

Safety Advice for Independent Sailing

Members are welcome to sail independently from the club. If advice is needed contact one of the more experienced sailors in the club. Members are responsible for their own safety at all times. In the case of children and youths, parents or guardians are expected to exercise appropriate supervision.

The following suggestions are for guidance only:

- Arrange to go out with another similar boat and watch out for each other.
- Check the weather forecast ideally Inshore Waters special forecasts.
- Check times and heights of tides
- Avoid sailing in a dying wind on an ebb tide.
- Check your boat's buoyancy, equipment, rigging and fixings.
- Carry a mobile phone in a plastic bag or waterproof container.
- Realistically assess yourself, your crew and your boat's ability to cope.
- Ask experienced sailing people for a second opinion if possible.
- Dress warmly for the conditions it is easier to take off a layer than put it on.
- Wear personal buoyancy, properly done up, at all times afloat.
- Sail within your 'comfort zone' both in terms of the conditions you sail in and the distance from the club you decide to go. Don't take risks.
- Watch the sky upwind for black clouds, fog, rain or wind direction changes.
- Carry a compass and a waterproof watch.
- Go ashore if you have doubts or get cold or tired there's always another day.
- If you capsize and can't right it, stay with the boat. Never try to swim to shore.
- Tell a reliable person ashore where you are going and give them your mobile telephone number(s) and/or consider using an app like SafeTrx from the RYA.
- Arrange a time for your shore mate either to contact you or to raise the alarm.
- Watch all around for shipping, other boats and obstacles.
- Tell your shore mate to stand down when you come ashore.
- Don't stay out alone after your sailing partner comes in.
- Always return to shore before dusk.

Additional guidance for Dinghy Cruising further afield:

- Take drinking water, food or trail bars, extra clothing, paddles or oars, an anchor and warp, towrope, small flare kit, first aid kit and a small toolkit including; knife, pliers, wire cutter, shackles, cord, gaffer tape.
- Also, consider; a handheld marine radio, waterproof charts, waterproof torch, outboard motor with extra fuel and spare shear pin.
- Ensure that you have the ability to reef or lower sails whilst afloat.