



**Deben Yacht Club**

## **Members Booklet 2025**

Deben Yacht Club is a registered charity number 1183054

# Welcome to the Deben Yacht Club!

This handbook is intended to help explain things that our members — new or existing, beginners or experienced, sailing or paddler — might like to know. It is set out in a question-and-answer format and is also a source of general information about the club. If you have a question that is not answered here, please let a member of the committee know and they will try to help you.

Although the club has been operating since 1838, it continues to evolve and develop to meet the changing needs of our diverse members. Although the majority of our members are dinghy sailors, we also have yacht sailors, paddlers of all kinds, and many of our members do more than one of these activities!

This year, we have introduced some new online systems to improve and streamline the service we offer our members. These include:

- Membership Management (<https://membermojo.co.uk/debenyachtclub>)
- Duties Management (<https://dutyman.biz/dmmain.aspx?id=D0001344>)
- Club Boat Hire (<https://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk/club-boat-hire/>)

and these are described briefly in this document because most members will already have used these, but detailed, step-by-step instructions for using these systems are provided on the website for anyone that wants/needs more guidance.

Fair winds, and we hope to see you on the water!

## 1. What are the club facilities?

DYC Clubhouse: includes the changing rooms, showers, and toilets. Also includes the 'galley' (kitchen), a meeting room, lounge, and the club bar.

[DYC Pontoons and Club Moorings](#): Members may keep their boats (if not too large) on the club moorings, and their tenders on the club pontoon.

DYC Dinghy Park: Members may be allocated spaces for dinghy storage, rack space for canoes/kayaks and paddleboards, and storage for sails, spars, outboards, etc.

If you are new to the club, ask any club committee member for a tour of the facilities, including where we keep our club boats and their sails, keys, codes, etc.

You will find their contact details on the programme card sent to all members each season and on the DYC website ([www.debenyachtclub.co.uk](http://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk)).

### **1.1. When can I use the clubhouse?**

Members, their families, and guests may use the clubhouse at almost any time. Please do not leave the clubhouse unlocked and remember to keep your key fob with you so you can get back in again!

We have an “honesty box” in one of the galley cupboards near the sink so you can pay for any drinks you make when the galley is unattended. Milk pots are usually available in the fridge.

Occasionally there may be a private function when the clubhouse is used for a party or meeting. Then, please just use the changing rooms or access the pontoon. Access to the clubhouse may also be restricted for short periods if there's a need for emergency maintenance.

### **1.2. How is the dinghy park organized?**

If you choose to keep your dinghy at DYC, you'll be allocated a space in the dinghy park. Please put your yearly sticker on your boat so we can see it's in date. If you have a road trailer or road base, you can either keep it under your boat or request an additional space for it, although there is a charge for this. An additional benefit of keeping your dinghy on its road trailer is that it's less likely to blow over in a gale! We ask all members to label their assets (boats, trailers, outboards etc.) with their name clearly so we know what belongs to whom and we don't accidentally dispose of it over the winter when tidying up the Dinghy Park.



## **1.4. How do I launch / recover my boat?**

Our Club Wayfarers are often on moorings, so you'll need to ask for a lift out to the dinghy on a safety boat. If you're using a boat from the Dinghy Park, then you'll need to use the launching ramp.

Get your boat organized in the dinghy park so there's less to do on the ramp where you could be in the way of others. If you're sailing single handed then you can tie your boat to the ropes on the ramp sides while you park your trolley on the hard, remembering where you left it. When you're sailing back to the club, green and red striped posts on the bank acting as leading marks to show you where the edges of the ramp are so you can avoid stepping off into deep water. Don't forget to raise your centreboard, when approaching the ramp!

## **2. When can we sail?**

DYC is in the upper reaches of the River Deben, which means that at low water it's impossible to sail in Woodbridge since the river is no more than a large expanse of mud with just a trickle of water in the channel. However, the river is navigable at all states of the tide downstream of Kyson Point.

Club sailing events usually start between two and three hours before high tide, and we aim to finish about high tide — if we finish later than this, the outgoing tidal stream can make it impossible to return upriver to the club if the winds are light.

