



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!

Windsurfing within your sailing club

Aim:	To introduce windsurfing to your club, to increase membership and increase activity
Duration:	Ongoing
Run by:	Club Officer
Examples:	Club night Windsurf club membership Open day Link with windsurf TC/virtual club/shop Day tickets
Facilities / kit needed:	Rigging area, kit storage; open access
Benefits:	Appealing to a wider audience Funding opportunities through partnerships Increasing membership and income
Options:	RYA promotion opportunities
Long Term Actions:	Continued programme of windsurfing activity e.g. open days/training days/racing. Windsurf activity to be included in Club development plan.



Case study for windsurfing within your dinghy club

The Aim: To introduce windsurfing to your club, to increase membership and increase activity.

Case study: Notts County Sailing Club

Notts County Sailing Club is a successful dinghy and windsurfing club with a strong racing, cruising and junior fleets based on a 160 acre gravel pit in rural Nottinghamshire. Like most clubs they need as many memberships as possible to keep the club going. Back in 1986 Notts County SC moved to a new lake and as such wanted to increase membership to allow for the building of a clubhouse. They held open days to encourage new members including windsurfers. This was so successful that by the early 90's a third of the memberships were windsurfers.

The club believes that the success of this project is down to a few key points. The windsurfers formed a Training Section which quickly gained RYA Training Centre status and the club put up funding for new kit, supported by lottery grants and hire fees. This professional setup gained them the respect of the rest of the club and enabled them to recruit and train new members as well as converting a number of dinghy sailors into windsurfing. To balance things out some windsurfers became dinghy sailors!

To encourage the windsurfers to use the water regularly they were allocated their own club night which was used for training, casual racing and just getting out for a sail. When the club set up a T15 club (www.t15.org.uk) to draw in more junior windsurfers this also resulted in their parents joining the club – some of whom became dinghy sailors. The increase in windsurfers formed enough of a group to open the bar and have food put on, this social side in turn encouraged partners and the rest of the family, who often ended up joining in. The T15 club now compete in the interclub series flying the flag for the club across the region and is a recognised Volvo Champion Club in its own right.

Although the windsurfers have their own club night they are still very much part of the same club and they are represented on every Committee, indeed they are so well integrated the Honary Secretary, Bosun, Publicity Officer and the Commodore are windsurfers.

This season the club wanted to increase the number of people windsurfing regularly so with support from the RYA, the club has been running race training sessions for adults with over 20 boards on the water week in week out, encouraging all standards out on the water.

A less obvious advantage of inviting windsurfers to use your facilities is that it may increase your chances of receiving funding from external sources. This is because they will be able to see that the club is used by a number of users throughout the week.

Learning points

- Windsurfers and dinghy sailors can use the same facilities!
- If your boat park is full windsurfers are a great option as they normally take all their kit home.
- A separate membership category is a good idea.
- T15 is a great way of getting juniors and families to join the club.
- Setup a windsurf training section to recruit new members.
- Own club night but include in club activities and management.
- The social side and friendly atmosphere is essential to any clubs development.

Need more advice? Contact your Regional Development Officer