

1 General

1.1 This code of practice has been produced to provide Club members who sail monohull or multihull dinghies and windsurfers with helpful information & guidance. The Code of Practice is intended to help keep members, their families, guests and property safe by the implementation of safe practices and make the Club an enjoyable place to sail from for all members.

2 Personal Safety – All Members

2.1 Members, their families and guests are responsible for their own personal safety and the Club cannot be held responsible for the actions of an individual. Advice given by any official of the Club is of an advisory nature only.

2.2 Parents and guardians are warned that the Club is only able to provide support facilities for Club organised activities. Parents and guardians have sole responsibility for their children and wards at all times and must appreciate that the Club cannot be expected to exercise supervision or control.

2.3 Club support boats have a prime responsibility to assist in protection of human life. The support boat helms are in charge of support operations and sailors are asked to assist the support boat crews by following their instructions completely. Members' equipment will only be recovered if doing so will not, in the opinion of the support boat helm, jeopardise either the life or health of crews.

2.4 All dinghies used from the Club shall be fitted with buoyancy to Class rules, or as the Committee may require.

2.5 It is strongly recommended that members and their guests wear personal buoyancy when sailing. A wetsuit is not considered to be adequate personal buoyancy. The wearing of this buoyancy shall be the personal decision of the individual, except when taking part in Club racing or any other club organised activity, when wearing personal buoyancy is compulsory. Members and their guests are additionally advised to wear Wet/Dry suits between the end of October and end of May whilst sailing.

2.6 It is recommended that all sailors should carry on their person an easily accessible sailing knife which has a sharp, serrated, locking blade with a blunt tip and a shackle key.

2.7 It is also recommended that when you go afloat, you advise someone where you intend to sail and what time you intend to return so they are able to alert emergency services should you not return as planned.

2.8 If you are sailing alone (which is not recommended) it would be strongly suggested that a VHF radio is carried on your person, and not stored in the boat, a mobile phone is stored in the boat and that hand-held flares are carried.

2.9 Flag N (blue and white check) flown from the clubhouse mast-head will provide the following information to members. This flag indicates the following:



'All club racing abandoned. We advise NO SAILING AT ALL.'

NO SUPPORT BOAT COVER will be available

3 Club Dinghies

- 3.1 The club is able to loan its members a number of Club-owned dinghies free of charge.
- 3.2 These dinghies are for use at the club and are not to be taken off site without the express permission of the club.
- 3.3 Members must use the Club Boat Booking System at <https://clubboats.marconi-sc.org.uk/> to book a Club Dinghy. A separate login is required to access the system. Email clubboats@marconi-sc.org.uk to be added to the System. Members are encouraged to read the [Important Info Page](#) on the Club Boat System prior to booking a Club Boat.
- 3.4 All Breakages and missing items must be reported via the Club Boat Booking System.
- 3.5 Anyone using Club Boats shall wear personal buoyancy at all times, and between the end of October and end of May shall wear Wet/Dry suit whilst sailing.
- 3.6 Club dinghies may only be used when one or more of the club's support boats are appropriately manned and on station. Additionally, in the case of two-handed dinghies:
 - It is advised that helms have a VHF radio carried on their person (not just stored in the boat)

