

# Tideline

News and information for Wivenhoe Sailing Club  
June 2026



## About Tideline

There have been several magazines and newsletters over the years at Wivenhoe Sailing Club and I felt it was time to try and revive it. This one is called 'Tideline' as we have many different activities on and off the water now and I hope that all areas and groups are or will be represented along with useful information. If this works then the plan is to produce it quarterly, the next edition will be in September 2026.

This is for the members, by the members, and if you have something that would be of interest then please get in touch. Some pictures would also be lovely, particularly for the front page that I'll change each time. I will also dip into the archives for an article or two as there have been some talented tales told over the years - and I hope more to come.

Alan Tyne gave me a bit more background as to where this all started:

*The earliest record I have is a Newsletter started by myself and Richard Barnard in 1979, with cartoons by Mike Philp. Andy Diggins began Mainsheet (A5 format) in 1981 with three editions printed a year until 1989. It was revived briefly in 1992, and then again in 1994 by Richard Barnard as we moved from our original club house above the Royal British Legion into the new clubhouse. It was edited for a bit by Richard Barnard (A4 format), then by Peter Cobbold and Brian Sinclair. Roy Crookes took over from 2009 until 2017. Bernie Hetherington briefly revived it in 2018, but by then we had become digital and there were no more paper editions.*

*The digital archives run from 2012 to 2018, and there were several digital editions in 2020 during the pandemic by Chris Wood.*

(The digital copies mentioned above can be found in the members area of the WSC website under WSC Club Archive.)

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed this time, I know there are more articles to come for September. Have a great summer!

**Nikki Robinson - Joint Rear Commodore,**  
**rearcommadorewsc@gmail.com**

# Commodore's Corner

I left school at 17 to join the Royal Navy with my headmaster writing "Peter has salt in his veins".

Both my father and grandfather had served in the RN. Already sailing a single-handed dinghy, it was on to successfully racing Navy Bosun dinghies and Dragons.

Retiring from the Navy and moving to Cornwall, it was racing Enterprises.

Later, with young children I began cruising, first with a Swift 18 graduating to Gibsea 26, followed up with a Westerly Discus 33.

Children grown-up and I met Sue who had never sailed but vowed to learn, calling it the RYA Course from hell, but of course survived.



I upsized again to a Nicholson 40 ketch and our honeymoon was a trip across the Bay of Biscay to Spain—and back via France.

We both loved it and so in 2003 set off from Fowey in Cornwall to return six years later via Panama and Suez canals and the Mediterranean to Fowey, a lifetime ambition completed.

Living in Colchester proved too noisy and busy so, seeking peace, we settled in Wivenhoe and became members of the Wivenhoe Sailing Club. Now cruising the beautiful Essex rivers and the occasional longer trip. We have lived here happily ever since.

WSC is a brilliant sailing club at a wonderful location. I am honoured to follow so many good friends that have been in the role before me.

However good, things can always be better and the team now in place are going to deliver more on the water, more in the clubhouse to include all those who just love to be on the water. Exciting times.

**Peter Goldsmith, WSC Commodore**  
**[thecommodorewsc@gmail.com](mailto:thecommodorewsc@gmail.com)**

# Wivenhoe One Designs - WODs



As the Wivenhoe One Designs start their 91st year, interest is stronger than ever. With 13 of the 16 remaining boats afloat last season, the same number are expected this year.

Owners have been busy fitting out at the ACBOC sheds where a majority of the fleet are stored overwinter.

Osprey no.19 has had a substantial amount of work done by a local boatbuilder, including having a new centreboard case, hog, several ribs, planking and deck, she will be back on the water in June.

Work on the restoration of Puffin no.8 has started after lots of fundraising over the last few years including the recent 70's night which raised £400.

We have WOD week returning again in August (**29th July – 2nd August**), this year we have made it into a 5 day event including the club regatta weekend. There will be social nights throughout the week.

Owners are often looking for crew, if you are interested please get in touch.

**Rob Maloney, WOD class Chairman,**  
**Wivenhoeonedesign@gmail.com**



# Dinghy Sailing



Dinghy sailing and racing has been increasing over the last few years through a combination of more active sailors, and more events. Since 2022 we have added the **Three Creeks Crawl**, **Brightlingsea or Bust** and the **Wivenhoe Weekend** (WOD Regatta week), to the sailing calendar, and expanded the WOD / Rivals / Laser cups from a single race to a three race summer series.

