



WEALDEN SAILABILITY

SAFETY POLICY AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

General Statement

Wealden Sailability (WS), takes responsibility for all WS activity on the water and on the pontoons during organised sessions. At all other times and places the responsibility and care for all participants remains with themselves or their Carers.

The decision to allow any boats to go afloat, to be reefed or not, or for any or all boats to return to the pontoons, rests with the Session Manager, who will liaise with the Safety Boat Coxswain as required.

Whilst operating at Longford Lake Chipstead, WS operates generally under the Rules and Byelaws of Chipstead Sailing Club and otherwise operates more specifically as detailed below.

Safety Policy

WS shall take reasonable appropriate precaution to ensure the health and safety of all persons attending WS sessions. WS Volunteers will receive training in relevant techniques as appropriate.

Operational Status.

1. WS currently operates on a sessional basis i.e., persons attending for sailing may do so only by prior arrangement with WS and only for the duration of the agreed session. Persons wishing to attend outside of these restrictions should contact a WS Trustee.
2. Sessions will normally be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from April to October inclusive and will normally start at 10:00. Any deviation from this will be communicated appropriately.
3. For the purposes of this document:
 - a. All persons acting on behalf of WS shall be generally referred to as “WS Volunteers”.
 - b. All persons attending sessions run by WS shall be generally referred to as “Sailors” and their “Carers” or “Guardians”.
 - i. Sailors shall be those persons participating in WS sessions.

- ii. Carers or Guardians shall be those persons who are in attendance to provide care for the Sailors.

WS Trustee Management Team

PERSON	POSITION	Telephone	EMAIL
Jonathan Buttery	Trustee - Chairman	07976739270	jb@wealdensailability.org
Steve Thomas	Trustee - Secretary	07810 392370	st@wealdensailability.org
Nigel Lamb	Trustee – Safety	07768 884947	safety@wealdensailability.org
Paul Chilvers	Trustee – Bosun	07717 746543	pc@wealdensailability.org
Mick Johns	Trustee - Treasurer	07711 093960	mj@wealdensailability.org
Chris Williams	Trustee	07802 507514	cw@wealdensailability.org

Management Definitions

1. Session Manager

The Session Manager will be a WS Trustee or another WS Volunteer approved by the Trustees, who will have overall responsibility for the management of the session, or for that part of the session previously agreed or as required.

2. Pontoon Manager

The Pontoon Manager or Managers (depending on the Sailors requirements and numbers on the session day), will either be the appointed WS Session Manager or a WS Volunteer or Volunteers appointed by the Session Manager, who will be responsible to the Session Manager for managing the pontoon during a session.

3. WS Volunteers

WS Volunteers are individuals vetted and approved by the WS Trustees to assist in the running of the WS sessions.

4. Safety Boat Coxswain

The Safety Boat Coxswain is the WS Volunteer appropriately trained and authorised by the WS Trustees to be responsible for on the water safety.

5. Commando Helm

The Commando Helm is the WS Volunteer appropriately trained and authorised by the WS Trustees to be responsible for assisting with on the water safety under the direction of the Safety Boat Coxswain.

6. Pioneer Helm

The Pioneer Helm is the WS Volunteer appropriately trained and authorised by the WS Trustees to helm the Pioneer Multihull and supervise the loading and safety procedures for the passengers whilst on the water. Also, that the boat has only the agreed number passengers and that they are placed so that the boat remains in balance and trim.

Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults

1. All WS Volunteers who are likely to come into regular contact with children and vulnerable adults shall be subject to appropriate screening in accordance with current legislation.
2. If any sailing club members with children or vulnerable adults are using the clubhouse or if there are Chipstead Sailing Club courses taking place involving children, then all Sailors who are accompanied by Carers will either be restricted to using the disabled toilet or must be accompanied by a Carer to use the toilets and changing rooms.

3. See also the WS policy on Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection.
4. WS will have a person responsible for Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults.

