

Welcome to Chesil Sailability



inspired
by 2012

Volunteer Guide 2025



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1 Welcome!

New Volunteers are always extremely welcome and are an asset to our team. We hope you will enjoy your time with us and will continue to support our activity throughout the season and year.

Please read this information pack and contact us if you have any more questions or would like a chat – or email us to arrange a time to come and meet us!

2 Who are we?

Chesil Sailability is a group of people who are passionate about sailing; some of us have disabilities. Inspired by the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games, Chesil Sailability is a registered charity and was set up at the beginning of 2013 by a small group of local volunteers, to give people with disabilities the opportunity to experience the freedom, thrill and exhilaration of the water, whether they are already sailors or new to the sport. Importantly, we aim to provide a pathway to all aspects of sailing, be it leisure, formal training courses or racing. As far as possible, we will support people with physical, sensory or learning impairments or those who are managing long term illness to enjoy sailing and achieve their goals.

Our Aims:

- Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to sail for fun, to learn to sail, to progress to sailing competitively, or any other aspect of sailing, regardless of disability.
- Provide a sailing experience which is valued by people with disabilities, and becomes an important part of what they do.
- Actively support progression and personal development for sailors and volunteers in whichever area they are interested in.
- Provide access to world class sailing facilities on our doorstep for local people with disabilities.

This is all on the underpinning foundations of:

- High safety standards
- Well maintained boats, equipment and shore-side facilities
- Well trained volunteers
- Continuous feedback and improvement
- Maintaining session fees and membership at an affordable level
- Good financial management
- Strong governance
- Strong Partnerships, both with the local sailing community, and with the wider Sailability programme

Check our website for more information and photos: www.chesilsailability.org.uk



3 Where and when?

We are very fortunate to be based at the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy (WPNSA), with the world class facilities of the London 2012 Paralympic Games and then to sail on the Olympic and Paralympic sailing waters. We have our own cabin as our base, close to the main building.

For 2025, our regular sailing sessions will be every Tuesday from mid-afternoon to evening. The sessions should finish by the time it is too dark! Dates and times will be by arrangement and will be published on the website, social media and by email. We also offer some group sailing sessions during the morning on some Thursdays during the season.

During the winter, we meet two or three times on a Tuesday evening for socials – more ideas and help welcome!

4 How can I volunteer?

As a guide we ask that our volunteers are 18 years of age, or older. However, if you are under 18, please email our Membership Secretary, Kirsty, at volunteers@chesilsailability.org.uk to discuss volunteering with us.

People become involved in many different ways, on and off the water, from hands on support at our sailing sessions, to behind-the-scenes areas such as fundraising or IT support, or as committee members to steer the organisation.

We need a diverse group of volunteers to make it a success and you don't have to be a sailor (or get your feet wet!). Some of those who join us to sail also volunteer, for example helping with information and fundraising events to being part of the committee. For sailing sessions, we need RIB drivers/crew, sailors and shore-based helpers, working as a team, sharing, developing and learning skills. We provide a range of training (see later section).

On the Water Team: This includes qualified safety boat drivers and crew – we take safety extremely seriously and will assess and train our volunteers. Experienced sailors or instructors, our Skippers, sail with our less able sailors and those requiring assistance.

Pontoon Team: This shore-based team helps to get ready for sailing: rigging and launching the boats, checking the sailors have life jackets and helping them in and out of the boats, using the hoists where needed (training provided).

Reception Team: Also shore-based, this team is based in the cabin, preparing the session: meeting, greeting and registering members and carers, ensuring everyone tallies in and out, and liaising with the other teams to get everyone on the water. The Radio Team also operates from the cabin.

The Pontoon/Reception Link Team: Based outside our cabin, this team meets and greets and helps sailors and carers to prepare for sailing and then escorts sailors to and from the pontoon.

First Aid: We have a designated qualified First Aider for each session – training available.

Boat and Cabin Maintenance: If you have an interest in making and repairing, there's plenty to do to keep us afloat with the maintenance team (including through the winter).

Behind-the-Scenes: Help is required throughout the year at social functions, with fundraising activities, administration, IT, website design, publicity and lots of other things... Just ask!



Formal and informal training can be given in all areas and new volunteers can develop their skills throughout the season. We value them all.

5 How to contact us

- See our website www.chesilsailability.org.uk
- Email us at info@chesilsailability.org.uk
- Text us or leave a message on our answer phone 07543 656390. This is not manned all of the time so there may be a little delay in getting back to you.
- Contact us for a chat or to arrange to come and meet us.
- Use the mobile number for contact on sailing days to check on weather etc. Become our friend and follow us on Facebook by searching Chesil Sailability 
- Follow us on X (Twitter) @ChesilSailing 

