



## 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!

### RYA Commercial/LEA Sailing and/or Windsurfing Clubs

Aim:	To provide a windsurf club environment and associated activities at an existing commercial/LEA centre
Duration:	Ongoing
Run by:	Allocate a lead role from centre
Example:	Club night Membership options (pay and play/annual memberships) Skills clinics Discounted courses Demo days Away trips Social events Fun racing Formal racing Establish regular communication
Facilities / kit needed:	Centre would need to allow access to facilities and kit
Benefits:	Increased revenue (pay and play sessions, membership, selling of kit) development of relationship in local community Increased funding opportunities Raising centre profile Offering sustainable exit route for existing customers Engaging new customers Staff development opportunity
Options:	Opportunity to subsidise training
Long term actions:	Sustainable club Develop centre / club links



## Case study for RYA commercial/ LEA sailing and/or windsurfing clubs

**The Aim:** To provide a sailing and/ or windsurf club environment and associated activities at an existing commercial/ LEA centre.

### **Case study: Castlegate Quay Watersports Centre**

Castlegate Quay Watersports Centre is a local authority centre overseen by Tees Active. It is a busy centre running sailing, powerboating, canoeing, kayaking and rafting sessions predominately for local school groups; as such they have been an active OnBoard centre since 2006 running introductory taster sessions, RYA Youth Scheme courses and a regular club for their young sailors. As an RTC they run RYA National Sailing scheme courses for children and adults and encourage participants to continue sailing after their course. Historically the Centre ran an adult club but in recent years the numbers attending have been poor, they decided to re-launch it to provide an accessible opportunity for adults to sail regularly, as the children had the OnBoard club.

The club was re-established for Adults on Wednesday evenings for two hours. They did not publically advertise the club as it was for people who have done a training course at the centre and were keen to continue. All past participants were contacted by mail shot and invited to join. Initially it was only staffed by one instructor so numbers were restricted, but as numbers grow they have the flexibility to increase instructors were necessary. Club members are encouraged to book in advance so that adequate instructors are available and costs are covered. The membership has a range of abilities, beginners are encouraged to do the minimum of an introductory session before joining the club and to make this more accessible they introduced a half day taster session at minimum cost. The instructors run a flexible programme depending upon who is attending, they keep a record of participants progress and development and where possible keep instructor continuity so that it is a familiar face and easier to keep track of membership.

As it is a community sports club they wanted to keep participant cost to a minimum, to help with this they contacted the Primary Care Trust for funding support. This funding has enabled them to offer the first session free to every new member, which is a great way of encouraging people to take the first step, as it won't cost them a penny! There after costs are: membership fee £60 for the year, if a family member joins they offer 50% off, each session costs £13 for non-members and £6.50 for members. The membership fee means that on weeks where numbers are low the instructor costs are still covered, it also encourages regular sailing as they have committed to the club. There are a number of people who have not been on a course and expressed interest in joining through either word of mouth or seeing the activity happening in their community, they are encouraged to book onto a course. The club provides a sociable training environment for adults, encouraging informal racing and training with the aim to feed their participants into local sailing clubs.

To start it was hard work and the centre made a small financial loss until membership grew, but they saw it as a long term benefit and it has proved to be that with, 30% joining a local sailing and 30-40% doing further training courses at the centre. The regular adults club has helped them to engage more with their local community and to encourage adults to stay in the sport after their initial training course.

### **Learning points**

- Important to keep a record of members progression to help maintain interest – instructor continuity will help.
- Encourage members to book in advance so sufficient instructors and boats are available and sessions to be planned.
- Ensure members are kept up to date with the next training course details.
- Create links to local sailing clubs so those who are keen can go further.

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