

Independent Sailing

Members are welcome to sail independently from the club, but advice and support boats are only available during club organised sailing activities. Members are responsible for their own safety at all times. In the case of children and youths, parents or guardians are expected to exercise appropriate supervision.

The following suggestions are for guidance only:

Prior to Launch

- Arrange to go out with another similar boat and watch out for each other.
- Check the weather forecast ideally from at least two sources including the Met Office Inshore Waters forecast and XC weather or similar. Check the current and recent wind at the pier head weather station (link on LSC website). Avoid sailing in offshore winds.
- Check times and heights of tide.
- Check your boat's buoyancy, equipment, rigging and fixings.
- Tell a reliable person ashore where you are going and give them your mobile telephone number(s).
- Carry a mobile phone in a plastic bag or waterproof container.
- Realistically assess yourself, your crew and your boat's ability to cope.
- Ask experienced sailing people for a second opinion if possible.
- Dress warmly for the conditions it is easier to take off a layer than put it on.
- Wear personal buoyancy, properly done up, at all times afloat.
- Carry a compass and a waterproof watch. Practice sailing a compass course so you can cope with poor visibility.
- Carry a paddle to allow you to return to shore in the case of rig failure or the wind dying.
- Arrange a time for your shore mate either to contact you or to raise the alarm.

Whilst Afloat

- Sail within your 'comfort zone' both in terms of the conditions you sail in and the distance from the club you decide to go. Don't take risks.
- Watch the sky upwind for black clouds, fog, rain or wind direction changes.
- Avoid sailing to the east of your starting point in a dying wind on an ebb tide.
- Go ashore if you have doubts or get cold or tired there's always another day.
- If you capsize and can't right it, stay with the boat. Never try to swim to shore.
- Watch all around for shipping, other boats and obstacles.
- Don't stay out alone after your sailing partner comes in.
- Always return to shore before dusk.

On Coming Ashore

- Tell your shore mate to stand down when you come ashore.

(above adapted from Brightlingsea SC document)