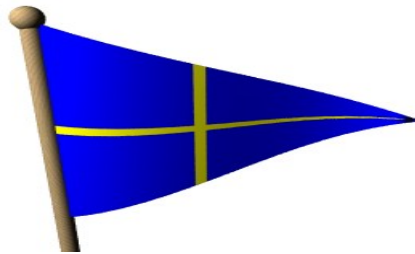


SIDMOUTH SAILING CLUB
GUIDELINES FOR SAFE SAILING



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|-------------------|---|
| Section 1: | Introduction |
| Section 2: | Race management |
| Section 3: | Use of rescue boats |
| Section 4: | Use of the winch |
| Section 5: | Major incident plan |
| Section 6: | Child protection procedures
(subject to consultation) |

SECTION 1: Introduction

1.1 Any form of sailing, especially on the open sea, carries an element of risk. On joining Sidmouth Sailing Club (SSC), members sign a disclaimer to the effect that they take part in SSC activities at their own risk. The decision on whether or not to sail on a given day rests ultimately with the crew of boat. SSC, however, has a responsibility to ensure that safe sailing is promoted at all times. These guidelines are based on a risk assessment of SSC's principal activities and build on the accumulated evidence of people who have sailed at Sidmouth over the years. No guidelines, however, can replace the core responsibilities of all members to support each other on and off the water, including:-

- signing on for races so that the race officer can keep track of all sailors and rescue boat crews
- arriving in good time for races so that everyone can launch their boats with appropriate assistance
- wearing appropriate clothing and personal buoyancy
- assisting other members, particularly those who are less experienced, in launching and landing boats
- giving priority to landing boats and removing them from the beach before de-rigging your own
- ensuring that their boats and sailing gear are in good order and adequately insured
- reporting dangerous (or potentially dangerous) occurrences to SSC officers.

The guidelines have been set out in the following sections:-

2. Race Management
3. Use of the rescue boat
4. Use of the winch
5. Child protection

They will be reviewed regularly. SCC would welcome feedback on the content of these guidelines, their lay-out and application. Please pass your comments to any member of the General Committee.



SECTION 2: Race Management
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Stage 1: Routine race management

- 2.1 Responsibility for race management decisions will rest with two officers or members of the general or sailing committees.
- 2.2 On the basis of current and forecast conditions they will determine the risk category for the race. This will be displayed on the 'signing on' sheet.
- 2.3 They will use the attached template to inform decisions about who should be advised not to sail, safety boat cover, launching and landing.
- 2.4 In the event of any advice not being followed by a club member, or for any other area of concern or incident, they will instruct the race officer to record this in a race log, to be held in the starter's box. They may also make the decision to abandon racing.

Stage 2: Serious incident

- 2.5 In the event of any serious incident, including deteriorating weather conditions likely to result in multiple capsizes and/or dangerous landing in the opinion of the race officer/senior safety boat helms, racing will be abandoned.
- 2.6 In the event of safety boat(s) being unable to cope with: the number of capsizes; boat(s) missing; boat(s) being blown off the race area; or serious injury at sea, then outside assistance will be summoned (in accordance with the major incident plan set out in Section 5).

Risk category	Green	Amber	Red	Black
Description of conditions	Calm/slight sea. Light winds. Good visibility.	Slight sea with light/moderate winds or moderate sea with light winds. Good visibility.	Slight sea with strong winds/moderate sea with moderate to strong winds. Poor, or potentially poor, visibility.	Rough sea and moderate/strong winds.
Who sails (all sailors to 'sign in')	Beginners and above	Intermediate and above	Experienced helms only (adult and junior)	No-one
Safety boat cover	Level 2 helm and above (or Level 1 under supervision of Level 2 and above)	Level 2 helm and above (or Level 1 under supervision of Level 3)	Level 3 helms only (or Level 2 under supervision of Level 3)	-
Launching	Safety boat(s) first. Then beginners	Safety boat(s) first. Then intermediates	Safety boat(s) first.	-
Landing	Either of club beaches	Most protected club beach	Most protected club beach or Clifton beach. Rescue boat crew and race officer/shore contact to decide on preferred option.	-

