

Reading Sailing Club



New Members' Guide

January 2024





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Welcome to Reading Sailing Club

Welcome to Reading Sailing Club. We are really pleased that you have decided to join us.

We are a growing, active and diverse club, situated in beautiful surroundings close to Reading. We aim to be an informal, family oriented and friendly club for people of all ages and abilities who enjoy wind-powered watersports, paddleboarding, kayaking and canoeing.

We have a busy calendar of events for members, alongside more informal activities, whether our social sailing or by arranging 'buddy' sailing. There really is something for everyone.

We are an accredited RYA training centre and offer training for both young and old. In addition, our experienced sailors are only too happy to pass on advice to those who are new to the sport. So if you need help, such as checking your rigging before you launch, then please don't hesitate to ask someone!

As a club we rely on our members as volunteers to keep the organisation running and the facilities clean and serviceable. So we are really keen you get involved and feel part of the club quickly.

We also take the safety of all our members, but particularly the many young people at our club, extremely seriously.

We want everyone at Reading Sailing Club to get the most out of being part of the club. The purpose of this guide is to help those who are new to understand how we operate, how they can get involved and who to talk to. However, it is not intended to be either exhaustive nor an exhausting read! More information is found on our website (<https://www.readingsc.org.uk/members/member-info/>). You are also very welcome to talk to other members or to your committee and we will do our very best to help you.

We look forward to seeing you on the water!

About the club

We are an informal, family oriented and friendly club for people of all ages and abilities who enjoy wind-powered or human-powered watersports (sailing, kayaking, canoeing, wind surfing and paddle-boarding).

Our club is located on a beautiful 60 acre lake at Sonning Eye, on the Oxfordshire side of the Thames near the lock at Sonning, yet only a few miles from the centre of Reading. We are signposted from the roundabout on the B478 Sonning Road. There is ample car parking space on our site.

Access to the club and our the lake is by a gated private track. What three words location: ///heats.sector.form. There are access codes for the gates which you will have been sent when you joined. Please contact membership@readingsc.org.uk if you have not received this information. The codes change regularly so please keep an eye on your email.

Our website address is www.readingsc.org.uk. This has up to the minute club news, race results, contact details and further details on how to get involved

Clubhouse what three words: ///sang.ideal.placed





Who's who

Adrian Blakey
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Vice Commodore

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boatpark@readingsc.org.uk

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modelyachts@readingsc.org.uk

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webmaster@readingsc.org.uk

Sally Newlove
Bosun Co-ordinator

What's on at the club

We are a friendly club and there is plenty to get involved in from organised activities and social events, to informal opportunities to get on the water.

Below we list our most regular activities, but please check out our website for a full list of events: www.readingsc.org.uk/whats-on/. We send out monthly newsletters with club news, activities and social events. If you don't receive these then please check your junk mail or it is possible that you have unsubscribed. Please contact membership@readingsc.org.uk for help.

Dinghy racing – held throughout the year on Sunday mornings (10.30 start), and from Easter to mid-September also on Wednesday evenings (19.00 start). Also one-off cup races on Bank Holidays. We encourage everyone to join in as racing is an excellent way to develop skills and confidence, and to get advice from others. Contact racing@readingsc.org.uk for details.

Social sailing - there is a group that meets regularly on Monday afternoons throughout the year. Contact socialsec@readingsc.org.uk to be added to the Whatsapp group.

Pink Fleet- second Saturday each month. Relaxed racing, particularly suitable for those just learning to sail. Cooked breakfasts are available and afterwards everyone stops for a chat. Contact Monica for details: monicabeer@aol.com.

Model Yachts - a section of the club sail radio-controlled model yachts (DragonForce 65) on Tuesdays and Fridays. Contact Dave for details: modelyachts@readingsc.org.uk.

Informal sailing at other times - during the summer there are likely to be boats on the water during most of the weekend and on some evenings. Members may use the lake at any time but should keep clear of areas being used for races or training. We ask that at least another boat is on the water for safety reasons (see next page for information on arranging sailing 'buddies').



Safety and safeguarding

As a club we try to operate as flexibly and informally as possible, but we have a small number of rules to help keep everyone safe.

We recognise that all water sports are potentially hazardous and ask our members (and any guests they bring to the club) to take responsibility as to whether it is safe to use the water, depending on the weather conditions, experience, availability of assistance and any other relevant factors.

Although members may use the water for sailing, kayaking, paddle boarding and wind surfing at any time, when a support boat is not available we ask that a 'buddy' system is used. This means that at least one other boat or watercraft is available so that help can be given to anyone who gets into trouble. We would encourage you to have a charged mobile phone to summon help if needed.

We ask that buoyancy aids or life jackets are worn when afloat in any craft and on the jetties also. From November to March we ask that wetsuits or drysuits are worn when on the water.

Swimming is not allowed on the lake at any point in the year, primarily because of the safety risk associated with boats being on the lake.

We ask those bringing children to the club to remain responsible for their safety while at the club, which includes ensuring correctly fitting buoyancy aids are worn on or near the water.

We recognise that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, irrespective of sex, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual identity or social status, have a right to protection from abuse. The club has a safeguarding policy which applies to all of our activities including training. A copy of this is available from our Club Welfare Officer, whom you can also contact to raise any welfare related concerns (safeguarding@readingsc.org.uk). You can also contact the RYA Welfare Officer (whose details can be found on the RYA website) to raise any concerns.