6 Still interested? What next?

1. Read the rest of our Volunteer Guide, with more details about our sessions and training, then contact our Membership Secretary, Kirsty, at secretary@chesilsailability.org.uk who will arrange for you to come and meet us, preferably at one of our sailing sessions in the summer or in the winter at a social or training event. You will see how we operate and talk through how you might wish to be involved. You can also see for yourself how exciting and rewarding it is.
2. We will then ask you to complete a Volunteer Application Form on line. You will need to use a laptop or PC to do this as the forms do not work very well with mobile devices. Go to the website, www.chesilsailability.org.uk click on the Membership tab and scroll to the bottom of the page. Select Browse memberships. Then under the Volunteer Heading, select 'Add to Basket' and follow the steps. You will need to complete the entire form as it doesn't save it until it is finished.
3. There is no membership fee for volunteers. However, for those who feel they would like to, we ask for a minimum donation of £10 which contributes to the core costs of insurance, training and Chesil Sailability's membership of the WPNSA. Donations can be made through 'Wonderful'. There is a link under the Fundraising tab on our website. Just click on the Donate! option in the drop down menu. If you are a UK taxpayer please sign the Gift Aid consent option whilst making your donation. There is also a Gift Aid Consent form in section 11, which you may prefer to complete and hand in at reception. This will be passed on to our Treasurer.
4. We also require all volunteers who will have face-to-face contact with our sailors to possess Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance. This is free for volunteers and our Safeguarding Officer will arrange this with you. Please see the DBS information sheet in Section 9.
5. There is a membership, induction and training process, including the RYA Sailability Disability Awareness Training, when courses are available. We aim to involve all new volunteers as much as possible, initially under the guidance of a mentor.



7 Sailing Sessions

At the sessions we allocate specific roles to volunteers, to ensure we have experienced leads in each area and to ensure volunteers are trained where needed. We use Dutyman to organise our rota and ask that all volunteers who can attend a session, sign up for duty by the Friday of the previous week. This greatly assists the Duty Officer to plan the session, ensuring we can cater for all or sailor needs and all operational areas have enough volunteers. Dutyman will send confirmation and reminder emails to you for the sessions you have signed up for.

All volunteers are asked to sign in at the Chesil Sailability Cabin (located in the dinghy park) on arrival: make yourself known to the reception team and check the duty board, inside the cabin, to find your role for the session. We greatly appreciate the flexibility of our volunteers in undertaking different roles at different times, to ensure the smooth running of the sessions.

Security at the WPNSA is important and gates may be locked. If this is the case, we will need to open them for you so ring the mobile to let us know you are waiting. The sessions all have a briefing before we go on the water, on boats, teams and weather, rigging and preparing for the session. We finish by everyone helping to put everything away and a quick debrief, often just as it gets dark!

Overall responsibility for the sailing session is with The Duty Officer (DO). The list of volunteers and their roles for each session will be displayed at reception along with a weather forecast. We communicate between teams by radio.

We have a number of boats available. The DO will advise at the briefing on the boats required, need for reefing and any special measures required for the session. The DO will brief the skippers and RIB crews on the weather conditions and sailing areas for the session.

Care should be taken at all times when rigging boats and two people should lift keels if required, which are very heavy, using our special device, affectionately known as 'Keith'.

Boats should be tied up to the chosen pontoon with bow and stern lines. Where hoisting will be required (this will be advised by the Reception Team) during a session, the boat should be secured next to the appropriate hoist.

Sailors also sign in at reception, pick up a sailor's tally, get kitted up and await instruction from the reception and pontoon team as to when their boat is ready for them to sail. All sailors are accompanied from reception to the pontoon by a volunteer.

Cancellation

In our first season in 2013 we only cancelled once for lack of volunteers, and once for poor weather. Since then, we have had to cancel some sessions due to adverse weather. We are very grateful for the support of our volunteers, enabling us to run sessions. 2020 was an exceptional year due to the pandemic, but even then, we managed to develop a Covid Secure way of sailing and were able to run a few sessions towards the end of the season. These were greatly appreciated by those volunteers and sailors who felt able to take part.



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Our cancellation process remains in place and we may have to cancel or postpone a sailing session because of unfavourable weather conditions. This may be at short notice if the weather looks doubtful. We always try to go sailing but sometimes the decision to cancel is at the last moment. We are sorry, but we can't phone everyone! Please check for an update on:

Mobile phone message on 07543 656390

Facebook Chesil.Sailability

X (Twitter) @chesilsailing

Website www.chesilsailability.org.uk then scroll down to the Tweets on the right-hand side.

8 What to wear and what to bring to sailing sessions

WPNSA is a large exposed site – for sun, wind and rain! We suggest comfortable casual clothing, non-slip boat type shoes or boots, training shoes or wellington boots (feet can get wet when launching boats) and some warm clothing, including your own waterproofs, a hat and gloves if appropriate. You may also need sun cream, hat with a lanyard, sunglasses and long-sleeved sun shirt.

If you are bringing your own lifejacket/buoyancy aid and sailing equipment and are volunteering in the rib or boats or on the pontoon, it is your responsibility to ensure that your life jacket/buoyancy aid is fit for purpose. All pontoon volunteers need to wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid. We have some lifejackets to borrow.

