

Minima Yacht Club Sailing

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES AND RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SAILING

Royal Yachting Association

1. Minima YC is affiliated to both the RYA and we keep in touch with and follows national guidelines set by them as the National Governing Body for sailing and canoeing

Insurance

2. Comprehensive public liability insurance for sailing is provided by the RYA recommended insurer, Heath Gallagher. We ask visiting instructors to produce proof of their own professional indemnity insurance.

Training

3. All sailing activities at the Club are organised and managed by the Training Manager under the overall supervision of the Sailing Committee.

4. Sailing Committee meetings are chaired by the Vice-Commodore and minuted by the Sailing Secretary.

5. The relevant honorary officers in 2018 are:

- Paul Bloomfield, Vice Commodore
- Robin Broomfield, Sailing Secretary
- Steve Collins, Training Manager

6. Sail training for beginners is advertised as a benefit of membership and is free for all new members. The club does not provide training for non-members. The Club is not a Registered Training Centre and is not accredited to award RYA certificates. Nevertheless, we follow the RYA 'Level 1 Start Sailing' syllabus and assessed the competence of our trainees against this standard before we allow them to take out Club boats without an instructor or experienced club member with them.

7. It is a Club rule that juniors (under 18 years) are not allowed to join the club on their own. Their parents must also join and be present at the Club at all times when their children are participating in water-based activities. We encourage families to learn together. The minimum age for active participation in sail training is 8 years.

Sailing Area

8. The sailing area is the non-tidal Thames from Molesey Lock to Kingston Bridge. Most sailing takes place between Kingston Bridge and Queens promenade in direct line of sight from the Racebox in the Clubhouse. The Club organises long distance races and social cruises which go beyond Raven's Ait, past Waterworks and Dittons Reaches, and as far as Hampton Court Bridge (**see Map**). In these cases a Club Launch will accompany the boats with mobile phone contact back to the Clubhouse.

9. It is possible for a boat to come to grief out of sight of the race officer or safety boat, and sailors are reminded it is everyone's responsibility to look out for their fellow competitors and call for help when it is needed.
10. The sailing area can be very congested on sunny days at weekends and bank holiday with numerous trip boats, motor boats, rowing boats, sailing boats on the river and there is a significant risk of collision. There have been accidents (less than one a year) causing damage in collisions with other river traffic, and very occasionally with moored craft, pontoons, or debris floating in the river.
11. Frequent minor damage, more than once a year, occurs in collisions between boats racing, however this is a normal risk of the sport and has not proved to be a serious issue. It is a club rule that all members who own a boat in the dinghy park must hold adequate third party insurance.
12. The Club's experience, gathered over 125 years of sailing on the Reach, shows no unusual hazards, outside the normal mishaps of sailing dinghies, including regular capsizes. The risk of a dinghy inverting completely is very low as at normal river levels the mast will get stuck in the mud first.
13. Accidents resulting in injury are extremely rare and are reported in the Club's Accident Book, kept upstairs in the main Clubroom. All such accidents are investigated carefully and a report presented to the Sailing Committee

Safety Boats

14. The Club owns two displacement launches with reliable inboard diesel engines: Minima X and Minima XI. These boats have proved to be fit for purpose as safety boats and are equipped with ladders to help casualties to get into them. The launches are manned by competent members who have been trained by the Club (see **Guidance for Launch Crews**).
15. The Club also owns a small (3.3m) RIB with a 4HP outboard engine which is used primarily for on-water coaching during sail training but is also available as an additional safety boat if conditions or the number of boats on the water warrant it (see **Guidance for RIB Operation**)

Personal Flotation Device (PFD)

16. New members are required to wear a PFD at all times when they are on the water or a landing stage, and are participating in sail training. PFDs are provided by the Club but members are encouraged to buy their own.
17. Experienced members are encouraged to wear PFDs when racing, but this is left to their personal responsibility in line with the RRS (**See Sailing Instructions**). The Race Officer has the power to require all competitors to wear PFD if he or she deems this to be necessary in light of the prevailing conditions

Club-owned Sailing Dinghies

18. The Club owns and insures the following dinghies:

- 2 x Topaz Argos
- 2 x Topper Picos
- 3 x Topper single-handed boats
- 1 x Enterprise
- 1 x Solo

19. Members are only allowed to take club boats out when organised sailing activity is taking place (racing, training or a social cruise) and safety cover is available on the water.

Member-owned Boats

20. Sailing Clubs have a tradition of personal boat ownership and we encourage members to buy their own sailing dinghy. Members are responsible for providing their own craft insurance and can go out on their own, at their own risk if they wish. However, we strongly advise them to follow the same guidelines as for club-owned boats.

Risk Assessment Template

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action
Accident between the Clubhouse and Dinghy Park	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only experienced club members who have completed an internal training course are allowed to drive the launch. Max of 12 people in the launch. All sit down in the launch and are instructed to keep hands inside the boat
Collision with a bike when transferring boats on trolleys across Barge Walk	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check that Barge Walk is clear before crossing Beachmaster on duty at open meetings and open day
Collision with a car or pedestrian when transferring boats on trolleys across Barge Walk	Very Low	Very low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above
Members slips on landing stage when launching or recovering boat on trolley	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear landing stage of bird excrement before use Non slip surfaces on slipways Members help each other to launch and recover boats Depth of water next to pontoon is 3-4 feet in normal conditions (may be deeper if level is high)
Boat swept underneath Kingston Bridge, a moored craft, or pontoon	Medium in Winter after heavy rain	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sailing Instructions specify that boats should have a paddle or and 4m tow rope on board (as per tidal clubs) Beginners are not allowed to helm in strong stream conditions.
Collision with a trip boat or power boat	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are briefed on the collision regulations and to keep a look out all times Do not rely on 'power gives away to sail' - particularly in relation to power boats who are restricted in their ability to maneuver Do not cross the fairway directly in front of the bows of a trip boat or power boat
Collision with a rowing boat	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club launch acts as a guard boat where possible Members instructed to shout 'Ahead Scull!
Sailing dinghy capsizes	Very high	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capsize recovery is included in Sail Training Club launches are double manned in

			strong wind conditions – gusts of F4 or above
Sailing dinghy inverts completely	Very low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masthead flotation is fitted to the Argos which do not have an adequate air pocket when inverted
Casualty in capsized boats trapped by ropes	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety boats are equipped with knives Club instructors must carry a personal knife
Head injury caused by boom	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginners encouraged to wear hats Safety helmets for beginners and children are under review (not used at the moment)
Cuts to hands	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainees are encouraged to wear sailing or gardening gloves
Bruises to body	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainees are briefed on the inevitability of 'boat bites'
Hyperthermia	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The importance of adequate personal clothing is stressed in sail training Reflective blankets are standard equipment in safety boats People before boats - casualties will be taken ashore and put in a hot shower