If you have your own boat, you can go sailing or paddling whenever you want (tide permitting). However, for your own safety we recommend that you've told someone what you're doing, where you're sailing, and what time you expect to be back.

## **3. Where can we sail?**

The river is navigable from Wilford Bridge in Melton all the way to the sea at Bawdsey/Felixstowe Ferry. DYC events normally take place in the waters from the Woodbridge Tidemill downriver to Waldringfield, though we occasionally venture farther afield, either upriver to Wilford Bridge, or downriver (mostly yachts) to Ramsholt and beyond.

People with their own craft are free to sail where they like, and some club members have sailed as far as the Baltic. But if you choose to stay in the Deben

then there are several potential places to land and picnic as well as pubs and restaurants at Waldringfield, Ramsholt, and Felixstowe Ferry.



#### 4. Can I hire a club boat?



Many members will already know how to use this system (some have already booked club boats this year, and paid in the DYC Store), but step-by-step instructions are available on the website.

## **5. What organised sailing events can I take part in?**

We try to offer something to suit all ages and abilities. The club has a strong dinghy racing tradition and offers a full programme of races throughout the season.

For those who prefer a leisurely sail together with others while improving their skills, we also offer Float Your Boat sessions and Flotilla Sailing. We also run a number of RYA approved training courses through the year, such as Learn to Sail, Safety Boat, and Power Boat 2.

Information about upcoming sailing events is sent via email to club members.

### **5.1. Dinghy and Yacht Racing**

For those who enjoy racing, the club runs a full programme of races, from early April through until the beginning of December. These are organised in series with additional one-off cup races. The highlight of the racing calendar is Regatta Week, held in August on 5 consecutive days.

### **5.2. Flotilla Sailing**

This is group sailing together, usually down river to Waldringfield for a stop ashore. The OOD decides the destination with the safety boat leader at the briefing and if you'd like to bring a picnic the safety boats will take it for you. If participating, please attend the briefing 15 minutes before setting off, sign on the sheet, and be ready on the water, to go at the appointed time in the programme. You need to be a competent enough helm to keep up with the flotilla but it's not a race and we stay together with the safety boats in attendance.

### **5.3. 'Float Your Boat'**

These are organised led sessions for adults and children of all abilities with safety boat cover. They are intended to be relaxed, fun, safe and confidence-building. Sessions are varied and include games, down-river picnics, and other social events. Safety boat crews will be there to support with sailing tips.

If you don't want to sail alone, we will try to find someone to buddy up or you can invite a friend who will be made a temporary member for the day at no extra cost. You need to arrive a good half an hour before the launch time to rig your



boat. If youngsters are sailing without parents, the parents are required to sign them in and are encouraged to remain at the club but not required to do so.

## **5.4. Training – ‘Learn to Sail’ PB2, Safety Boat courses**

‘Learn to Sail;’ courses generally take place in the Spring and are popular, so it is advisable to book early. They are advertised by at the beginning of the season and shown on the club calendar (on the website and posted to all members on renewal). For more information, contact the DYC training team using link on the club website: <https://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk/training/sail-training/>

You can book a course either using the email details or just follow the link.

## **6. More about Racing**

### **6.1. When should I arrive?**

We suggest you arrive at least one hour before the race start to give you time to rig your boat, get changed and get afloat. Race start times are shown on the sailing programme and on the website: .

### **6.2. How long do races take?**

We generally run two races, sailed back-to-back, of about an hour’s duration each, or one longer race, on each racing day. Since the Deben is tidal, the normal start time is between 1 and 3 hours before high tide so we can get boats back before the tide turns. The ebb gathers pace soon after high tide and if there is little wind it can be challenging to get back upriver.