SECTION 3: Safety Boats

Ensuring Competent Safety Boat Helms

- 3.1 The RYA advises clubs that safety boat helms should be trained appropriately. This may be through a recognised powerboat qualification or club based training programme.
- 3.2 SSC operates a club-based accreditation scheme whereby safety boat helms will, on the basis of an assessment using the checklist set out below and on their experience at Sidmouth, be accredited as either level 1, 2 or 3 safety boat helms.
- 3.3 Level 3 helms are authorised to helm a safety boat in all conditions when club racing takes place. Level 2 helms are authorised to helm a boat in risk categories Green & Amber, as defined in the section on race management, but not category Red. Level 1 helms will have undertaken training and be gaining experience. They are authorised to helm in risk category Green and will crew in risk categories Amber and Red. At the discretion of the helm, lower level crew will be allowed to take the helm (in order to gain experience).
- 3.4 The sailing committee will maintain an up to date list of all level 1, 2 and 3 helms and will be responsible for accrediting new safety boat helms using the checklist set out below for the safe use of club safety boats.

Checklist for the Safe Use of Safety Boats

3.5 Pre-launch

a) Condition of hull:

- air pressure
- plugs and bungs

b) Equipment:

- anchor
- anchor rope
- tow rope
- two paddles
- tool set
- flares
- first aid dressings
- fire extinguisher
- spare kill cord
- whistles
- serrated knife

- air pump

c) Fuel:

- minimise fire risk when re-fuelling
- correct fuel level
- no fuel spillages
- safe return of petrol can to store

d) Engine:

- oil levels
- fuel connections
- warm-up using hose connector
- coolant circulation

e) Trailer:

- visual check, to include tyres

f) Radio:

- battery level
- radio contact with race office.

3.6 Launch procedure

a) Crossing of highway

- check for cars and pedestrians

b) Removal from trailer

- ensure that area around winch handle and boat is clear

c) Carriage to water's edge

- ensure that boat is transported using weighs

d) Launching

- ensure sufficient helpers for sea state
- safety boat helm to determine timing of launch

3.7 Whilst at Sea

a) Use of radios

- communication with race officer
- communication with other safety boat helms

b) Boat handling in different sea conditions

- calm water handling
- handling into, across and down waves
- handling in surf

c) Buoys

- laying and retrieving

d) Capsized dinghies

- attending/observing
- retrieving sailors who are separated from boat
- righting different classes of dinghies

e) Towing

- towing different types of dinghies, singly or in combination.

f) Overseeing safe launching and landing of dinghies

- keeping dinghies off groynes and sewage pipe
- determining landing sequence

g) Use of kill-cord

3.8 Recovery

a) Safe landing

- signals to and from winch operator
- no-one in the sea
- visual sight of beach party appropriate to the conditions

b) Return of boat to club

- careful mounting of boat onto trailer
- safe crossing of road.

Section 4: Use of the Winch

4.1. Ensuring Competent Winch Operators

SSC has a club-based accreditation scheme, as attached overleaf, whereby members will be trained in the safe use of the winch using the checklist set out below.

The Sailing Secretary will maintain an up to date list of accredited winch users and will undertake training for new members. Only accredited members can use the winch.

4.2. Procedures to be followed for the Safe Use of the Winch

If at any stage there is reason for concern about the safety of any piece of equipment or the general public the use of the winch must be stopped until the problem is rectified

IF IN DOUBT

STOP

1. There must be two responsible assistants.
2. Winch operators and assistants must wear fluorescent jackets.
3. Operator and assistant independently to check fuel, operating controls, winch alignment and attachment to anchor point with shackle and pulley block condition and alignment.
4. The winch must be secured to a fixed attachment point (which excludes the local authority railings) before attempting to pull out cable.
5. Position safety rope and assistant to keep public away from winch cable.
6. Inspect rope as it is pulled out and ensure that it does not overrun and recoil onto drum in wrong direction..
7. Ensure rope passes through pulley block correctly.
8. Place one assistant at top of ramp to keep people clear of rope.
9. Assistant on the beach with caribena is to be in control of attaching cable to boat and winching operation.
10. If there is no clear view between the winch and beach, assistant at top of ramp to **relay** messages.
11. Winch operator to start winch, take up excessive slack.
12. Winch operator to signal to beach that you are ready, via ramp assistant if needed.
13. Winch operator to await signal to start winching. Acknowledge response and start winching. Be aware that the winch may move as it takes the strain. Keep feet clear of the wheels. Watch out for people stepping over the rope or approaching the winch. Remain alert – DO NOT BE DISTRACTED.
14. Winch operator to respond to signals from the beach. Acknowledge.

