

The Club - Seasalter Sailing Club, founded in 1952, enjoys an enviable position on the beach side of Faversham Road Seasalter in Whitstable Bay, North Kent, with approximately a mile of beach on either side and free public car parking adjacent to the club.

The club focuses on providing a friendly family environment with the emphasis on encouraging those new to sailing, or wishing to improve their skills, to find a class of boat that suits them and to enjoy club racing and personal leisure sailing.

The location is about 5 miles from the eastern end of the M2 motorway and 2 miles from the A299 Thanet Way – around a one hour drive on trunk and motorway roads from the M25 Thames crossing at Dartford or the M20/M26 motorway junction.

The Club's own two storey clubhouse, with panoramic views of the sailing area from the first floor clubroom and balcony, has views out over the sea wall to the north and the salt marshes to the south. The facilities include changing rooms with showers and toilets, together with sail locker and briefing area on the ground floor. The main clubroom on the first floor has a galley and Licensed bar and a door out onto the balcony adjacent to the sea wall – as well as the Race Control Tower.

The club web site provides extensive information about the club with a range of photographs.

Sailing – Organised sailing takes place, subject to weather and tidal conditions, at weekends between March and November. Members can, generally, have access to the facilities at any time and a growing number of members sail together during the week in the summer months and explore the Swale estuary and the coast of the Isle of Sheppey.

The sailing area is normally within Whitstable Bay and is largely protected by the Isle of Sheppey and Whitstable to the west and east respectively. Sea conditions are normally slight except with high north or north east winds. The beach, of sand and pebbles, shelves very gradually for about 1 mile out and sailing is normally limited to about 2-3 hours according to tide heights. Winds are predominately from the south to south west (cross offshore) and thus from generally open land.

Members are not restricted to racing and may 'free-sail' as they wish. During each season a number of sailing sessions are put aside for 'free-sailing' at weekends with a patrol boat on the water. By arrangement these sessions may include sail training activities or longer jaunts to local beauty spots or waterside hostelrys.

Boat Storage & Access to Sea - The boat storage and camping areas are located in the Club's field, with easy road access, on the opposite side of the road about 70 metres from the concrete ramp over the sea wall. Thence it is only 10-15 metres across the beach to the high water mark.

Members may normally store their boats in the field by arrangement with the Sailing Committee. We maintain a register of boats as part of a safety initiative with the MCGA local Coastguard team.

From April to September boats a number of members choose to secure their boats on the beach for easier access.

We do not permit storage of keelboats or powerboats.

All boats must be covered by third party and public liability insurance when stored or sailed from the Club. We do enjoy a discount with a marine insurer and can provide details on request.

Racing - The members' fleet comprises just over 70 boats with a near equal split between monohull and catamaran classes. There are no restrictions on class of sailing boats and racing is primarily split into fast and slow handicap (PY > and < 950).

The Club's largest fleet (18 boats) is the Sprint 15 catamaran (previously known as the Dart 15) that can be sailed single or double handed. Smaller fleets of Dart18 catamarans together with Byte, Enterprise, Laser, Miracle, Mirror and Solo dinghies currently make up the majority of boats.

Each sailing day normally comprises two races of between 45 and 60 minutes duration. Most races take place on courses directly visible by spectators from the club building and balcony. There is a mix of handicap and pursuit races set out in a number of series or one weekend regattas through the year. During the season several longer races follow courses into the River Swale.

Club Boats – Not everyone knows what kind of boat that they want when they start and some may not wish to purchase a boat or would like to try different boats. The club operates three club boats for day use by members, in return for a small donation per session to cover maintenance costs.

This fleet comprises Sprint 15 and Dart18 catamarans and a Mirror dinghy that can be used, on prior booking through the Bosun, on Club sailing days.

The Social Scene - In addition to sailing the Club has an active but relaxed social scene. The Club bar and clubroom are normally open on Friday evenings for relaxation, socialising and playing some of the many games available.

Whilst there are Fitting-Out and Laying-Up suppers at each end of the sailing season there are also themed Saturday evening social events approximately once a month throughout the year.

To work off the Christmas excesses a ramble along the local footpaths followed by a soup and bread lunch is organised annually one or two days after the festive day. Other notable annual dates are marked in appropriate ways.

Open Events & Visiting Fleets or Clubs - The club organises open sailing events by arrangement with class associations and is a favourite on the Sprint15, Shearwater, Catapult and Pacer TT circuits. We also hold our own annual Open Fowley race up the River Swale to Conyer Creek and back (in excess of 24 kilometres).

We look forward to meeting fellow sailors at any time and do, on occasion, arrange for other clubs to visit with their boats. Sailing visitors may camp in the field for the weekend and join in with our Club sailing –you have but to ask and we will see if we can arrange something.

Camping - The club can accommodate up to 6 caravans and 30 tents in the boat field and parking along the beachfront is free. Camping for members and visitors to sailing events is free of charge but those wishing to park caravans or motor homes in the field must book a space beforehand.

Within 3 miles there are two Travel Lodge style hotels for those who treasure their comforts.

Non-Sailors – The beach and shallow waters provide an ideal location for beach lovers. In addition, for non-sailors, the Saxon Shore Way footpath passes directly in front of the club and leads westwards to a nature reserve on the salt flats past the well known 'Sportsman' pub and restaurant. Seals and many varieties of birds are seen in the Swale in summer months and this is a favoured 'twitcher' area. We can provide a walking 'triptique' for a route of about 7 miles across the marsh, past the nature reserve and back.

Walking eastwards leads into the picturesque town of Whitstable with its strong oyster trade and active fishing harbour. About five miles to the south west is the historic town of Faversham that also provides a wealth of history to explore – being home to a number of sailing barges and the historic gunpowder factories of years past. In Faversham Creek, where it combines with Oare Creek and leads to the River Swale, is a favourite of thirsty sailors, the Shipwrights Arms pub, at an active boat yard. You can actually sail there and pull your boat ashore to enjoy local real ales and more delicate liquids.

Becoming a Member - The Club is open for new members, subject to approval by the Committee, and an application form can be found on the Club website. However why not pop in and meet us and have a tour of the facilities first. The Club sailing programme is also on the website and shows when members will be available to show you around – or come along on a Friday evening.

We have single, family and social (non-sailing) memberships. Children attaining the age of 18 must become members in their own right in the following year. Please note that children, under the age of 18, must be accompanied by an appropriate adult when at the Club.

Each summer we do hold an Open Day when, weather permitting, visitors can have a sail with members on either or both catamarans and dinghies – watch this site for the date.

Training - We cannot currently offer training for absolute beginners. We do however have good contacts with three RYA Registered Training Establishments in North Kent that do organise Level 1 and Level 2 courses. We will be pleased to take potential members out for a sail, weather permitting, and to discuss with them the appropriate training that they may wish to undertake.

We do have a number of experienced and trained members who can provide improver sailing skills training by arrangement.

Duties - All sailing members are expected to help out by doing several duties during each season, either in the Race Tower or on the RIB patrol boats. Duty teams normally comprise between 4 and 10 members depending on the type and size of event. Each team is led by a trained Race Officer and Patrol Boat Helm.

Wheelchair Access - There is ramped access to the ground floor changing and briefing areas and the toilets directly from the car parking area. The first floor clubroom, galley and bar have ramped access, via the balcony, from the sea wall public footpath.

The boat ramp, approximately 70 metres from the building, permits wheelchair access to the sea wall footpath from the car parking areas.

More Information? - If you are interested in finding out more then please browse this web site or e-mail or telephone us for more information.

Enquiries@seasaltersailing.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.