

## Rules and Guidelines for Stand-Up Paddleboards at Ogston Sailing Club

### *(To be used in conjunction with OSC Membership handbook)*

Stand Up Paddleboards (SUPs) at Ogston Sailing Club (OSC) are governed by the same general rules as for sailing. Please refer to the members area of the OSC handbook for full details of the club rules. SUP is generally a less technical and more easily accessible sport than sailing, however as with any water-based activity there are inherent risks associated with being out on the water. There are also some specific risks related to SUP activities. The perceived ease and simplicity of paddling a stand-up paddleboard, can sometimes lead paddlers into dangers that they had not considered.

Below are the key rules and guidance to be followed when undertaking SUP'ing at OSC.

### **Safety**

1. Paddling, like sailing, is only permitted when there is a manned safety boat on the water.
2. Buoyancy aids (also referred to as Personal Flotation Devices) must be worn at all times whilst on the water (see club rules for full details). Buoyancy aids must be of a vest style; should be correctly sized and fitted for the wearer; and in good condition. Auto or self-inflating buoyancy aids are not to be used.
3. All paddleboards must be fitted with coiled leashes and the leash must be attached to the paddler at all times whilst on the water. A Quick Release Waist belt is the preferred option of attaching the craft to the paddler. For multiple rider craft (tandem boards etc.) the rear paddler must be attached to the board by a coiled leash. Only 1 leash should be used per board.
4. Independent paddlers (i.e. those not part of an organised or supervised group such as a training course) must be competent to a minimum of the club paddler standard as set out below.
5. There is always a risk of falling from a SUP. Wear suitable clothing for the conditions. Never wear items of clothing that can fill with water e.g., launch trousers, waders, wellington boots. Footwear with a protective sole (rather than barefoot due to stones) should be worn when launching and landing.
6. Be aware of the risks of cold-water shock and take appropriate steps to manage the risks associated with this. From November the 1<sup>st</sup> through to the 30<sup>th</sup> of April a Full Wetsuit or Drysuit must be worn.
7. SUPs are far less visible to safety crews than sailing dinghies are. Wear bright visible outer clothing. Consider carrying some form of visual signalling with you (e.g. a bright t-shirt or rash vest that could be placed over your paddle and waved in the air to summon assistance). In the absence of a suitable signal raise your arms crossed above your head, or if in the water wave them above your head.
8. There are club VHF radios available for use by SUPs – details of how and when to operate these will be displayed within the club. These are to be used by the 'lead SUP within a group' where there is more than one SUP on the water, or by the individual otherwise.
9. Consider the conditions and your ability/experience before going out on the water. SUPs can be very difficult to handle in windy conditions. If you are heading out in windy

conditions, consider making the first leg of your paddle upwind, and do not paddle further downwind than your launch point.

10. Paddlers should always adopt a “safe paddling position” when approaching shore, sailing craft, or fixed objects in the water (e.g. pontoon, moored boats).

11. Paddlers under 10, must be accompanied on the water by an adult when paddling beyond 100m from the launch area. Within 100m from the launch area and adult must be present to observe safety from the shore.

## **Paddling Area**

1. SUP paddlers have access to the area of water as shown in the map at the end of this document.

2. Before heading out on the water check-in with the OOD (Officer of the Day) who is in charge of the sail racing for that day. Follow their guidance with respect to any areas of the water to be aware of in order to avoid conflict with dinghy racing. (Be aware that at start/finish times the OOD will be very busy and unable to respond).

4. Please remember to observe a 5 board length margin from the shore (approximately 15 metres), with the extra precaution of 50 metres (approx. 16 board lengths), where there are bird hides, specific bird areas, turn rafts and Anglers using the water. The only exception to coming close to the shore is to access the club frontage. **(please see map of marked stay clear zones).**

5. Paddleboards are generally smaller, more manoeuvrable, and slower than sailing dinghies.

Paddleboarders should aim to keep clear of congested sailing areas as much as possible, and especially when racing is happening. Where SUPs are in close proximity to dinghies always aim to cross behind the dinghy if possible.

## **Times of access to the Water**

SUP users have access the water when there is a manned safety boat on the water such as during advertised race times (Weds eve/Saturday afternoon/Sunday). During the Sailing Season there is often opportunity to SUP on Friday evening as this is used as a social sailing evening.

When there is a club open meeting being held (such as the Enterprise Open, Handicap Open, Laser Open for example) the water is closed to SUP's and other craft.

At times it may be possible to use the water when there is training being provided (such as learn to sail) However the Instructors on the water are required to concentrate on the safety of those learning to sail and may not be able to support other water users at this time so it essential to check before launching that they are able to cover safety for SUP.