REMEMBER – IF IN DOUBT

STOP

Recognised signals are

STOP - RAISED ARM WITH STATIONARY OPEN HAND
START WINCHING - CIRCULAR MOTION ABOVE HEAD WITH POINTED FINGER
ACKNOWLEDGE SIGNAL - EXTENDED ARM WITH THUMB RAISED

Section 5: Major Incident Plan

5.1. Introduction

Risk assessment has been used to determine the most effective control measures in order to reduce the degree of risk imposed by SSC's activities as far as practicable.

The controls already in place, and described in the safety policy, will enhance the safety of members and guests under all foreseeable conditions; this section will describe how the club will deal with situations of an extreme nature that could lead to actual or potential injury to one or more persons involved in organised activities.

5.2. Major Casualties

The following are incidents that could lead to a major casualty situation; the list is not exhaustive and the intention of this plan is to introduce systems that will seek to control effectively both those listed and the unforeseen:

- a. Multiple capsize/stranding where self rescue or rescue by club safety boats would result in prolonged exposure to hazard e.g. lee shore stranding/multiple capsize in strong tidal conditions, early or late season (cold water)
- b. Collision with powered craft and serious damage to several boats.
- c. Loss of one or more persons overboard in extreme weather conditions.
- d. Medical emergency in poor weather.
- e. Multiple physical injury.
- f. Loss to sight of dinghy or crew.
- g.** Craft / crew not accounted for when tallies are checked.

5.3. Action Plan

5.3.1 Immediate Action: Rapid response by the safety boat helm/race officer and instructors during the initial stages of any incident will mitigate the potential for additional harm to personnel. The following action is to be initiated at any time when the safety boat helm/race officer considers that a situation exists that may lead to death or serious injury, or when such a situation has already occurred;

- a. The safety boat helm is to take control of the incident on the water.
- b. The alarm is to be raised by VHF communication with person in charge (Instructor in charge or race officer), the launching of distress flares and attempting to communicate with the emergency services by VHF CH16.
- c. If communications can be established immediately, the location and extent of the incident should be passed to the emergency services;

particular emphasis should be placed on the number of potential casualties and the proposed location at which the rescue teams should await casualty delivery. Emergency landing point will be the beach opposite the club house unless directed otherwise.

- d. Club officials/organisers not involved in the incident should take steps to coordinate all boats that have not been affected and move them in close company to a place of safety. If appropriate, instructor controlled boats may assist in the rescue operation but only if the lives of those on board are not endangered.
- e. The safety boat(s) are to carry out rescue operations; priority being given to those in greatest danger. Persons who are in the water but not in immediate danger will be dealt with as soon as those in most need have received attention.
- f. Under no circumstances are children or crews to be left in the water unattended and if the safety boat is unable to offer immediate assistance a responsible person is to remain in the water with the children until assistance can be given.

5.3.2 Co-ordination: the following actions are to be taken in order that all persons can be accounted for:

- a. When the emergency services arrive on the scene the safety boat helm is to make contact immediately with them and explain the current situation and extent and disposition of any casualties.
- b. The race officer or person in control at the sailing club is to ensure that a list of all persons involved is available and be prepared to assist both the safety boat helm and the emergency services to account for all those involved in the incident.
- c. The race officer or person in control at the sailing club will coordinate all requests for information from families and the media. Next of kin are to be provided with details in respect of their own children only and are to be told their location; caution should be exercised in the release of any personal information. No information other than the overall details of the incident are to be given to the media; all requests for information are to be passed to the emergency services.
- d. When the situation has stabilised the club will inform all families of the incident and advise them to proceed to the centre to meet their families when they return.

5.3.3 Post Incident: when all personnel are accounted for and casualties evacuated by the emergency services, the remaining craft will return to the centre with all remaining persons. All persons are to be immediately taken to the main function room and accounted for before being allowed to leave the premises.

5.4. Summary

The aim of this plan is to have procedures in place that will be implemented in the event of extreme situations. SSC will ensure its effectiveness by implementing a regime of briefing race officers, safety boat helms and others involved in managing activities and maintain their competence in all areas of emergency control.

This document will be kept under review and will be modified as circumstances dictate or when other advice is received from the RYA or emergency services.