### **6.3. Racing fleets**

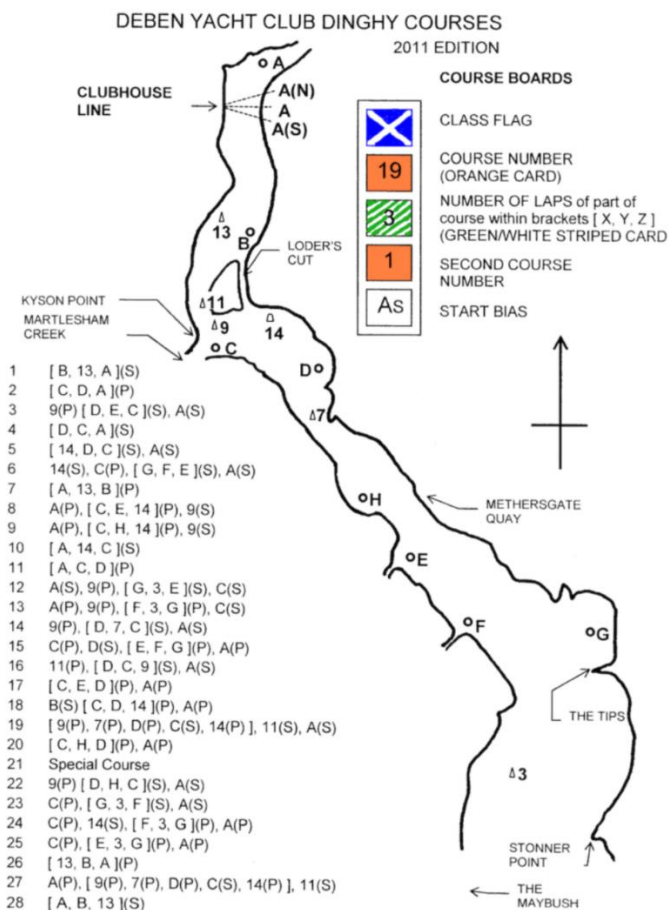
Most of our races use the RYA Portsmouth Yardstick (PY) handicap system so different types of boat can race together; we usually have two fleets: fast and slow:

- The Fast Fleet is for boats with a PY above about 1150; such as the Laser, Hadron, RS Vision, RS200, RS300 and RS400.
- The Slow Fleet is typically comprised of boats such as Toppers, Miracles, Mirrors, RS Qubas and Fevas.



## 6.4. Race courses – where to find maps and how to identify the course?

The DYC Course Card lists about 20 courses and has a map to show the buoys to be rounded for each course. The Officer of the Day (OOD) chooses a course suitable for the wind strength and direction. The course number for your class is on a board hung from the Crow's Nest veranda about 15 minutes before the race start. Races may use Committee Boat starts downriver or start lines from the Crow's Nest across the river to black and white leading marks on the other side of the river. Races normally finish at the club. Paper and laminated course cards are available from the Crow's Nest and a printable version is on the website. If you still need a bit of help, just ask the Officer of the Day.



## **6.5. What do the flags and hooters mean?**

The DYC uses a 5, 4, 1 and 0-minute count down sequence, using flags raised and lowered at the Club House; each flag event is signalled by a klaxon. The Fast Fleet starts first; at five minutes the black and white “6” flag is raised, at 4 minutes the Preparatory flag “P” - a blue square with a white centre - is raised. At one-minute P is lowered and at the start “6” is lowered. The slow fleet’s five minute, red and white, “F” flag is raised at the same time as 6 is lowered, P goes up and down at 4 and 1 minute respectively and F is lowered at the start of the slow fleet’s race.

## **6.6. What is an OOD and what do they do?**

The Officers of the Day (OOD) are experienced volunteers responsible for organizing racing and other events. They open the Club House, choose courses, start, and finish the race, record times, and calculate the results using the handicap system. They are also responsible for closing the clubhouse and checking that the sheds and dinghy park are secure.

## **7. How do I find out about club activities?**

DYC uses many channels for communicating with its members:

### **7.1. DYC Website**

The DYC website is [www.debenyachtclub.co.uk](http://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk). This is the definitive source of information about the club, and is where you can find links to the various online systems we use (for [membership management](#), for [duties management](#), and for [club boat hire](#)) as well as reference material such as the club constitution, club rules, membership fees, and helpful guidance such as how to rig the club boats and how to take part in club events.

### **7.2. DYC Newsletter and DYC News**

The [DYC Newsletter](#) is an annual journal that is posted to the home address of all members. It contains reports from the various officers on matters such as finance, training, racing, etc. as well as articles from other club members on topics such as local people and history, and sailing matters.

