



## Safety Policy



The Walrus Cruise is affiliated to the Standing Conference of Christian Sailing Cruises (SCCSC) and this policy reflects the current SCCSC recommended safety guidance (as at Jan 2024).

## **1 GENERAL**

- 1.1 Sailing holidays have, for many years, been organised and held on the Norfolk Broads by groups affiliated to SCCSC. The record of health and safety has been good, and a body of experience has been built up which relates to the aspects of sailing and boating which are particular to the Norfolk Broads as regards both the nature of the waterways and the type of craft involved. This includes members being involved with the development of the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Keelboat Sailing syllabus to ensure that it is fit for purpose for the training and development of leaders.
- 1.2 The identification of the hazards and the recommended control measures which are employed to reduce the associated risks, as described in this manual, are the result of accumulated experience over the years.
- 1.3 There is no place for complacency; the assessment of the risks and the control measures must always be kept under review, and appropriate modifications to this document will be made as necessary. This review will include debate on any significant incidents at the Annual Meeting of the SCCSC.
- 1.4 This document can be used in two ways by the groups affiliated to the SCCSC. Either:
  - As a record of best practise put together using the collective knowledge and experience gained over many years that is then used to inform the formulation of policies and procedures particular to a specific group; or
  - For a Holiday Leader to use as the basis for their own Safety Policy.
- 1.5 In either case it is highly recommended that where a holiday chooses to deviate from the recommendation in this guidance, this deviation is supported by activity focused risk assessment or risk benefit analysis.

## **2 SCOPE**

- 2.1 It is recognised that most of the holidays which take place on the Norfolk Broads involve those taking part living on the yachts and motor cruisers. Most of the activities are therefore centred around the use of these boats, but some activities take place ashore, for example games in a field, visits, walking or other excursions.
- 2.2 This document only covers activities specifically related to the use of boats or to the fact that the holidays take place around water in the Norfolk Broads area. Each Holiday will assess activities other than those covered here and set in place appropriate guidelines and policies relating to these more general activities elsewhere.
- 2.3 The duties of the Holiday Leader and Skippers on SCCSC affiliated holidays extend beyond that of providing a safe environment as regards physical hazards. The aim of the holidays encompasses mental, physical, social and spiritual aspects, and so the qualities required of the Holiday Leaders and Skippers will have a similarly broad spread. It is the responsibility of the Holiday Leader to ensure that the right balance of skills is present in the leadership team.

### **3 DEFINITIONS**

<b>Holiday</b>	in respect of this document this is a sailing activity holiday for young people that is a member of the SCCSC;
<b>Holiday Leader</b>	the individual with overall responsibility of each Holiday.
<b>Activity Leader</b>	the individual with responsibility for the sailing activities on the Holiday.
<b>Skipper</b>	the individual responsible for a single sailing craft on the Holiday.
<b>Team member</b>	other leaders on the Holiday not yet specified.
<b>Norfolk Broads</b>	the navigation area of the Broads Authority defined in accordance with Sections 8 and 10(4) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988.

### **4 DUTIES**

#### **4.1 Holiday Leader**

The Holiday Leader is the individual with the overall responsibility for the running of the holiday. They will normally be appointed by any parent organisation. The Holiday Leader should have the necessary experience to lead, coordinate and manage a group of co-leaders in the provision of the sailing holiday.

It is the duty of the Holiday Leader to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare of all people on the holiday. This may include the appointment of an Activity Leader with overall responsibility for sailing activity or alternatively this responsibility may rest with the Holiday Leader if the holder of this post is suitably qualified and/or experienced.

#### **4.2 Activity Leader**

The Activity Leader should normally be (as a minimum) an RYA Keelboat Instructor with experience of sailing on the Norfolk Broads.

The Activity Leader shall:

- select Skippers with appropriate qualifications and experience;
- provide appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision;
- make reasonable endeavours to ensure that the boats and general equipment are in a proper state for their purpose on the holiday (largely achieved by hiring from professional boatyards);
- shall establish in advance of the holiday the swimming ability of the crew and take appropriate measures to protect non-swimmers;
- encourage and maintain safe practice on the holiday; and
- provide general policies with respect to the Health and Safety for all people on the holiday, including risk assessments/risk benefit analyses, procedures and record keeping systems.

### 4.3 **Skippers**

For the purpose of this document Skippers are those who may be required to take charge of sailing activities on individual boats.