The increased participation is really showing in the numbers entering each race, including one of the **Frostbite** races in February seeing 14 hardy sailors out on the water, (plus two fully crewed safety boats!).

In May we started the **May Mug** and **Sykes** (WOD's), series, these will continue as the weather (hopefully) continue to improve through to the start of July, during which time we will also have racing for the **Rowhedge Regatta** (20th June), and **Wivenhoe Town Regatta** (4th July).

Towards the end of July we will see the return of a slightly expanded **WOD Weekend**, now running over 5 days (29th July – 2nd August), including the **WSC Dinghy Regatta** on the Saturday and **WSC Cruiser Regatta** on the Sunday.

The WOD weekend uses down river starts near Alresford Creek to avoid the difficulties of a large fleet trying to start in the relatively narrow river near the clubhouse, we are planning to trial this for other races with the Laser / Rivals / WOD summer series that starts 19th July, starting near Alresford Creek and finishing as normal at the sailing club line.

Social sails have also seen a hugely increased uptake with the success of women on the water morphing into the Cadufts section. We had our first Long Distance Social Sail on May Bank Holiday and are looking to schedule a couple more in the summer.

Of course, all these events can only go ahead if we have sufficient support with OOD's and Safety Boats crewed. We rely on volunteers to sign up (sign-up sheet in the foyer), being either OOD or on the Safety Boats helps understand racing and can be a great opportunity to get involved and get on the water so please can we encourage people to sign up – if anybody is unsure or wants to know more then please send me an email or WhatsApp message.

**Dave Souch, HSS, WivenhoeSailing Secretary@gmail.com**

# Sailing into Cadet Season 2026



Cadet season started again in April with a second-hand kit sale. It was quiet this year, but we sold a few items (for donations to the Cadet funds) and have sold a few more since too!

We had a core of returning Cadets this season – it is always nice to see familiar faces as they get older and taller! For the new Cadets we are beginning some sessions a bit earlier to cover the theory of boat rigging, wind, tacking and steering.

The Cadet camp is coming up which is always a great experience. The exposure to sailing three days in a row is invaluable to our budding sailors.

On the Friday, Cadets sail to Mersea and walk round to the campsite. Tents need to be put up and then supper is eaten. The Cadets are often pretty tired after a long sail so lights out on Friday isn't usually tricky!

Saturday is usually sailing to Brightlingsea and the surrounds with a packed lunch (assembled by the Cadets) and then a BBQ in the evening.

Sunday is a fry-up breakfast, taking the tents down and clearing the campsite before the sail home.

Hopefully, the weather will smile on us, but we will be prepared with rain clothes and suncream at the ready!

For anyone who isn't aware, Cadets is run by a team of volunteers both on the water and on land with a core group of helpers overseen by Rob Gordon, Matt Pearson, Justine Pearson and Emily Gordon.

We absolutely couldn't run Cadets without the time given so generously by all those involved. We are always keen to have more helpers, either on the water in boats with Cadets, in the safety boat or on land. We all have a DBS check and first-aid training.

Get in touch if you think you can help us every now and then by using the email address below. Also, we are not full at the moment so if you know of a young person (aged between 10 and 17) who would like to learn to sail or improve their sailing - get in touch. The fee for the season is £55 if you are not a member, £25 for members.

**Emily Gordon,**  
**Wscadets@gmail.com**

# CADULTS

## Getting adults dinghy sailing

### The Background

Our group started with the formation of a WhatsApp group called WOW - Women on the Water. Its aim was to organise some sailing for club members with a focus on providing opportunities for women who didn't know how to sail to go sailing in the company of other women. We scheduled our sessions around the club's social sailing dates, usually scheduled on Saturdays. Our first sailing session was held in April 2021, with Jenny, Danielle and me helming with support from Tony and Nigel on safety cover. By the end of the Summer we realised that there was a need to broaden our scope to include all members, not just women (with several of our group's partners asking how they could start sailing too!)

Spring 2022 saw the group change its name to Cadults (Cadets for adults - thanks Dave S for the suggestion!) We had a big flurry of new male recruits, and thankfully several new experienced helms to get people on the water - Nigel, Chris and Dave often helped as helms and used their own boats too. We got a lot of requests for advice on what to wear - information that is now shared on the club's website. We started providing some land drills, rigging and basic theory sessions which included tacking practice and symmetrical spinnaker practice on a Friday to coincide with the bar being open.

