



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!

Open Days

Aim:	To raise awareness of your club and to attract new members.
Duration:	1 day
Run by:	Dinghy/Windsurf Senior Instructor or a Club Officer
Things to consider:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Insurance? Check your policy covers you – can you charge visitors?2. When? The open day should feed people into to your club course and should give them chance to use their skills before the winter.3. Who? Encourage members to bring a friend, family or colleagues.4. Contact the local press/radio or write a press release – it is worth calling them to remind them of the event.5. Follow this up with another press release with a photo of the event. Put up posters in the local area. Contact your local school and advertise there.6. Open day listed on the RYA website: www.rya.org.uk/newsevents/events/club-open-days7. How? Plan – allocate roles for the day. Give all volunteers a briefing including the emergency action plan.8. Setup a registration desk – take their name and contact details for a follow up - the visitors can then be given a time for their joyride.9. After their joyride arrange for a member to meet them at the jetty and talk about the learn to sail course/club membership.10. Give them the forms to complete or go away with.11. Tea/coffee biscuits, cakes BBQ available to buy.12. Bad weather alternatives.
Facilities / kit needed:	Dinghies – club boats and possibly borrow suitable member's boats - check all are in good condition Fun activities for children – colouring in, quizzes, face painting Buoyancy aids Spare wet weather gear Instructors/competent helms/volunteers
Benefits:	Raise awareness of the club New members Improve community relations Possibly boost club finances
Long term actions:	Follow up communication with all who attended inviting to either join or attend the learn to sail course. Run at least one open day per year.



Case study for open days

The Aim: To raise awareness of your club and to attract new members.

Case study: Shotwick Lake Sailing Club

Shotwick Lake Sailing Club is a small sailing club (176 members) based on Deeside, Flintshire in North Wales. They are an RYA Training Centre and recently gained the Volvo Champion Club Status. They pride themselves on being a club that is open to all and provides good quality training. The club gained Registered Charity status for the promotion of sailing and associated Watersports. They have a number of links with local community groups that use the facilities that the club has to offer including Sea Cadets, Scouts and a Disability Swimming Group.

The club hold open days in order to provide the opportunity to break down barriers, to encourage better community integration and let people know what the club/ sport can offer. The open days are advertised at least 3 months ahead to give interested parties the opportunity to participate and to ensure key people are able to attend and help out. They are also scheduled in prior to a 'learn to sail' course, where the club can use the open day to sign up new participants.

The club advertises widely with the use of flyers to make sure there is information to take away, these are sent to:

Local libraries and leisure centres	Local Authority Sport Development Department	Club website
Local Groups/ Youth Organisations	Local Volvo Dealership (VCC contact)	RYA/WYA website

Further to this advertising, the club informs the following of the activities on offer:

- Club members, so they can invite their friends along
- Other relevant bodies e.g. RNLI
- Local Dignitaries (They sit on local funding panels or may have access to funds not heard about yet):

Assembly Ministers	Local Councillors	Sport Council	Local Volvo Dealership (VCC)
Press	Affiliated bodies	MP's	

The Club then organises a work party before the day to tidy up - first impressions count! The club is located just off an industrial estate so has to ensure it is well sign posted as Sat Nav postcodes don't always work.

Because the club has done most of the organisation prior to the day everything happens in a very relaxed way. There are lots of opportunities to allow people to go out on the water and try sailing & Windsurfing. The club has many different boats including Access dinghy and hoist. The club ensures that there are enthusiastic instructors and volunteers on hand to help out (the club juniors like to help out) on the water and shore side. A BBQ is laid on to provide food and a social atmosphere. There are member's boats on display and people around tasked with chatting to visitors. The Training section of the club ensures that they have a display showing what the opportunities are and that potential members can sign up to courses on the day.

Learning points

- Local Authority Sport Development Department is key contact if you are wanting to advertise to families.
- Provide tasters session throughout season not just on the open day allowing unprepared people to come back.
- Everyone is made welcome- the club has a high retention from courses into club membership.
- Makes sure 'pathways' are clear to ensure retention is easy.
- Membership is growing and most of their courses are signed up from that open day.
- Everyone remembers good food and a good atmosphere!

Need more advice? Contact your Regional Development Officer