Skippers should normally hold as a minimum, an RYA Seamanship Skills certificate and have some experience of sailing on the types of boats used for the sailing holiday. However it is at the discretion of the Holiday or Activity Leader to determine if appropriate experience can be demonstrated and taken in lieu of these requirements.

It is the duty of every Skipper to:

- take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions during the holiday;
- cooperate with their Holiday Leader or any other person as far as is necessary to secure compliance with relevant provisions, and the safe practices provided in this guidance document and associated procedures;
- guide, instruct, direct and supervise the Crew and any other Team Member on their boat; and
- not intentionally interfere with or recklessly misuse equipment or instruction (either written or verbal) provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare;

### 4.4 **Team Members**

For the purpose of this document Team Members are all adult volunteers that do not have a previously defined role such as Activity Leader or Skipper but have a responsibility for looking after the needs of the crew.

It is the duty of every Team Member to:

- take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions during the holiday;
- cooperate with their Holiday Leader, Skipper (if appropriate) or any other person as far as is necessary to secure compliance with relevant provisions, and the safe practices documented in this guidance document and associated procedures;
- guide, instruct, direct and supervise any crew in their care; and
- not intentionally interfere with or recklessly misuse equipment or instruction (either written or verbal) provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.

### 4.5 **Crew**

All individuals regardless of age need to be encouraged to consider their own safety and that of others around them. To that end all crew members should receive a briefing at the start of the holiday to include necessary safety and welfare instruction. The briefing should encourage every crew member to:

- take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of the other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions during the holiday; and
- not intentionally interfere with or recklessly misuse equipment or instruction provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.

## 4.6 Boatyard

It is the duty of the Holiday Leader to ensure that those providing boats provide:

- boats and equipment which are in a proper state for their purpose. This must include 50N buoyancy aids which conform to relevant parts of BS EN393-396 and are appropriate for the size and weight of the crew;
- appropriate information for the use of their boats and equipment in respect of their liabilities to the health and safety of the holiday; and
- as far as reasonably possible during the holiday, appropriate support of the boats, equipment and information as requested by the Holiday Leader or his appointed representative.

## 5 GENERAL SAFEGUARDS

5.1 The practices recommended here are the result of the combined experience of the Holiday Leaders of SCCSC and the guidelines of the Royal Yachting Association relating to Dinghy and Keelboat sailing and to the use of powered craft.

5.2 Operating Area - All sailing will take place within the navigational part of the Norfolk Broads system of rivers and inland lakes. No boats will pass under the Haven Bridge at Great Yarmouth or through the Mutford Lock at Oulton Broad.

5.3 The Broads are designated as Inland Waterways and Navigation is governed by Bye-laws as set out by the Broads Authority. These can be found on the Broads Authority Website: <http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating/navigating-the-broads/byelaws-and-speed-limits>

5.4 The daily sailing programme will be determined by the Holiday Leader in consultation with the Activity Leader and Skippers, having regard to the forecast weather conditions. The yachts must be rigged according to weather conditions and the level of skill of the crew, which will be determined by the Skipper, in consultation with the Holiday or Activity Leader whenever possible.

5.5 A first aid pack must be carried on each boat containing sufficient and appropriate contents for the number of people based on that boat.

It is the responsibility of the Holiday Leader to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place for First Aid. These arrangements will include a First Aid Kit on every boat and an ability to replenish any items used at the end of each days sailing. A record must be kept of each incident for which first aid items are used.

It is the responsibility of the Holiday Leader to consider on a risk basis what First Aid training or qualification is required for the holiday as a whole, and on each sailing vessel, , but as a minimum it is recommended that each holiday has at least one individual holds a First Aid Certificate approved by the RYA as acceptable for Sailing Instructors, and that all Skippers should as a minimum have an annual Emergency Briefing as a part of their basic Training and Competence activity.

5.6 The Emergency Briefing should include as a minimum training in the following Initial Actions:

In the event of an emergency or accident the team member present should be able to:

- STAY CALM;
- safe-guard the rest of the group;

- safe-guard self and the casualty;
- proceed with first-aid treatment as appropriate; and
- seek appropriate assistance
- afterwards, report and record the situation as appropriate.

It is the nature of sailing that accidents and emergencies may happen where it may be difficult for a suitably qualified person to reach the location of the incident. The team member present must know how assistance can be summoned. This could include the use of shore-based telephones, mobile telephones, radio or other craft.

