

# Chesil Sailability Standard Operating Procedures

## Part 1 SOP-General Principles & Safety for All Volunteers

### Updates

March 2025	All Volunteers 2025 v2	Original (after amendments)
January 2026	1-1 All Volunteers 2026 v1	Annual update incorporating learning from 2025 season

### 1. Introduction

Chesil Sailability provides opportunities for people with disabilities to sail, either for fun, to learn to sail, or to progress to sail competitively. Sailing gives people the opportunity to take part in a healthy, sociable and outdoor activity, and provides a freedom on the water regardless of any limitations.

We provide opportunities for people with physical disabilities, long term health conditions, learning difficulties and mental health difficulties. We are passionate about enabling people to progress and take their sailing as far as they want and are able.

Inspired by the 2012 Paralympics, Chesil Sailability was set up in 2013 and is entirely volunteer run. Our sailing is based at the Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy, the home of the 2012 Sailing Paralympics. People come from across Dorset to sail with us.

Chesil Sailability is a registered charity (Charity no 1154416) and is affiliated to the national RYA Sailability programme.

### 2. Aims and Objectives

#### Aims:

- Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to sail for fun, to learn to sail, to progress to sail competitively with the Chesil Sailability Race Team, 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.

#### Objectives:

- Increase our sailor numbers, through more individual sailors and with groups
- Build the numbers of sailors who sail regularly with us
- Introduce new people to sailing, as well as those who have been sailing before
- Run sailing sessions which are fun for sailors, and include challenge where appropriate
- Value volunteers, and make sure volunteering with Chesil Sailability is a fun and rewarding experience
- Develop more involvement of sailors & volunteers in the development of Chesil Sailability as a whole

#### Our underpinning foundations:

- High safety standards based on current risk assessment(s)
- 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

Through all of this, Safety is our absolute top priority

### 3. Management and Key Roles

Management (as at January 2026)

**The Board of Trustees:** covers good governance & compliance, an overview of finance and risk management, and longer- term strategic planning.

Chair, Michael Gill, with Philip Hall and Mike Clarkson (Treasurer) as the other Trustees.

**The Management Committee:** covers the more detailed management of Chesil Sailability, such as finance and funding, safety, membership, volunteer support, etc.

Chair: David Griffiths, Secretary: Kirsty Lydeard, with Hugh de longh, Louis Gale, Shaun Kerigan, Tom Hepburn, Denise Hepburn. Philip Hall and/or Mike Clarkson from the Board of Trustees will also attend.

**The Operations Group:** an informal group of Duty Officers and Bosun team, covers the operational day to day matters, taking any decisions needed to the Management Committee.

Key Roles (as at January 2026)

- **Safeguarding Officers:** Ian Green and Nikki Armstrong
- **Responsible person for Safety:** David Griffiths (as Chair of the Management Committee)
- **Safety Adviser:** Gary Hepburn
- **Duty Officers** (able to run sessions): Kirsty Lydeard, Gary Hepburn, Ian Green, Hugh de longh
- **Race Team:** Phillip Hall
- **Bosun Team** (look after our boats): Nick Browning, Shaun Kerigan.

### 4. Our Volunteers and our SOPs

The success of Chesil Sailability relies entirely on the commitment and skills brought by our volunteers, without our volunteers Chesil Sailabilty would not exist.

- Volunteers progressing to key roles will be asked to read the Standard Operating Procedures in Part 2, and Part 3 as relevant and confirm understanding and agreement for their training record.
- Our Standard Operating Procedures are written by volunteers, for volunteers and are subject to revision and updating. All volunteers have a role in making sure our procedures are safe and fit for purpose.

