



Seasalter Sailing Club

NEWSLETTER



An Inspired Facility



Although it is a few weeks yet until the beginning of the 2013 sailing season, the winter months have been busy for the Committee in sorting out a number of important matters for the season.

In particular these have led to a delay in finalising the programme for the year to get it ready for printing – so apologies to those who have already renewed their membership for the year and are eagerly awaiting the published programme; it should be back from the printers this week.

In the meantime you can now view the programme on the club web site (www.seasalter.org.uk), but we thought it would be helpful to let members know about some important initiatives and changes that are in hand to improve the club and what it offers to you.

Sailing Instruction & Mentoring

We are conscious that 2012 saw a significant number of new members join the club and that for some there has been little opportunity for them to sail or get instruction from members. In addition a number of other members have not been sailing for some time and may feel they need some encouragement.

We recently reviewed our programme with the RYA Development Team to identify ways of improving how we operate and what we offer members of all skills. For 2013 onwards we intend to significantly develop our focus on providing sailing instruction for both beginners and improvers. The following give a broad outline of how we are moving forward:

- **Training Days** - In order to provide a better environment and opportunity for providing instruction we have set aside 10 days in the programme, approximately every two weeks from mid-April, on which there will be sailing instruction for those who want it. On those days there will be no racing and we will focus on providing skilled sailors to instruct and mentor as necessary. We will start in mid-April with 2 off-water sessions – one to carry out boat and equipment checks and a second to review the basic rights of way of sailing and safety. All the following sessions will be on the water.
- **Mentoring** – We are developing a buddy programme to allocate each new member, and those who want to renew or build on their sailing skills, one or two nominated mentors from among the skilled sailors in our membership who will provide assistance and encouragement as required. This will range from mentoring in basic sailing skills to race improvement according to the wishes and needs of the individual. In particular we will be looking to the mentors to come along on the Training Days to sail with or alongside those who want instruction.
- **Instructors** - Whilst we cannot currently offer formal Level 1 and Level 2 instruction for beginners the RYA have agreed to work with us and partially fund the training of several members to become Instructors. This will enable us to offer RYA syllabus instruction and for us to issue SSC Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates without the need for beginners to go other venues for the course.
- **Cruises** – On the training days, and subject to suitable weather and numbers, we would aim to provide some escorted short cruises for those who just want to sail in company without formal training. For example last summer more than a dozen boats joined in a 'Pirate Raid' on Sheppey on a summer evening (a sail to a Sheppey beach for a picnic).

Whilst we have some 20-25% of our boats out sailing on most club days (better than the national average of 16-17%) we are conscious that at least half of members' boats do not move from the field much. We do hope that the initiatives that we are putting in place will encourage more members and their families to get out on the water and enjoy our local environment.

For more news see the next page

First Aid Training – We arranged two 2-3 hour first aid courses focussed on sailing for members and instructed by an RNLi crew member. The first was held on 9th Feb and was very well received. The second is taking place on 17th Feb and is now fully booked. If you would like to undertake a course then let us know and when we have the numbers we will arrange another course.

Rules and Duty Refresher 10th March - We are holding two refresher sessions in the club room **and we urge you to try and attend**

10:00 to 11:30 we will review the new changes to the RYA Racing Rules that came into action in January – this is relevant to all who take part in racing.

11:45 to 12:45 we will go over the key points for duty teams - this **is relevant to all sailing members whether their duty is in the tower or on the patrol boat.**

Fitting out Lunch 29th March – For a change we have decided to hold a Fitting out Lunch instead of an evening meal. This is to be held at 14:30 on Good Friday 29th March after sailing. Even if you are not sailing in March this would be an ideal day to come down and check over your boat and equipment and then join us for lunch in the clubroom.

RYA Dinghy Show, Alexandra Palace 2/3 March – If you need equipment or clothing don't forget the Dinghy Show is an ideal place to get what you need and worth a trip to see what boats are available if you are looking to buy.

Camping and Sailing Week 19th-23rd August – For several years some members and friends have spent a week camping at the club. This year we are including a nominated week in the programme to open the week up to more members. Members can come with family and friends and camp from 17th through to the Bank Holiday Monday 26th or for part as they wish. On the Wednesday we will hold some on the water training if numbers warrant. If you think that you may wish to join in then please let us know and we can contact you with more details nearer the date.

Sea Wall Ramp Rebuild Project – We are conscious that a few members are asking about progress on the ramp rebuild as we had hoped to get the work completed before sailing starts. Needless to say nothing is easy and we have had a lot going on in the background.

We had to have formal engineering drawings and construction details produced and agreed with Canterbury City Council Engineering Manager before we could progress with the following formal applications. This followed several site meetings with outside organisations in late 2012.

- Planning Permission – We received planning permission from Canterbury City Council for the ramp rebuild in mid-January. However the permission includes a restriction prohibiting work starting until 1st April (to prevent disturbance to overwintering wading birds).
- Land Lease – We are nearing completion in drawing up a lease with Canterbury City Council for the land on which the ramps are situated to formalise ownership and responsibilities. We hope to have the lease in place by mid-March.
- Land Drainage Consent – As the ramps are on part of the sea defence structure and have the potential to affect the sea defence we require formal consent from the Environment Agency which is due in the next 2 weeks
- Formal Tendering for the Works – In December a works specification was sent out to potential contractors as an invitation to tender. We now await formal tender responses from several suitable companies and, once all the above are in place, we can award the contract.

Potential Impact on Sailing – It is clear that starting the works after 1st April will have some impact on sailing. Those who keep their boats on the beach will be able to get them in place before work commences and we will look at several options for obviating the need to move patrol boats over the wall. We will work with the contractors to minimise the period when access to the beach is impaired and hope that it will not affect more than a few sailing weekends.

If you have not renewed membership yet Jane Bainbridge would be pleased to hear from you as renewal must be completed by the end of March or boats removed from the field.

Looking forward to a good sailing season with you all – the SSC Committee