## **Duties**

All members OSC members are expected to complete duties during the year as the club is run on a voluntary basis. It has been agreed that SUP only members should complete 2 Safety Duties per year. (Training is provided by OSC).

## Insurance

1. Paddleboards need to be insured to the same level as sailing dinghies as defined in the club rules.

## Boards and Equipment

1. All boards and equipment used at the club should be in good order and designed to be used as a SUP. Inflatable SUP boards should always be inflated to the correct pressure as advised by the manufacturer before going out on the water.
2. Leashes are critical safety equipment should be checked regularly for signs of wear or damage. This check should also extend to the leash attachment point on the board.
3. Buoyancy aids (PFDs) should carry a CE mark and give adequate flotation for the size of person wearing it (nominally 50N for adults). They should be properly fitted. Buoyancy aids (PFDs) should be of a vest style and allow the wearer to self-rescue.
4. When boards are left temporarily unattended (e.g. during lunch breaks) they should be kept out of the way of foot traffic or routes used for launching boats. It is advisable to lay boards upside down to avoid damage to the fins and minimise the risk of the wind getting under the board and picking it up. In windy conditions where this could happen, boards should not be left unattended or should be secured. Other kit such as paddles and leashes should be stacked on the board to minimise trip hazards.

## Invasive Species

1. The portability of SUPs mean that they can and often are transported and paddled at numerous different locations. It is important that the risk of transferring invasive species from one location to another is minimised. Any SUPs coming to OSC after paddling on other waters must be cleaned down and fully dried before being launched at OSC. It is best to clean and dry your board, paddle and all other paddling equipment immediately after using it.

## **Novices** (*those who do not yet meet the club paddler level defined below*).

1. It is advisable for novice paddlers to “buddy up” with other more experienced paddlers in order to avoid going on the water alone.
2. Novice paddlers are advised to stay adjacent to the shore in front of the boat park / launching area whilst practicing newly acquired skills, and to only go out in conditions that they are completely comfortable with.
3. Novice paddlers must identify themselves to the OOD before heading out on the water.

## Considerations for OODs and Safety Crews

1. When SUP'ing during racing OODs should consider whether the area of operation for SUPs needs to be adjusted based on the forecast conditions and what other activities are happening on the water. Adjustments can be advised using the notice boards on the club house doors.
2. Safety crews should always be aware of the number of paddleboarders out on the water and their general location. It is very easy to lose sight of a paddleboarder if they are some distance across the water.
3. The wake from a powerboat can very easily unbalance a paddleboarder. Please consider this when operating around SUPs and try to minimise the waves created.
4. Paddleboarders are generally very self-sufficient and can usually self-rescue with ease. A powerboat approaching them at speed would not usually be a welcome sight. Wait a few moments before deciding to go to offer assistance – most paddleboarders will be back onto their board very quickly after a fall.
5. Look out for paddleboarders signalling for assistance. A waved flag or arms held crossed indicates that help is needed. Boarders in the water might only manage a small wave of the arms or hands. Please be vigilant.
6. When approaching paddleboarders please be aware of the possibility of other items being in the water. Paddles are often dropped. Safety bags and drinks etc. can come off of the board.
7. Take extra care if you need to recover a paddleboarder into the safety boat or get very close to offer other assistance. They will have a leash trailing in the water which should still be attached to the board. Prop entanglement with a leash will drag the paddleboarder into the prop.

## Club Paddler Standard

All independent paddlers at the club must at a minimum be at the “Club paddler standard” as detailed below:

1. Can properly fit an appropriate leash and PFD.
2. Understand safe manual handling techniques for SUPs whilst ashore.
3. Can safely land and launch a SUP.
4. Understand “safe paddling position” and when to use it.
5. Understand the risks associated with winds and how to protect against them.
6. Understand the risks of “cold water shock” and “wind chill”, and how to protect against them.
7. Understand the risks associated with power craft when on/in the water.
8. Are aware of site specific risks and restrictions at OSC
9. Can paddle with directional control over a pre-defined course (min 100m).
10. Can turn a stationary board through 360 degrees.
11. Can turn a board whilst moving.
12. Can paddle effectively and maintain directional control upwind, downwind and across wind in a light breeze.
13. Understand how to fall safely.
14. Can self-rescue and return to shore.
15. Understand and agree to OSC member rules and SUP guidance.

**Current Temporary S.U.P. area (boats also to access) / Excluded area to ensure no disturbance to nesting birds.**