Club members have been extremely supportive both with their time, and practically - Mike Mitchell kindly donated a smart Wayfarer to the club fleet to help us get more people on the water, and two Lasers have been donated to open up more single-handed sailing opportunities for both the Cadults and Cadets (with the choice of 3 rigs they are extremely versatile and spare parts are easily available.)



### How does it work?

Join the WhatsApp group (see below.) A few days before each social sailing calendar event a message is put on the group. Anyone wishing to sail replies - and I ask lots of helms their availability to arrange everyone a suitable helm and boat. Weather permitting, we go sailing. First time sailors will crew before they are offered the chance to helm. Some limited spaces to crew or helm for Sunday races are also offered via WhatsApp messages too. Learning is informal - you get to develop sailing skills at your own pace in a supportive environment. We don't issue certificates (although several people who started sailing with us have gone to RYA recognised training centres to get their formal qualifications - certificates can be useful if you want to hire a dinghy.)

### Here's what people say about the group

*"Being part of the Cadult group has given me the opportunity to learn sailing alongside experienced and patient sailors who are always willing to share their knowledge. Everyone is incredibly supportive and there is always someone ready to answer questions or lend a helping hand." (Mehmet)*

*"I was first introduced to sailing through the Cadults initiative nearly 2 years ago. It is entirely thanks to this opportunity to access the sport, and the welcoming and encouraging environment created by wonderful experienced sailors, that I am the sailor you know now. I'm now delighted to be one of the team, giving something back to the community that welcomed me in." (Claire)*

### How do I start?

Join the WhatsApp group. (Send a WhatsApp message to Julie-Anne White 07921 868058 asking to be added to the group). More questions? Please message me 😊



# Wivenhoe Corsairs

Rowing • Wivenhoe, Essex



The past few months have been a busy and successful period for Wivenhoe Corsairs, beginning with the club's first "Have a Go" rowing session of the year in April. The event attracted 26 enthusiastic participants on what turned out to be a beautiful afternoon on the water, with several attendees subsequently joining the club as new members.

Both club boats, *Defiance* and *George*, were used during the session, with experienced rowers accompanying newcomers in each boat. Participants were introduced to basic rowing techniques, commands used on the river, and the history and structure of the gigs themselves. The day proved to be a great success and highlighted just how many people in Wivenhoe were keen to try rowing for the first time.

April also saw the club take part in the important environmental initiative known as the "Big River Watch". Row leaders recorded water conditions, wildlife sightings and other observations using a dedicated app, helping to monitor the health of local waterways. Another Big River Watch is planned for later in the year.

Environmental work continues to be a major focus for the club. Since signing up as "Litter Warriors" with the local council last year, members have participated in three organised litter picks along the banks of both the River Colne and Roman River, working both on foot and by kayak. In addition, the club is supporting the University of Essex by regularly collecting river samples for testing and analysis.

Through rowing, conservation work and community partnerships, Wivenhoe Corsairs continues to play an active role in improving both the local environment and community wellbeing.

If you are interested in joining us, the Corsairs offer three free trial rows. Simply email us for more details.

W: <https://wivenhoecorsairs.teamapp.com/>  
Fb: <https://www.facebook.com/wivenhoecorsairs/>  
E: [wivenhoecorsairs@gmail.com](mailto:wivenhoecorsairs@gmail.com)



# Alresford Creek Boat Owners Cooperative - ACBOC

Members might wonder about the boating organisation that uses the clubroom on the first Monday evening of the month. Formerly Alresford Creek Boating Association, this was formed in the 1970s by a number of sailors who moored boats in Alresford Creek.

They were concerned at the number of near wrecks and potential live aboard boats that were becoming abandoned. They entered into an agreement with Colchester Borough Council to rent mooring space and manage the moorings to protect a rather special place.

One of the large sheds at Alresford is now regularly rented out as under cover storage for the ever-strengthening Wivenhoe One Design organisation. Nearly all other space inside and out is full.

Boats need a trailer designed for launch and recovery and have to be towed down to the Ford with masts down. This means size is restricted to about 26 ft overall as masts are then erected by hand before launch.

It has been great to see some of the WOD owners join us on a Monday evening recently as the bar is open. Obviously WSC members are also welcome as it is their club. Members of the Wivenhoe & Rowhedge Cruising Association and WSC have joined ACBOC cruises in company to Tollesbury, Heybridge and Bradwell.

