



## Ideas for increasing & developing adult participation

This information has been compiled to offer guidance to sailing and windsurfing clubs on how to increase membership, on water activity and income. Most of the ideas presented in these sheets have been developed and proved successful by sailing clubs and centres around the UK so there is a good chance that they will work for you too!

### Introduction to Yacht Racing

Aim:	To introduce non sailors or those with little experience to yacht racing through a series of progressive sessions to enable them to crew competently during future club races. To create a pool of experienced crew for the club.
Duration:	6 X ½ Days or equivalent
Run by:	Experienced Skippers, administered by designated club person
Example content:	Boat/ Crew Safety, Responsibilities on board, Boat Familiarisation, Hoisting/lowering sails Sailing manoeuvres Racing, courses, start procedure, practise starting Basic races (No Spinnakers) Spinnakers Fun Regatta
Facilities / kit needed:	Members Own boats (minimum 2) Committee Boat Classroom and white board etc Club house open with tea/coffee and maybe food available
Benefits:	More new members, increased crew pool for skippers, more volunteers
Options:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Regional Club Coach to come in and help put programme together, assist with first couple of sessions to mentor skippers if necessary.</li><li>2. Clubs own management/experienced skippers put together a programme of activity.</li></ol>
Long term actions:	Club to run at least 1 introduction to Yacht racing programme per year (at start of season). Club to organise follow on days throughout the season to help with progression. Club to ensure there is a system for skippers/ crew communication.



## Case study for an introduction to yacht racing

The Aim: To increase the number of competent race crew available.

### **Case study: Brighton Marina Yacht Club (BMYC)**

People generally perceive sailing to be an expensive sport to get into, but many don't realise that there are opportunities to get involved at minimal cost. Many Yacht Clubs have regular racing activities in their sailing programme however it is not always that easy to find enough crew. Yacht Crewing is potentially a very accessible way into the sport.

In the 1980's BMYC realised that some of the bigger racing yachts were struggling for crew and as a result less likely to race. It was evident that there was a lack of skilled crew available so the club decided to do something about it. This led BMYC to start a programme called 'Club Class' billed as a Yacht Racing Appreciation course.

BMYC put together a 6 week (1/2 Days) programme for novice or inexperienced sailors. The programme would be delivered on Saturday mornings by experienced skippers volunteering with their boats. Throughout the duration of the course the new sailors would get to experience different types of craft and learn all of the basics from 'winch procedure' to 'gybing the spinnaker'.

The Club now runs this programme in the spring and in the autumn. There is no advertising, but due to the success of the course there is no shortage of participants. The club caps the numbers at 40 and charges £130 per head for the six weeks. This price includes 3 months membership. Out of the 40 initial participants they consistently end up with about 15-20% joining the club as full members and sailing regularly. Not only does the club benefit from having more crew available for the racing and as a result more yachts racing it also brings in a significant amount of revenue.

BMYC is a racing club, many of the participants on the 'club class' programme decide that racing isn't for them and drop out. BMYC is looking at Linking with a cruising club to help these non racers continue sailing.

There are challenges associated with running this type of programme including: finding volunteers willing to help with the delivery. Ensuring that the new crew get opportunities after the course, getting skippers to accept relatively novice crew, ensuring that the new crew are welcomed in to the club and are fully involved.

### **Learning points**

- BMYC encouraged their skippers to volunteer to deliver the programme. They have found it is often the skippers that don't need the crew who help out.
- BMYC worked hard to ensure the programme is enjoyable and delivered at the right pace.
- Be flexible with membership, encourage more people in.
- Make sure there are opportunities for the new participants after the course.

**Need more advice?** Contact your Regional Development Officer