4 Use of Hard – All Members

- 4.1 Access to the hard is through the gap in the sea wall and a 3.6 metre (12 ft) strip from this gap to the low water mark should be kept free of parked dinghies and launching trolleys at all times. Additionally, the gravel area between the pontoon and the hard should have an unencumbered path from the top of the hard to water line to facilitate the launching and recovery of dinghies & tenders.
- 4.2 Occasionally restrictions may be placed on the use of the hard or specific areas of the hard, for instance whilst the winches are in use or during Cadet Week. These restrictions are put in place to protect members from exceptional hazards or from placing themselves in harm's way.
- 4.3 When cruisers are being launched or recovered on a Sunday or at any time when Club dinghy racing is scheduled in the yearbook, a member of the cruiser fleet will act as Beach Master who will oversee activities on the hard. Members must comply with the Beach Masters' instructions at all times. The east side of the hard **MUST NOT** be used by sailing dinghies when cruisers are being launched or recovered or when mooring activities are taking place.
- 4.4 It is important to be particularly aware of cruisers being launched or recovered when approaching the hard to land because of:
 - The risk of a serious accident should the cruiser be lowered onto a boat and crew.
 - The risk of striking a partially submerged cruiser trailer and resultant injury to crew or damage to sailing dinghy. The support frames of the cruiser trailer will be visible above the surface of the water to provide warning of the trailer being partially submerged.
 - The risk from steel wire ropes when winches or tractors are in use. Anyone who is not directly involved with the launching or recovery of cruisers should stay well clear of the operation.
- 4.5 At times when, due to high tide, space is restricted on the hard, early finishers of races should take their craft into the dinghy/cat parks. Space must be left to allow cruiser tenders and windsurfers to use the beach areas either side of the hard and to exit the hard safely.

- 4.6 In accordance with Club rules, motor vehicles are only permitted on the hard in very limited circumstances. Members must not use their car or other motor vehicle to launch or recover their vessel.
- 4.7 The electric winches are available to members for launching and recovery of dinghies. The winches must be operated in accordance with its specific code of practice (MSCP75). As with all winches, members should keep well clear of the electric winch and rope when in operation.
- 4.8 During Cadet Week, a member will act as Beach Master and oversee activities on the hard. Members must comply with the Beach Masters' instructions at all times. When powerboats are being launched that side of the hard **MUST NOT** be used by sailing dinghies or at any other time at the request of the beach master.
- 4.9 At ANY time when ANY boat is being launched or recovered using a winch, that side of the hard below the boat being launched or recovered **MUST** be avoided in case the boat becomes detached from the winch.
- 4.10 The beach at the western end of the hard is often used by swimmers in the summer months. It is the responsibility of all watercraft users to keep an eye out for swimmers and ensure avoidance.
- 4.11 Swimmers should ensure that they are not swimming in front of the hard during sailing periods (racing, training, launching etc) to ensure both their safety and the safety of sailors.

5 Storage of Dinghies and Catamarans - General

- 5.1 No boats may be brought to the Club before registration and payment of the appropriate fees, unless specific permission is granted by the Club Secretary. All trailers and launching trolleys must be clearly marked with owner's name, boat number, and telephone number. Boats should also carry some means of identification, e.g. boat number.
- 5.2 Boats must display the appropriate fee stickers supplied by the Club.
- 5.3 Boats which are not clearly marked and show signs of neglect and could cause damage to other members' boats may be moved by representatives of the Club to an area away from other members' boats.
- 5.4 In accordance with Club rules, any boats or equipment abandoned at the Club may be sold by the Club in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Club handbook.
- 5.5 Dinghies should not be left in or obstruct the windsurfer rigging area. Space needs to be left summer and winter for windsurfer parking and rigging.

6 Dinghy Park (Monohulls)

- 6.1 Boat spaces are allocated by the Club rather than the previous first come, first served system. Members shall only keep their boats in the numbered space(s) allocated to them. Where a member has two or more spaces allocated to them by virtue of the fact that they have two or more boats, each boat must be kept in its respectively allocated space. Boat spaces will be displayed in the clubhouse and recorded on the club membership database.
- 6.2 If a member wishes to bring a new boat to the club, they should contact the Dinghy Park Co-ordinator to be allocated a space and ensure any fees are paid to the club accordingly. If a member removes a boat from the club, they should also advise the Dinghy Park Co-ordinator so the space can be made available for another dinghy. The Dinghy Park Co-ordinator will update the Dinghy Park plan accordingly.

