at WS, please report to the Session Manager. If you need to leave early, please inform the Session Manager.

**VOLUNTEERS DAYS:** Before the sailing season commences there are training sessions organised at the Clubhouse for all volunteers. It’s a time to get together, have chat, tell everyone about our plans for the season after the winter break and remind people of safety procedures, safeguarding, any upgrade of the fleet, etc.

**COMMUNICATION:** Emails are sent from time to time to all volunteers to keep them informed of news and events. In addition, through the season there is a weekly “Ask” email sent to all volunteers to see who is able to help the following week on either (or both!) of the days. Please reply to the “Ask” email, ideally by the Sunday evening, if you can help, indicating which day(s), so we can make suitable plans. There is no need to respond if you cannot make it that week.



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**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Any information or contact details you supply will only be used for any requirement of WS's administration. Your details will not be used for marketing or any other purpose.

**ASSESSMENT OF SAILING ABILITY:** WS has a responsibility to provide a safe sailing environment for its volunteers and clients. Therefore, the sailing skill required is higher than might normally be expected. It's very different to be a skipper of a boat when your crew may have no or limited mobility, limited sight, limited hearing, etc. Often clients have never sailed or if they have, only want to providing the boat doesn't tip. Therefore, the ability to control a boat safely is a priority.

Every volunteer will be assessed for their ability to crew or skipper on one of our boats. This is regardless of sailing experience. However, in order to become a volunteer, it is not necessary for you to be able to sail already. We are very happy to teach you. A logbook has been developed to enable volunteers to be signed off to skipper one of our boats and review their sailing progress.

In the event of windy conditions, even if you are signed off as a skipper, the Session Manager may not allow you to skipper because of the prevailing conditions. It's important that you practice in gusty/windy conditions.

Even if you have been signed off for a particular class of boat, please do not feel obliged to go out if you have any concerns about the weather conditions or state of the boat. Safety is paramount and we want everyone to feel confident in what they are asked to do. We are keen to give you as much training as possible in order that you can build up your sailing skill and confidence. Please feel free to discuss additional training with the session manager or those in charge of sail training (Helen Fairfax or Paul Chilvers – both trustees).

The sailing boats are divided into 3 broad categories:

1. Small purpose built dinghies for single handed or two person disabled sailing.  
Hansa Access 2.3 – single handed  
Hansa Access 303 – single or double handed  
Hansa Liberty – single handed
2. Larger performance dinghies adapted or designed for disabled sailing  
Laser Stratos 16 – maximum 4 people  
RS Venture Connect – 1 or 2 people
3. More traditional boat able to carry more people  
Drascombe Lugger – maximum 7 people  
Drascombe Longboat – maximum 9 people

We also have a Pioner, a motor boat that allows us to carry people in wheelchairs with carers, where required, around the lake.



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**BUOYANCY AIDS:** Buoyancy aids are mandatory to wear on all pontoons and while on any boat. We provide them for our clients but we encourage our volunteers to purchase their own once you have decided to continue volunteering for Wealden Sailability. Buoyancy aids can be purchased through any yacht chandler or online if you know your size. The ones we use for clients are Crewsaver which retail for around £45 to £50.00, although there are cheaper ones available.

Please print your first name onto your buoyancy aid (we can provide Duct Tape to write it on). It makes it so much easier to identify people and remember names when there are so many around.

**MAINTENANCE OF THE FLEET DURING WINTER:** Once the sailing season ends maintenance of the fleet commences. An email will be sent to you asking if you are prepared to help and whether you have any special skills – fibre glassing, carpentry, engineer, sewing repairs of heavy material, etc. We don't expect people to use their own tools. We have a shed which we use for storage and maintenance.

**FIRST AID TRAINING:** We strongly encourage volunteers to have an up to date first aid certificate. Some roles make it a mandatory requirement to hold a current certificate. One day Courses run by the RYA are held at the clubhouse for a nominal cost.

**POLO SHIRTS:** We encourage all volunteers to purchase a WS branded polo shirt which are embroidered with the WS logo and available at cost price, to assist clients in readily identifying volunteers. Additionally, we have a navy-blue fleece with the WS logo on them at cost price.

**CLOTHING:** It is always colder on the water than land so bring an extra layer. No special clothing is required as long as it is comfortable and warm. We strongly recommend nonslip enclosed toe footwear that can (and probably will!) get wet. If you sail when it's raining, waterproof, not shower proof, clothing is recommended. If you wear glasses or sunglasses, it's advisable to tie them onto your buoyancy aid or around your neck. There are changing areas with showers in the clubhouse. It can be worth bringing a change of clothing to drive home in as you never know if you are going to get wet!!

**SUN PROTECTION:** Being on water can be very sun intensive so we recommend you wear a hat, sunglasses, and slap on suncream (factor 50). Ensure that any hat or sunglasses are tied so they don't fall off or are taken off by the wind or ropes.

**WS HAS NO LIABILITY FOR PERSONAL ITEMS:** Any keys, jewellery, mobiles, wallets, etc. should be left on shore. It's too easy for things to fall into the water. There are lockable security boxes available in the changing rooms for small items.

**WINTER TALKS:** During the winter months some talks are organised for all our client sailors and volunteers, which gives everybody a chance to get together and keep in contact. They are held at the Clubhouse and last about an hour. We'll send details of the programme at the end of the sailing season.



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**LANYARDS:** To assist the Session Manager and remind individuals concerned, we issue a lanyard to each volunteer indicating the boats that they have been signed off to skipper, whether if they hold a first aid certificate or are able to skipper or crew on one of our safety boats.

Finally, and above all, we welcome volunteers and client sailors alike into our Wealden Sailability “family”. We hope this information pack has been helpful to you. If you have any queries or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact Helen Fairfax [lottiehelen@gmail.com](mailto:lottiehelen@gmail.com).

The main contacts for volunteers are Helen Fairfax, Trustee, ([lottiehelen@gmail.com](mailto:lottiehelen@gmail.com)) and Paul Chilvers, Trustee ([p.chilvers@icloud.com](mailto:p.chilvers@icloud.com)).