The DYC News is a regular (approximately monthly) email sent to all members by the Secretary, with reminders about upcoming events, and reports of recent activities at the club.

### **7.3. DYC WhatsApp groups**

There are three active WhatsApp Groups – please email the appropriate person with your mobile number if you would like to be added to the group:

- DYC General Forum - David Hayhow ([secretary@debenyachtclub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@debenyachtclub.co.uk))
- DYC Yachts & Keelboats – Chris Cobb ([chrisjacob@btinternet.com](mailto:chrisjacob@btinternet.com))
- DYC Paddlers – David Kemp ([paddlers@debenyachtclub.co.uk](mailto:paddlers@debenyachtclub.co.uk))
- DYC Women on the Water – Jill Wickson ([jillwickson@hotmail.com](mailto:jillwickson@hotmail.com))
- DYC Float Your Boat - Jane Bradburn ([publicity@debenyachtclub.co.uk](mailto:publicity@debenyachtclub.co.uk))

### **7.4. Posters and notice boards in the DYC Clubhouse**

Another way to find out what is happening at the club is to look in the clubhouse. We often put up DYC posters for special events (such as Float Your Boat sessions, training sessions, coffee mornings, etc.), and members can post 'For Sale' and other notices on the relevant notice boards.

## **8. How do I find crew/offer to crew?**

Many of our members have two-person boats and sometimes have need of a crew. There is a WhatsApp group called 'DYC General Forum' where you can ask for crew or to crew. If you'd like to join it, please email the Honorary Secretary; [secretary@debenyachtclub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@debenyachtclub.co.uk).

Alternatively, pop a message onto the "For Sale" board in the Club House. Or just turn up on the day and see if anyone can help (whether you're looking for a crew or offering to crew!).

## **9. When is there safety boat cover?**

Club events are usually supported by two RIB safety boats manned by 2 people each. We also have a displacement boat which is used for directing events or acting as a committee boat. Club boats may only be used when there is safety boat cover. When training is taking place the safety boats are completely occupied looking after the trainees, so no club boats are available.

## 10. How do I volunteer to help support the club?

Thank you to all our members who volunteer and support the club in any capacity (e.g. maintaining the clubhouse, ramp, pontoons, dinghy yard, club dinghies, and the safety boats during the winter, or managing races, driving safety boats, running the galley and bar, etc. during the sailing season) - we simply could not exist without your valuable contributions.

We hope and expect that all active and able-bodied members do at least one 'wet' duty (OOD, AOD, safety boat, etc.) and one 'dry' duty (galley, bar, etc.).

This year, we are managing both 'wet' and 'dry' duties through Dutyman (<https://dutyman.biz/dmmain.aspx?id=D0001344>), so you need to be registered on that system to volunteer or swap duties. Please ask via [safetyboatroster@btinternet.com](mailto:safetyboatroster@btinternet.com) to sign up on Dutyman if you have not used it before.



Many members will already know how to use this system (they use it to check / accept / swap / volunteer) for safety boat and galley duties, but step-by-step instructions are available on the website.

### 10.1. What are duties and what are we expected to do?

The Safety Boat Teams (helm and crew) work together to provide safety cover for all DYC-organised events. The helm collects, prepares, drives, and then returns the safety boat, and the crew helps the helm. Safety crews will generally be needed from about one hour before the scheduled race start until about one hour after the race ends.

The Officer of the Day (OOD) organizes events and safety boat cover, sets the course, runs the start and finish, and works out the results. See also section 5 above for how racing is organised. The AOD (Assistant Officer of the Day) helps, often operating the flags and keeping an eye on the boats.

The galley team works together to provide hot drinks and food in the club house for most sailing events based at the club. At the start of the year, the Galley

Team Leader prepares a rota of the galley volunteers, assigning a galley lead and helper for each event. The galley lead will plan the meal, arrange the supplies and organise the timetable. Typically, the galley team arrive at about the scheduled race start time and aim to have food ready at about HW, just after the races finish. They also clean up the galley after the event.