Arrival

1. The responsible WS Session Manager should:
 - a. ensure that access to the premises is possible at the agreed time.
 - b. be present, or arrange someone to be present, in order to greet the Sailors and their Cares/ Guardians, and to assist as necessary.

WS Volunteer Briefing

1. The appointed WS Session Manager for the day should brief all Volunteers prior to the commencement of each session or as required.

Assessment of Participants

1. It is the responsibility of the sailor and/or their Guardian or Carer to bring to the attention of the WS Session Manager any issues that their Sailor, or the individual may have, and for the WS Session Manager and the individual or Carer/Guardian as appropriate to agree on the requirements to be put in place to enable the Sailor to go sailing.

Volunteers

1. WS Volunteers shall be assessed by the Trustees as to what boats they are capable of helming.
2. WS Volunteers will be provided with such additional training and/or guidance as is deemed necessary for them.

First Aid

1. There must be at least two trained "First Aiders" present during sessions - one on shore and one in the Safety Boat.
2. There must be two persons on shore at all times. One of these is the Session Manager.
3. There are two first aid kits available for the session:
 - a. **Shore Based Kit.** During sessions, this should be kept in the vicinity of the pontoon.
 - b. **Safety Boat Kit.** During sessions, this should be kept in the primary Safety Boat.
4. There are defibrillators available for the session. One is located in the club house. There is also one in the emergency box on the Wealden trolley by the pontoon.

Accident/Hazardous Incident Reporting

All accidents and/or hazardous incidents should be reported to the Session Manager at the earliest practical opportunity.

Defect Reporting

All equipment defects should be reported to the Session Manager at the earliest practical opportunity.

Boats

1. Only sailing boats with the agreement of the WS Session Manager shall be used.
2. The WS Pioneer shall have been inspected by the maintenance team every six months in each session year

Safety Boat Cover Policy

1. The Session Manager has overall responsibility for all safety issues afloat and ashore during a session.
2. The Safety Boat Coxswain is responsible to the Session Manager for the safety of all WS volunteers and sailors when afloat.
3. The Commando Helm is responsible to the Safety Boat Coxswain for patrolling and assisting boats in difficulty.
4. The number of safety boats to be used shall be at the discretion of the WS Session Manager in direct consultation with the Safety Boat Coxswain and taking into consideration the number and types of boats afloat, the number of sailors afloat, and the prevailing weather conditions. These decisions shall be recorded.
5. If during a session the conditions deteriorate The Safety Boat Coxswain shall reassess the safety needs and shall call for additional power boats or send sailing boats ashore.
6. No sailors or volunteers will be allowed to go afloat until The Safety Boat is afloat and appropriately manned.
7. The Safety Boat and the Commando shall be helmed by competent WS volunteers who have been approved to carry out this role by the Trustees.
8. The Safety Boat Coxswain will helm the Safety Boat and shall hold an RYA PB2 certificate.
9. The Safety Boat shall have a qualified First Aider on board.
10. The Safety Boat shall be manned by two persons.

Launching

1. If manhandling any boat down the approach ramp, due consideration must be given to having an adequate number of physically able people available to safely carry out this procedure.
2. Boats should not be launched with the mainsail hoisted.
3. Life jackets or buoyancy aids to be worn before approaching the water edge or going onto the pontoons.
4. All personal buoyancy should be worn outside of personal clothing.
5. The relevant WS Volunteers must check sailors' personal buoyancy, before the sailor goes afloat.
6. Sailors and/or Carers/guardians must not enter a boat without the permission of the Session Manager or Pontoon Manager.

Sailing

1. The default rigging decision must always be "why should I NOT reef the boat".
2. The Laser Stratos, RS Venture, Drascombe Lugger and Drascombe Longboat must all have fully inflated masthead buoyancy in place before leaving the pontoon. All other dinghies sailed by Wealden Sailability will be assessed according to their requirements.
3. It is the Session Manager's responsibility to ensure that all the boats have been properly prepared before launching, and correctly rigged before leaving the pontoon. This must include ensuring that any bungs are correctly fitted, and keels are correctly tied down. Also that the boat has only the agreed number passengers and that they are seated so that the boat remains in balance and trim.
4. Sailing should take place only in the area designated for the purpose during the relevant session briefing.