Don't forget a drink, hot or cold or both and a snack to eat. The WPNSA canteen is usually closed just before 5.00pm when we are there on Tuesday evenings, although we do have access to the changing rooms and toilets.

9 Training

Training is at the core of Chesil Sailability and offered for all levels of experience from beginner to expert alike.

We aim to run courses for new members in a range of areas, as refreshers for those who have trained previously and want to get ready for the new season and for those who need a quick update before updating existing awards.

Our courses range from a simple 2 hour session to whole days (eg First Aid) and, for some formal RYA qualifications, a whole weekend.

Most of our courses will be based at WPNSA in Portland but do look out for training updates.

RYA Sailability has a volunteer logbook scheme which are available and our disability awareness courses also have their own log book which is a great aid memoire.

The list below outlines some of the areas of our training programme, it's very much a modular programme with different aspects being covered over the programme and volunteers covering a range of skills.

- Boat rigging and sail reefing including Hansas and Hawks.



Chesil Sailability Volunteer Guide



- Boat launching and recovery and securing to the jetty.
- Handling of lifting keels.
- Wheelyboat preparation and use
- Preparation of the pontoon area and storage of hoist parts, hard and hammock seats, anemometer, wind indicators and tools.
- Selection of appropriate life jacket for the sailors.
- Assisting with hoist operation and precautions including sling selection.
- The reception desk and sailor and helper registration process.
- The role of safety boat helms and crews
- Use of defibrillators.
- RYA Disability Awareness Training.

More formal courses are available:

- RYA First Aid Courses.
- VHF Course.
- Introduction to Powerboats.
- Preparation for RYA Power Boat 2 and Club Safety Boat course.
- Introduction to dinghy sailing instruction, preparation for formal instructor qualifications.

Volunteers Without Dinghy or Yacht Sailing Experience

Those interested in going afloat are encouraged to take an appropriate RYA dinghy sailing course. This can be arranged in conjunction with Chesil Sailability and will enable volunteers to be more effective on the pontoons and to sail with Sailability sailors in 2-seat Hansa dinghies or Hawk Keel boats. However, it's fine if you want to stay on dry land too – and you are just as important to us in off-the-water roles!

Volunteers With Sailing Experience

You'll need to talk to the Duty Officers about your experience and skills. Dependent on experience, you will initially be invited to take one of our boats out to see how you perform. We have a list of competencies by which you will be assessed and then added to the list of authorised Skippers. If you need time to brush up your skills before being added to our skipper list, don't worry, we will try to make sure you get time to do so.



10 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

All Chesil Sailability Volunteers who will have face to face contact with Sailors are required to possess Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance. Normally we recommend requesting Enhanced Clearance which will enable contact with Adults and Children.

The RYA act as our processing agents. Applying for a DBS Check is now an on-line process. Ian Green heads up our team of 'Document Verifiers' and will start your application. You will receive an email asking you to complete the online form. The service is free for volunteers.

Details required to enable the checks to be carried out:

- Full Name (matching exactly as it appears on your documents)
- Date and Place of Birth
- National Insurance number
- Driving Licence number
- Passport number
- Current Home Address (+ all addresses for the past five years if not the same).

The details given by applicants on the forms need to then be verified (by seeing appropriate evidence) by one of the Verifying team

Evidence needed:

- Passport and /or original Birth Certificate
- Driving Licence Card
- National Insurance number (Payslip, tax form or pension form)
- Current Address (Current utilities bill or letter from head teacher if aged 16 – 17 years in full -time education)

The DBS forms, once issued, will be sent by post to the applicant and Ian will be notified, if you give your consent. If you would prefer not to have an online copy sent, you will be asked to show your DBS document to Ian or Nikki, our Welfare Officers.

The DBS Update Service enables applicants to register for annual updating, and it is strongly recommended that all do so, as it avoids the need to reapply when the current clearance expires. You will receive an email inviting you to do this and need to do so within two weeks of receiving the clearance form. Late application for the update service is not accepted.

Please contact Ian Green or Nikki Armstrong, for any queries and to arrange for details given on your form to be verified.

Ian:

welfare@chesilsailability.org.uk

Nikki:

welfare@chesilsailability.org.uk



11 Gift Aid Declaration – Chesil Sailability

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Please treat as Gift Aid donations:

The enclosed gift of £ _____ OR

All gifts of money that I make today and in the future as Gift Aid donations OR

All gifts of money that I have made in the past four years and all future gifts of money that I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations.

✓ *Please tick the appropriate box*

Donor's details

Title: _____ Initial(s): _____ Surname: _____

Home address:

Postcode: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.

Please notify Chesil Sailability if you:

1. Want to cancel this declaration.
2. Change your name or home address.
3. No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay income tax at the higher rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HMRC to adjust your tax code.

12 Map of the site and key points of interest

Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy – WPNSA

www.wpnsa.org.uk

Parking – car park near the main building, with disabled parking spaces.



By Bus:

Check the local timetable for First Group bus number 1 bus from Weymouth to Portland Victoria Square. It may not stop at the Academy but ask for the nearest stop.