If you want to find out more then please pop down for a drink at the clubhouse on the first Monday of the month at 7:45pm.

**Brian Sinclair - ACBOC - [acbo.org.uk](http://acbo.org.uk)**



# WivGigs Rowing Club

## Inclusive Gig Rowing In Wivenhoe



WivGigs Rowing Club is a community gig rowing club, based at Wivenhoe Sailing Club. We formed 14 years ago and have introduced hundreds of members to the delights of rowing on the Colne estuary over these years.

**You have probably seen us launching our boats *Audacity* and *Varuna***, both are Pilot Gigs built at Harker's yard in Brightlingsea, where the Pioneer Trust apprentices learn boatbuilding skills. ***Audacity*** was the third gig to be built in 2012, a wooden rowing boat known as an East Coast Pilot Gig, based on a 19th-century design, with four thwarts for the rowers and a seat for the Cox. ***Varuna*** is the 20th boat to be built and is made from GRP. 24 gigs have been made so far and these are used by 13 community gig rowing clubs in the Colne, Blackwater and Crouch River estuaries.

We use 13 ft wooden oars on alternate sides to power the gig through the water. Instead of modern rowlocks, the gigs use two thole pins—wooden pegs that hold the oar in place while allowing it to pivot during the rowing stroke.

**The gigs were designed** to take the pilots out to large ships offshore so they could navigate through the narrow channels of the estuaries and dock safely in their destination port.



This led to competitive crews rowing the pilot out to the ships, as the first pilot on board was likely to get the job.

This racing tradition is kept alive today through the **Harker's Yard Winter Series**. Each gig club around the Essex coast holds a race event over the winter months with three races: men's, women's, and mixed teams. The winning teams accumulate points over the season and a trophy is awarded to the overall winners at the end. Look out for the date when **WivGigs host a race at WSC** as we strongly recommend watching these races from the club house or along the bank to brighten up a winter's day. This year our mixed crew came third in the Harker's Yard Winter Series. **Watch out in the September edition for other races and results, including the Great River Race in London.**

We have a strong tradition of social rowing, getting as many members out on the water as we can. The only restriction on age is that you have to be over 18! WivGigs membership is a thriving community and rowing is a great way to keep fit, both in body and mind!

**Lorraine James – WivGigs committee member**  
[wivgigs@ymail.com](mailto:wivgigs@ymail.com)



# Nature friendly gardening at WSC

Anyone who likes gardening and also wants to encourage our native wildlife in the vicinity of the sailing club will be very welcome to come and help when we have gardening sessions at the club.

Through our gardening practices, we are trying to provide food sources and habitats for insects and birds in and around the club boat/car park and edging hedgerow whilst also improving the appearance of our green spaces for the pleasure of members.

To do this we are trying to increase the range of different habitats and the diversity of plant species, particularly native flowering plants, with an emphasis on plants known to be rich in nectar and pollen and so good for pollinators and with plants able to provide seeds and fruit for birds and dense vegetation for nesting.

We are also trying to eliminate a number of undesirable plant species to include Spanish bluebell (which harms our native species by forming unattractive, environmentally harmful hybrids); tricorned leek (which is very invasive); bear's breeches (which traps and kills many of the pollinating insects that visit its flowers) and Mediterranean Spurge (which is spreading and encroaching on the salt marsh to the detriment of that fragile habitat).

Gardening sessions are notified to the club membership via WhatsApp groups and the WSC alert emails and on the club notice board.

## WSC Gardening Group



# On the Hard

## Beer or Tea at WSC

The House committee have one major objective to make coming to the club, fun, affordable and a place where all members can mingle with friends. With this in mind you might have noticed some big changes in the clubhouse being new curtains, carpets and of course high quality bar stools. Enjoy!

It was noticed by a club member last year that during summer evenings our bar was closed early doors and as such we experimented with longer bar shifts from 5pm till 10pm and this was a big success. From **5th June until the end of August** our club bar will not only be open earlier on Fridays but staging a series of events for your enjoyment!

We also have plans to link up on water Sunday activities relating to tides (Gigs/Canoes/Dinghy) with a later than normal bar. These dates are called **Super Sundays** and are intended to attract all club members to soak up the sun and have a great afternoon. We have events linked with these days as you would expect us to do!

So here is a thought, keep an eye on all our events, because our events are your events. Enjoy the Summer because we are going to!

We are always appealing for **new volunteers** on the bar or generally to help us and if you like **DIY** then we want to have a chat as there is much to do. More about that later.