- 5.7 The Holiday Leader must consider how Skippers will summon help or assistance in the event of an emergency. Experience has shown that mobile phones cannot be relied upon in the areas that we operate. It is recommended that consideration is given to the provision of 2-way radios, particularly where Half Deckers or other open boats may be used out of sight of others.
- 5.8 Each Skipper must be aware of, explain and demonstrate to the crew at an early opportunity in the holiday the procedure to follow in the event of “man overboard”. This should be centred around the recommendations of the Royal Yachting Association for Keelboats, dinghies, or powered boats, as appropriate, but also bring into play the practical implications of operating in close quarters as experienced in river navigation.
- 5.9 Condition of boats and equipment - The boatyard is ultimately responsible for the quality of their hire fleet. However, at the start of the holiday, and before leaving the boat yard, the Activity Leader must satisfy themselves as to the condition of each boat to be used and on the condition and sufficiency of the gear and equipment. Any defects or deficiencies should be reported to the boatyard’s representative for remedy or making good before leaving the boatyard.
- 5.10 Norfolk Broads sailing boats differ in design, construction and rigging. It is the responsibility of the Skipper to understand the limitations of the boat in his or her charge and to ensure that the boat is sailed and navigated well within these limitations.

## **6 RISKS AND HAZARDS**

- 6.1 The following have been identified as the principal physical risks and hazards associated with Norfolk Broads sailing and boating activities. This list is not exhaustive:
- (a) Drowning
- (b) Personal physical injuries:
- cuts
  - sprains
  - concussion
  - fractures
  - bruising
  - crushing of hands and feet
  - back injuries
  - burns
- (c) Effects of climate:

- heatstroke
  - hypothermia
  - sunburn
  - cold
  - exposure
- (d) Weil's disease and general water-borne ailments
- (e) Tetanus
- (f) Suffocation
- (g) Gas poisoning
- (h) Explosions due to gas or petrol fumes
- (i) Falling objects
- (j) Trips and falls
- (k) Rotating machinery
- (l) Fire
- (m) Collision

6.2 Entering the water either accidentally or deliberately represents the most significant risk and has associated with it the following hazards: drowning, concussion, bruising, fractures, crushing, cold, hypothermia, Weil's disease, and general water-borne ailments.

## **7 CONTROL MEASURES**

- 7.1 All participants in the holiday are at risk from the risks and hazards described above. The holiday is divided into crews assigned to individual boats and so those at risk at any one time from a particular activity will be limited to the crew of the boat on which that activity is taking place. The level of risk associated with any particular activity will vary according to a number of factors of which the most significant, and the most variable, is the weather.
- 7.3 Each Holiday completes its own risk assessment or risk benefit analysis, and may have its own Safety Policy, which are issued in advance to set out control measures to mitigate the risks and hazards.
- 7.4 In addition to advance planning, the Activity Leader is likely to undertake a dynamic risks assessment as conditions change, unforeseen circumstances unfold, or new hazards emerge.
- 7.5 The Walrus Cruise also implements the following additional control measures:
- All members of a Holiday (or their Parent/Guardian if under 18) sign a declaration that the individual member will operate under the authority and rules as set down by the Holiday Leader for the duration of the Holiday;
  - All members of a Holiday (or their Parent/Guardian if under 18) are required to make a declaration stating their swimming strength so the holiday leader can consider what measures need to be put in place for non-swimmers;
  - All Skippers receive a basic Emergency Briefing as per 5.6. This is also provided in the "What to do in case of an emergency" sheet in the Boat Handbooks and on the back of the emergency grid references map which is provided to all boats;
  - The Holiday Leader must consider, based on risk and numbers, what additional First Aid skills should be available to the Holiday as per 5.5;

- The Holiday Leader puts in place appropriate Safety Briefings for Skippers (and other Team Members) at the start of the Holiday covering their own policies and procedures and the Skipper's responsibilities.
- The Holiday Leader holds a daily review/briefing with all Skippers to learn from the previous day's experiences and highlight the current days plans including risks associated with weather and any specific navigating issues such as bridges.
- The Holiday Leader holds a review at the end of each Holiday to learn from the week's experiences and to discuss possible learning points for future Holidays.
- An annual Leaders' Meeting and AGM aims to further review/plan and provide training for Leaders/Team Members.