

READING SAILING CLUB

New and Prospective Members Information

ABOUT THE CLUB

Reading Sailing Club is located on a 60 acre lake at Sonning Eye, on the Oxfordshire side of the Thames near the lock at Sonning.

We aim to be an informal, family oriented and friendly club for people of all ages and abilities who enjoy wind-powered watersport. Members are welcome to join in the regular racing or just cruise on the lake if they prefer. The club operates all the year.

The official Reading Sailing Club website address is www.readingsc.org.uk, this has up to the minute club news, race results, and various links to other sail related sites.

FACILITIES

The sailing water covers the area from the clubhouse across to the line of orange buoys delineating the rowing strip and south to the far bank beyond the island. The buoy line must not be crossed.

The clubhouse has a clubroom including a galley area with cooking facilities and a small stock of refreshments. The changing rooms have hot showers and heated flooring during the winter.

A boat park is available for member's boats and there is a lawned area for picnics etc.

Members are free to use the club at any time. Keys to the clubhouse are available for a small deposit. The gates on the track have combination locks, the codes for which are known to members.

A limited number of guests can be accommodated. To prevent overcrowding, a guideline has been adopted allowing an annual total of 8 guest-days per membership. Members must sign their guests in and are responsible for their conduct while at the club. There is a charge of £10/day for guests sailing their own boat.

HOW TO GET THERE

The club is situated at Sonning Eye and is signposted from the roundabout on the B478 Sonning Road. Access to the lake is by a gated private track and there is ample car parking space.

SAILING

Racing

Racing take place throughout the year on Sunday mornings. The race type alternates between handicap events where all boats start together and pursuit events where the start is staggered. Most races are mixed fleets open to any type of boat, but some races have separate starts for different classes.

During the summer there is also a race series on Wednesday evenings. Special cup races are held on Bank Holidays and at other times.

We encourage everyone to join the racing as it is an excellent way to develop skills. Beginners can follow at the back of the fleet and try to negotiate the course, improvers can judge their progress against others and experts can compete for the trophies.

Cruising

Members may cruise on the lake at any time except during the Sunday morning races and some special events. During the warmer months we operate a cruise cover system on weekends and Bank Holidays whereby members take turns to man the rescue boat for the afternoon.

Pink Days

Once a month on a Saturday, we hold a pink day; this was originally intended as a ladies informal training session but has now developed into a fun sailing event in its own right and has become very popular. Breakfast and lunch are available, afterwards everyone stops for a chat.

Youth Sessions

We have introduced a young persons sailing session of informal training and waterborne fun activities on Thursday evenings during the summer. It is planned to continue through the winter, on one Saturday morning/month.

Sailboards, Canoes

Although primarily a dinghy sailing club, members who have sailboards or canoes are free to use them on the lake. Sailors whose main interest is windsurfing are welcome to join the Club but no organised events are held.

Model Yachts

A section of the club sail radio-controlled model yachts currently on Tuesdays and Fridays. See the separate noticeboard in the clubhouse for details.

Special Events

We hold a few events throughout the year with sailors from outside the club who race on our lake as part of a class championship series. Members with the appropriate boat type can take part but must pay the entry fee. There may also be occasional inter-club race events.

Regular RSC events are an Open Day in the spring, a "Family Fun Day" in the summer and a Bonfire Night social event.

SAFETY

All water sports are potentially hazardous. It is the responsibility of the member whether to it is safe to sail, depending on the weather conditions, experience, availability of rescue cover and any other relevant factors. Although members may sail at any time, when a rescue boat is not available it is strongly recommended that "buddy sailing" is arranged between members, where two boats can keep watch on each other.

Buoyancy aids or lifejackets must be worn when afloat in any craft and these must fit correctly. Between 1st November and 31st March, wetsuits or drysuits must be worn when sailing. The club has a limited supply of buoyancy aids that can be borrowed for guests.

Parents/guardians are responsible for the safety of children while at the club, particularly in ensuring correctly fitting buoyancy aids are worn when on or near the water.

Member's and guest boats must be insured against 3rd-party risks both on the lake and in the boat park.

CLUB BOATS

We currently have a fleet of nine club boats of different types that members can hire for £10 per half day. Boats can be booked in advance on the sheet on the noticeboard but only one reservation can be active at any one time.

SAIL TRAINING

The club is accredited with the RYA and offers dinghy training courses to RYA standards with a certificate on successful completion. Training courses are only provided for members of the club. Course fees include the use of club boats and all other equipment can be provided. Club boats may be hired at a discount after the course to allow practice of the skills learnt.

Training is run as beginners and intermediate courses each usually running over two successive Saturdays. The beginner's course covers the basics of sailing with the wind coming from different directions allowing a triangular course to be negotiated. Also included are boat rigging, simple knots and appropriate clothing. The intermediate course builds on the basic skills to teach efficient sailing and includes capsizing drill and close quarters manoeuvring around buoys, jetties and other boats.

Hector Cisneros, recently the UK Mirror national champion, occasionally runs a racing master class during the summer.

RUNNING THE CLUB

The club is kept running only by the voluntary efforts of its members. Apart from the minimum duties below, many members regularly come to the club to help with running training courses, youth sailing, maintenance, cleaning, gardening and the many other tasks that need doing to keep the club functioning and to improve the facilities.

It is a condition of RSC membership that you undertake the following minimum duties:-

- a. Assist in running the club's Sunday racing under the guidance of a senior club member. This will involve about 3 half-day duties per year, mostly on Sunday mornings or Bank Holiday Mondays, and includes timekeeping and/or crewing the rescue boat.
- b. Keep your boat-park space tidy, if you have one.
- c. Join in occasional working parties for specific tasks or general tidying-up.

Cruising Support Cover (Voluntary)

Most members take turns to provide cruising support cover on Saturday and Sunday afternoons between May and September. This consists of being available with the rescue boat and keeping watch over people on the water in case anyone requires assistance. Tuition in the use of the boat and outboard will be given if required. Typically this will be once per year, depending on the number of volunteers.

The rotas for racing duties and cruise cover are published regularly and members must attend or arrange to swap dates with another member so that cover can be ensured.

MEMBERSHIP

For 2008/2009 annual membership costs are:

Joining Fee	£15
Family	£115
Single Adult	£105
Single Student	£20

Single Junior	£15
Crewing Only	£50
Model Yachts Only	£55
Boat Parking (per boat)	£20
Trailer Parking	£10

The membership year starts in April. There are reduced fees for people joining in October and further reductions from January although this latter will be waived for new members paying the fee for the following year in advance. Family membership includes partner and children under 18 living at the same address. Regular crew outside of a family membership are expected to join the club. See the membership form for a full list of fees.

HOW TO JOIN

New members are always welcome and there is no waiting list. If you would like further information, come down to the club on Sunday mornings or on most weekend afternoons during the summer. Alternatively, please ring either of the following committee members:

Colin Heaven	Commodore	0118 9475300
Simon Bray	Membership Secretary	01494 530019