Supporting your club

Our club is kept running by the voluntary efforts of our members, there are no paid staff.

The whole organisation, maintenance and training of the club is entirely run by unpaid volunteers. Therefore, we will ask you to participate on up to three occasions a year as an officer of the day (OOD) to help run our races. These are fun occasions on a Sunday morning or Wednesday evening and you will be part of a team of 4-6. These duties help to train members in running races, rescuing capsized dinghies (a very useful skill for anyone sailing at the club), get familiar with powerboats and getting to know other members for sailing activities. Details can be found on our website. We also ask members to attend a few work parties (held each 1st Saturday morning of a month) to maintain our club and boats. And we are always looking for volunteers to help with training, maintenance, socials etc. We can only offer activities if our members get involved.

Apart from the minimum duties below, many members regularly come to the club to help with running training courses, youth sailing, club boat maintenance, cleaning, gardening and the many other tasks that need doing to keep the club functioning and to improve the facilities.

For those confident in the use of the power boat and trained to RYA power boat level 2, there is a voluntary roster to provide support cover for cruising sailing on Monday afternoons.



Training and club boats

Training

We offer RYA accredited training for members for both adults and children, with a number of courses each year running over two successive Saturdays:

- **Level one (beginner)** - covers the basics of sailing with the wind coming from different directions allowing a triangular course to be negotiated. Also included is boat rigging, simple knots and appropriate clothing.
- **Level two (intermediate)** - builds on the basic skills to teach efficient sailing and includes capsizing drill and close-quarter manoeuvring around buoys, jetties and other boats.

Early reservation is essential. Further information can be found on our website. Please contact training@readingsc.org.uk for details and dates or to book a course. Upcoming dates can be found on the website calendar.

During the summer we run practice sailing sessions aimed at those who have been on our courses. Please contact socialsec@readingsc.org.uk for details.

Club Boats

We have a fleet of dinghies that members can hire out. This is a good way to build on your training and test out boats before deciding to buy your own.

Boat hire for half a day is £10 for Picos, £15 for Zests, and £20 for the Sport 14. The am session is between 10am and 2pm, and the pm session is anytime between 2pm and 6pm (and later for racing on a Wednesday). Payment should be made by bank transfer with the reference 'BH your initial and surname'.

Hire of club boats is dependent on the weather conditions and boats should not be borrowed if the wind is too high (over 12 mph) or too gusty. Please write any issues you find with a club boat on the maintenance book in the Red Shed. If you have any questions regarding boat hire or any issues using the google sheet, please feel free to contact Aileen on rsocialsec@gmail.com.

Club boats can be hired by logging on to the Reading Sailing Club Portal (accessed from the membership section of the website) and accessing the Google sheet.

Power Boat Training

We encourage members to learn to use our power boats. This skill is a great way to get involved and support your club, and enable us to continue to provide safety boat cover during races and practice sessions. We run accredited 2-day RYA Level 2 training courses for which a fee is payable.

Oppies, and Youth and Juniors

We run training for young people in the club on Monday evenings, following the RYA training schemes. Oppies caters from beginner to improver levels and starts from age 7 onwards. Youth and Juniors runs alongside and caters for those who have some basic sailing knowledge. Please contact Karen Smalles oppies@readingsc.org.uk for details.

Using club facilities

Members are free to use the club at any time, but please note that if you are on the water then at least one other craft (and person) must be available to assist. We have a Whatsapp group whereby members can arrange 'buddy' sailing outside of the normal events – please contact sailing@readingsc.org.uk if you wish to be added to this group.

We have a large boat park available for member's boats. If you would like an allocated space please contact boatpark@readingsc.org.uk. We ask that all boats at the club (whether member's or their guest's) are insured against third party risks covering both on the lake and in the boat park. We also ask those with a space to keep it tidy and clear from weeds.

Our clubhouse has a clubroom with a galley area with cooking facilities and a small stock of refreshments. The changing rooms have hot showers and heated flooring. We ask that those using the clubhouse leave it as they would like to find it, including taking home any rubbish. Keys to the clubhouse are available for a small deposit (please contact membership@readingsc.org.uk). Please ask a member to show you how to unlock and lock the clubhouse.

Please bear in mind that the club has no waste collection and no mains sewerage. It is important to take home all your own rubbish and to not put anything down the toilets apart from the toilet paper provided.

Our 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. We share our lake with Reading Anglers and ask that you respect their access to the water, as well as that of the rowing club across the water. We ask that priority on the water is given to sailors by other users, and that everyone respects the use of the lake for organised events, such as racing and training.

We have a large lawned area for rigging boats and also for picnics and relaxing by enjoying the surroundings. We do allow members to do limited camping overnight on our site but tents must be taken down the following day.

It is important that members are conscious of the security of our site. We are on private land so members of the public should not be using the site to access the Thames, though we do allow dog walkers to pass through. Access to the site is by two gates with access codes. Please do not leave these open unless you are sure that the person following you is a member of the club. The clubhouse should also be locked if the door is out of sight.

We allow members to bring guests to the club, but ask that each guest is limited to three times a year so all can be accommodated. If a guest wishes to attend more regularly then we should encourage them to become a member! Members must sign their guests in the visitors book in the clubhouse entrance and are responsible for their conduct while at the club. There is a charge of £10/day for guests bringing their own boat to the club.