Returning to the Pontoon

1. Volunteers should be available on the pontoon when sailors return, to assist in berthing, and assisting sailors out of their boats.

Wheelchairs and Hoists

1. When a wheelchair is stationary on the pontoon the brakes should be applied.
2. When not in use any wheelchairs will be removed from the pontoon.
3. The hoist may only be used by an appointed and trained WS Volunteer in line with the WS Hoisting Policy Document.
4. Where a Sailor has a Carer or Guardian in attendance, they must supervise the Lifting Operation in order that their Sailors specific requirements are taken into account.
5. For independent Sailors requiring to be hoisted, WS will have a Lifting Plan agreed with the Sailor.
6. Where a Sailor in a wheelchair is on the Pioneer, the Sailor will not normally be strapped into their wheelchair. Where this is not possible it is the responsibility of the individual's carer (who must be on the boat) to unstrap them if instructed to do so by the Helm. This activity must be demonstrated to the Pioneer Helm before the Pioneer leaves shore.
7. It is the responsibility of the Carer or Guardian to advise the WS Session Manager and the Pioneer helm if the Sailor has any behavioural or medical issues prior to the Sailor going aboard any boat.
8. Where a Sailor in a wheelchair is on any boat in their wheelchair, the manual brakes must be applied and kept applied once the wheelchair has been positioned. Electric wheelchairs must also be switched off once in position.
9. It will be the responsibility of the Carer or Guardian to advise the WS Session Manager and the Pioneer helm if the Sailor has any behavioural or medical issues prior to the Sailor going aboard the Pioneer.

Use of the Power Winches

Power for the electric winches is provided by operation of the foot switch set into the concrete pad. In order to avoid any possibility of fingers getting trapped in the drum, this foot switch and the winch rope must ONLY be operated by the person holding the rope tail leading from the winch drum. Only WS Volunteers are permitted to use the winch. Nobody under the age of 16 should use the winches.

End

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Revised 30/07/2008

Revised 07/07/2009 – no changes

Revised 17/02/2011 – change to Management Table

Revised 18/05/2011 – various changes arising from move to Chipstead.

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Revised 17/11/2012 – change to Management Table.

Revised 15/01/2014 – minor change to Management Table.

Reviewed 17/02/2014 – no changes

Reviewed and revised by DMcK, BH, BS, JK, ST, Feb 2015

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Revised DM and agreed by JK, BS, MC, RM, MM, ST 19.10.16 Child Protection Item 2 added

Revised by DM, ST 01.03.2017

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Reviewed and Revised by DM/ST 23.04.2018 to take into account Pioneer

Reviewed and revised by DM/ST 05.04.2019 to take into account recording weather and safety prior to commencement of session. Notes on 1st Aid qualification stipulation for Safety Helms and wheelchair participants on Pioneer added 13.05.19

Reviewed and revised DM/JK/ST 24.10.19. WS Management Team list revised, Note changed on Use of Hoist, Note changed on Sailing Item 3 Responsibility for checking rigging.

Reviewed and revised by DM/NL/ST 21.01.21. WS Management Team members revised, Assessment section revised, in Sailing Section boats with masthead buoyancy increased, and checking procedure re-worded, Use of power winch section minimum age of user reduced.

Revised by DM, NL, ST 31.03.2022 to reflect the minimum safety manning level and also to add new Trustees.

Revised by ML, JB, HF, ST, PC, MM March 2023. Trustee changes made.

Revised by JB,ST March 2024. Trustee addition made, 2 winches taken account of. Session Manager accreditation altered to include Volunteers being eligible, note on strapping in of those in wheelchairs when on the Pioneer added.

Revised by NL January 2025. Amended to reflect changes as a result of the MAIB report into Wheelyboat 123.

Revised by NL February 2025 to add Chris Williams. New Trustee.

Revised by NL March 2026 to remove Mike McKenzie and change to new email addresses. Additional difib and Commando Helm.