So this year will be amazing or ordinary and do you know what makes the difference? **YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.**

## Lanza Phil

## Joint Rear Commodore



**THE GLOWSTICKS**  
Friday 12th June 2026

**Familiar Faces, Fabulous Music!**

Bar open from 5pm • First Set 7pm

Blending guitars, ukulele, banjo, harmonica, and rich vocals, The Glowsticks are a lively acoustic cover band bringing fresh energy to classics from the '60s to today!

**Don't miss the fun and great tunes!**

**THE GLOWSTICKS**

Formed through a shared love of sailing and pub jam sessions, Dave, Gary, Nikki, and Steve deliver feel-good tunes that get everyone singing along!



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# On the Hard... cont.

It's been around 15 years since I was last involved in the Club after eight years of taking on various flag officer roles as well as helping out with the cadets for many years. It's lovely to see the club thriving and expanding all the time with so many new members and activities.

Lanza Phil has lots of events in the pipeline so keep an eye out for the WSC Alerts and information on the relevant WhatsApp group. Your website Club Calendar also has everything on it for the whole year. We have a great House Committee who support and work tirelessly in the background along with you, the members, who make it all happen. Please reach out if you have an idea or would like to run an event, we'd be happy to support you.

We have several housekeeping tasks that we need to share with others so that no one is overloaded, some of which can be done from the comfort of your home. We would also like to let some of our long standing members come off the contact list for a call out in the rare event that the alarm is activated - generally caused by a window or door not being properly closed. Of course there is also bar duty and I'm thrilled to see that so many people have signed up. Please contact me if you'd be interested in taking on something a bit more specific.

Keep a look out in September's edition for the Autumn/Winter events including details of the Annual Dinner & Prize Giving.

**Nikki Robinson**

**Joint Rear Commodore - rearcommodorewsc@gmail.com**

## **Wivenhoe Town Regatta** **Saturday 4 July 2026**

**WSC will be open to members and the public from 12pm until 6pm (max)**

Outside bar selling beer from Colchester Brewery, wine and a selection of soft drinks

Inside galley selling Tea, Coffee and Cakes

The Wivenhoe Pizza Co. will be selling their delicious pizzas

### **We are calling for:**

**Bar and galley volunteers** during this time, in **one or two hour shifts**, so that no one is overloaded, appropriate training will be given.

**A 'clear up' team**; perhaps you are sailing or busy elsewhere during the day but could spare us a bit of time **around 5.30pm to help pack it all up**.

If anyone is happy to **donate cakes, cookies or other delicious treat**, this would be gratefully received, baked or purchased, we don't mind.

**Please email rearcommodorewsc@gmail.com if you can help with any of the above or contact Nikki on 07914 833116**

For further information about events, sailing & timings on the day please see  
<https://wivenhoeregatta.co.uk/>

# Upcoming Social Events in and around WSC



## The Nottage Maritime Institute

Every summer The Nottage hosts a variety of events driven by local demand. Artists book weekends or whole weeks to display and sell their work knowing that our popular venue will always attract visitors from far and wide. Please see below information taken from their website for a current exhibition. Many WSC members are also members of the Nottage, please visit their website for more information <https://www.nottage.org.uk/>

### Ernie Turner – A Wivenhoe Artist

**6/7, 13/14, 20/21 June. 1.00 – 4.00 p.m.**

This exhibition marks the 20th anniversary of a major exhibition that we held in 2006 at the Nottage of the works of Ernie Turner, one of Wivenhoe's many artists.

Ernie was born in Brook Street in 1899 and spent most of his working life in Wivenhoe's shipyard. Upon retiring, and in the prolific artistic community that was beginning to flourish in the early 1960s, he decided to join in and take up painting.

His work was well-known in the community and even further abroad, as he was encouraged by other local artists, notably Dickie Chopping and Denis Wirth-Miller, who lived next door to the Nottage on the Quay.

For the next 12 years until his death in 1977 Ernie produced many pictures of Wivenhoe scenes and the boats he'd known on the river Colne. His work fell into the "naïve" category and can be compared to the work of Alfred Wallis, the Cornish artist whose life was also linked to boats and the sea. Like Wallis, (though not in the same price league!), Ernie's paintings and ship models are now collectable and the Nottage has several of each on display.

For our new exhibition we hope to show even more of Ernie's work than the 70 or so pieces we displayed last time.