- 6.3 Boats in the dinghy park must have their masts raised; masts must not be left on the deck. Boats must be tied down to the cables and chains provided. If in doubt contact the Dinghy Park Coordinator.
- 6.4 Members shall keep their allocated boat space tidy and the grass cut. Motor vehicles must not be brought into the boat parking area. Road trailers must be stored in the trailer parking area, fitted with a locking device to prevent theft, and marked in accordance with Section 5.1. To minimise the space occupied by road trailers, combination road trailers should be stored under dinghies where practicable. Other dinghy road trailers should be stored in the designated parking area.
- 6.5 All dinghies must be securely tied down to the wire cable. Fixings shall be able to withstand all possible wind conditions to prevent the dinghy from falling onto other boats. It is the Club member's own responsibility to ensure the tie down attachments are adequate. It may also be necessary to ensure that the fronts of trolleys are secured if raised. Dinghies, trolleys and sails should not be left between parking lines obstructing access to the dinghy park for other members. The size of the park does not allow for storage of boxes, sailboards, canoes, road trailers and so on.
- 6.6 The Club reserves the right to secure a vessel in order to prevent damage to itself or other boats.
- 6.7 Members who remove their dinghy from the club for the whole of the winter period (1st December through to 1st March) may apply for a rebate of a portion of their annual boat fee. Members who remove their boat(s) for the winter may apply to the Honorary Treasurer accordingly, after the 1st December. Checks will be made that the dinghy has been removed for the full winter period. If a dinghy is present at any time between 1st December and 1st March, it will not be eligible for a refund. Owners must ensure that boats are tied down sufficiently securely to withstand winter gales. This may include the lowering of masts or addition of supplementary tie downs.

7 Catamaran Park

- 7.1 Each catamaran will be allocated a parking space by the Cat Park Co-ordinator. Members shall keep their allocated boat parking space tidy and grass cut. Motor vehicles must not be brought into the boat parking area. Road trailers must be stored in the trailer parking area and fitted with a locking device to reduce the risk of theft, and marked in accordance with Section 5.1.
- 7.2 Members shall park their boats in the allocated space and write their name, boat details and contact details on the allocation sheets on the Club Notice Board. These details must be updated as appropriate.
- 7.3 All catamarans must be securely tied down. Fixings shall be able to withstand all possible wind conditions to prevent the catamaran from falling onto other boats. It is the Club member's own responsibility to ensure the anchor attachments are adequate. Experience from the 1987 hurricane and more recent storms has shown that anchors and tie-downs must be able to withstand forces estimated at 1 Ton. The Club reserves the right to secure vessels in order to prevent damage to itself or other boats. It is recommended that Duckbill ground anchors or similar are used to secure catamarans. These are available for purchase from the Catamaran Park Co-ordinator.
- 7.4 Duckbill ground anchors purchased pre-2005 have approximately a 5-to-7-year life expectancy. Those purchased during or after 2005 have an average 40-year life expectancy. It is the member's responsibility to ensure that the ground anchor in use remains fit for purpose.

7.5 All Catamarans stored at the Club during the winter months must have their masts lowered and be made secure from the 1st November until the start of the following sailing season. Catamaran's that are regularly used during the winter months must be securely stowed and have their masts lowered in advance of forecast poor weather conditions.

7.6 Members who remove their cat from the club for the whole of the winter period (1st December through to 1st March) may apply for a rebate of a portion of their annual boat fee. Members who remove their boat(s) for the winter may apply to the Honorary Treasurer accordingly, after the 1st December. Checks will be made that the cat has been removed for the full winter period. If a cat is present at any time between 1st December and 1st March, it will not be eligible for a refund.

8 Windsurfers

8.1 The Blackwater Estuary immediately accessible from the Club has strong tides and, in some conditions, severe wind shadows, it is strongly recommended that new members or those windsurfing for the first time at the club seek advice on the prevailing conditions from experienced members before sailing. Contact via the windsurf representative or the Marconi Windsurfing & SUP Facebook page.