All volunteers (OOD/AOD, Safety Boat Teams, Galley Crew, Barkeeper and Ramp Master) will generally get a free hot drink and meal from the galley in appreciation of their contribution to the event.

The Winter Working Party maintains club assets, including the clubhouse, safety boats, club boats and dinghy park. It meets at the club on winter Tuesday mornings at 09.30 and lead hands organize activities. No great expertise in DIY or boat building is needed since there's plenty of helpful advice available.

## **10.2. What experience do I need on a safety boat?**

The Safety Boat Handbook is essential reading for all Safety Boat crews and can be found on the website: <https://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk/safety-boat-info/>

Safety Boat crews need no special experience but must be sufficiently able-bodied that they can help right boats and rescue sailors in difficult conditions. Volunteers learn over time and may take qualifications such as RYA Power Boat 2 and Safety Boat Certificates. As they learn, they'll do more responsible tasks. Choose what you feel comfortable with and build from there.

## **10.3. What clothing is suitable for sailing and safety boat duties?**

- a) Buoyancy aid – essential when you're on the water. It's best to buy your own but you can borrow one from a changing room, Crow's Nest, or the locker under the key hooks near the Galley.
- b) Warm clothes that are OK to get wet, hat & gloves/mittens, or sun cream in the summer!
- c) Use several thin layers or a wetsuit & layers to keep warm.
- d) Water and wind-proof jacket and trousers or a spray suit are useful on cooler days.
- e) Wetsuit boots or other suitable footwear like old trainers (not garden wellies).
- f) Towel and a change of clothes in the unlikely event that you get wet.

- g) One of the safety boat crew should be prepared to go into the water although this is very rare.

#### **10.4. Do you need to be able to bake or cook to do Galley duty?**

No. The normal fare is sandwiches, rolls, hot dogs, bacon sandwiches, cake, and hot & cold drinks. Many basic supplies and drinks are part of Galley stock. Perishable items like cakes, bread, milk etc. can be bought at places convenient to the volunteer or made at home. We always put a new volunteer with a more experienced helper, so they can 'learn the ropes.'

#### **10.5. Who will contact you before your duty, and how long before?**

Safety boat, AOD and OOD: Dutyman will send an email with information and instructions about a week before your duty, and the lead helm or OOD will contact you before your duty.

Galley Teams: Dutyman will send an email with information and instructions about a week before your duty, and the Galley Lead Lesley Yeung (galley@debenyachtclub.co.uk) contacts galley volunteers in the week before each sailing session, so can answer any queries or pass on useful information.

### **11. Where can I find information about Club Policies and Rules?**

The Club has policies covering: Health and Safety, Data Protection, Safeguarding, Environment and Paddle Sports. These can be found on the website (<https://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk/the-club/policies/>) and in folders on the bookcase inside the clubhouse lounge. If you need further clarification on any of these topics, have a word with the appropriate club officer.

Details of club rules and the club constitution can also be found on our website: <https://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk/members/club-constitution-rules/>

#### **11.1. Health and Safety**

The club's committee takes matters of Health & Safety seriously by routinely identifying potential hazards, assessing risks, and taking action to minimise these. Members can assist by:

- Recognizing that water sports are inherently risky and that they are responsible for their craft and those upon it.
- Familiarizing themselves with basic safety measures which are listed in the club house.
- Maintaining third party insurance of at least £2,000,000 when taking part in club events.
- Wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) while on the pontoon or when afloat.

## 11.2. Environment

We are lucky to live in a beautiful and environmentally important part of the country. The club is committed to protecting our environment and has adopted an [Environmental Policy](#) that was developed in line with guidance from the RYA and accepted best practice.

## 12. How do I check/update my Membership Details?

This year we introduced a new online membership management system that is based on a commercial platform (MemberMojo) but tailored for the Deben Yacht Club.

The DYC/MM system allows members to check and update the personal information the club holds on them and their boats, and automates membership renewal and fee collection so that members can pay apply online and receive email receipts showing how much they paid, for what, and when.



Most members will already know how to use this system (they used it for renewing their membership this year), but step-by-step instructions are available on the website.





[www.debenyachtclub.co.uk](http://www.debenyachtclub.co.uk)