8.2 Windsurfers should be rigged in the area west of the dinghy park. (Note: Work is carried out across the site during the winter and early spring seasons. Care should be exercised when going to and from the rigging area.) Members should park their cars in the windsurfer car park after driving through the dinghy car park. To avoid unnecessary damage to the turfed dinghy car park, windsurfers may use the 'grasscrete' area to the east of the clubhouse for parking and rigging between 30 November and the first dinghy racing Sunday in March. Be aware of the disabled bays in that area which must be kept clear at all times. Access to the water is directly over the sea wall.

8.3 The Coastguard recommend that they are contacted (ring 999) if a rescue is instigated by Club members so that they are prepared to help if necessary. When the Coastguard has been alerted to an incident, members must inform the Coastguard of the outcome. If sailors are rescued but equipment is not recovered, then the Coastguard must be informed so that fruitless searches for people are not made.

8.4 The Coastguard make the following safety recommendations to windsurfers:

- Carry a 'day glo' distress flag or pocket flare;
- Carry spare rope (4m) for being towed if necessary;
- Know the maritime distress signal – raising and lowering both arms at your sides – to attract attention if in difficulty;
- Do not leave your board if in difficulty, as they aid buoyancy and make sailors more visible in the water.

9 Speed Limit – All Members

9.1 An 8 knot speed limit exists along the full length of the southern shore of the river. Members are reminded to be particularly cautious when leaving or approaching the hard where swimmers are liable to be in the water and to exercise caution when in the vicinity of moored boats.

9.2 Anybody sailing within the cruiser moorings should exercise extreme caution, particularly with regard to laden tenders manoeuvring around such boats.

10 Collisions – All Members

10.1 For Club purposes, any collision between boats/windsurfers embarking from the Club must be reported to the OOD so that a record can be made in the OOD log. If a collision

takes place when there is no OOD on duty the helmsperson must make a log entry themselves (OOD log to be found in The Galley), contact an officer of the Club and provide the name or sail number of any boat with which they collide and brief details of damage.

- 10.2 Any collision with an unmanned club boat – e.g. a moored cruiser, must be reported by the helm to the owner of the vessel within 24 hours of the incident and reported to the OOD or, if no OOD is on duty, to an officer of the Club as set out above. The appropriate Fleet Captain will be able to provide the helmsperson with contact details of the owner of the affected vessel.
- 10.3 In the event of a collision where all the vessels are racing from the Club, the appropriate penalties and actions shall be taken in accordance with the Sailing Instructions and RYA Racing Rules of Sailing. If damage is sustained to any vessel, the helm must ensure that it is reported to the OOD to be recorded in the OOD log.
- 10.4 While racing, any vessel in collision with a moored cruiser shall retire. In the event of a helm not voluntarily retiring and being subject to a protest, he/she will be disqualified.

11 Use of the pontoon – All Members

- 11.1 The pontoon is for the use of all members of the club for dry access to boats, launch and recovery of dinghies/tenders, access to water supply for cruisers and access to the scrubbing posts.
- 11.2 Dinghies/tenders may be secured along the eastern and western sides of the pontoon. Support boats should tie up on the inside of the hammerhead if possible.
- 11.3 The hammerhead is reserved for deeper draft boats and support boats; the helm must remain available to move their vessel whilst on the hammerhead. Maximum unattended stay for other craft is 10 minutes.
- 11.4 Dinghy trolleys must not be left on the pontoon.
- 11.5 No unaccompanied children (under 16) are allowed on the pontoon. Children must wear personal buoyancy while using the pontoon. The club would advise the wearing of personal buoyancy whilst on the pontoon.
- 11.6 In the interests of safety there must be no fishing or crabbing and no swimming or diving off the pontoon. The tide can run strongly under the pontoon and around the hammerhead.

12 Insurance

- 12.1 All boats brought to or sailed from the club shall be adequately insured by the owner against third party risks. The current recommended minimum is £5,000,000.
- 12.2 All vehicles, trailers and other forms of transport brought onto the club premises shall be adequately insured.

Reviewed on 20/02/2024 by the Sailing Subcommittee

Next review due in January 2025