## 5. KEY SAFETY POINTS FOR EVERYONE

<b>General</b>	
Keep yourself safe	Sign up, sign in, sign out for sessions. Understand and follow the appropriate Standard Operating Procedures. Know your limits. Do not take risks. Support zero tolerance for alcohol or drug use before or during activities. Contribute to the further development of safe procedures.
Raising immediate concerns	If you think anything might be wrong or a risk during a sailing session or other work, you are encouraged to ask for a halt, so any concerns can be looked at immediately.
Emergency Action Plan	Be aware that we have an Emergency Action Plan, shown below. There is a copy on the wall on the left, going into the Cabin.
First Aid kits & Defibrillator	There is a First Aid kit in the Cabin, each Safety boat and keelboat will also carry a First Aid kit. There is a Defibrillator outside the changing room access door at the Academy main building
Equipment condition	All equipment must be checked for signs of wear and tear on a regular basis, and any concerns reported to the relevant person, e.g. Bosun or Trustee.
Safe guarding	When working with adults at risk or children, always communicate clearly, in whatever way best suits the individual and check their understanding and expectations. Always try to work in an open environment in view of others and avoid spending any significant time working with adults at risk or children in isolation. Do not take an adult at risk or a child alone in a car, or to your home. If you have any safeguarding concerns, raise these with the Safeguarding Officer.
<b>On Shore</b>	
Fire	If there is a fire or Fire Alarm on site, the Fire Assembly point is on the Dinghy Park in front of the main WPNSA building
Fuel & Chemical Storage	Fuel must be stored in the Fuel Container in the main container and be locked when not in use. Chemicals must be stored in a COSHH Cabinet in the main Container and must be locked when not in use.
<b>On the Pontoons</b>	
Lifjacket or B/A, & shoes	Everyone going on the Pontoons must wear a correctly fitting Lifjacket or Buoyancy Aid, and closed toe shoes.
Wheelchair	Wheelchair users must <u>not</u> be strapped into their wheelchairs when on the pontoons, or the bridge ramp.
Hoisting	Hoisting cannot take place unless there is a Safety boat deployed, and with 'line of sight' to the hoisting. When hoisting, there must always be one person in charge. The sling set-up must be checked to ensure a safe hoisting. The Safe Working Load for a Hoist is 160kg.
Man Overboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shout/Radio tell everyone (Get Help to Give Help)</li> </ul>

(MOB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most important – protect airway</li> <li>• Remove from water</li> <li>• Protect from hypothermia</li> <li>• Monitor for Acute Respiratory Distress (secondary drowning)</li> </ul>
<b>On the Water</b>	
Safety Boat	A Safety boat must be launched prior to launching a dinghy or keelboat. The Safety boat will hold a First Aid kit and safety pack.
Safety Boat	The Kill cord must be used at all times
VHFs	All Safety boats and keelboats must have a VHF Radio with them
Lifjacket or B/A, & shoes	Everyone going afloat must wear a correctly fitting Lifjacket or Buoyancy Aid, and closed toe shoes.
MOB	As above

## 6. Volunteer Code of Conduct

**Language:** In order to create a more comfortable environment for learning, volunteers are not to engage in the use of profanity or any language that would be reasonably construed a sexist, racist, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate. Volunteers should also not condone such language from sailors but need to be mindful of specific learning disabilities.

**Medications:** Volunteers should not normally give any prescription or non-prescription medications to other volunteers or sailors. The exception to this may be First Aiders or qualified medical personnel using emergency medicines within the scope of their training and experience.

**Behaviour:** In any setting or gathering where you are perceived by others as representing Chesil Sailability you should recognise your responsibility as a role model for our group and conduct yourself as such in a responsible manner. Support zero tolerance for alcohol or drug abuse.

**Treat other volunteers, sailors and carers with respect:** Arrive for sessions on time and prepared, give sailors undivided attention, be polite and courteous at all times. Protect their personal confidences with proper discretion. Smoking or vaping is not permitted. All members are encouraged to read the Chesil Sailability Volunteers Charter.

**Equipment:** Use any equipment provided in the interest of safety properly, do not purposely damage it and report and faults or damage to any safety equipment to the Duty Officer as soon as practicable.

**Social Media:** Volunteers must not 'follow' or 'friend' any sailor on any social networking site, except via the Chesil Sailability Closed Facebook Group.

**Know your limits:** make sure you are fit to volunteer, have read the relevant standards, know how to keep yourself and others safe, and know when you have reached your personal limit and stop.

## 7. Policies

Chesil Sailability has set Policies for several aspects of the organisation operation, volunteers and where appropriate sailors and carers should make themselves aware of these policies. They are included in Part 4 of the Standard Operating Procedure folder and are published on the Chesil Sailability website.

- Safeguarding
- Harassment
- Equal Opportunities
- Safe Handling of personal information
- Employment of Ex Offenders
- New Volunteer Induction process
- Buoyancy Aid and Lifejacket Policy (In preparation)
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## **8. Emergency Action Plan**

A copy of part of the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is included below for casual reference only.

The full EAP can be found in Part 3 folder of the Standard Operating Procedures.

### Emergency Action Plan: Code Red

On Water	Both on Water & Land	On Land	Minor Injury
<p>First Safety Boat at scene calls <b>Mayday (or Pan Pan)</b> to Coastguard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For <b>Mayday only</b> - Activate Red Button on GMDSS VHF (transmits exact location)</li> <li>Make <b>Mayday (or Pan Pan)</b> call on Ch16</li> <li>SBL/ first aider – Check MRL (Medical Response List for the sailor)</li> <li>Take immediate action needed to minimise harm as BRONZE command</li> </ul> <p><b>Coastguard will direct the incident</b></p>	<p>Duty Officer (DO) picks up key info from Mayday/Pan Pan on Ch 16 or our VHF Channel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of people/ What happened/ injuries</li> <li>Responsive/unresponsive</li> <li>Breathing/not breathing</li> <li>Check MRL (Medical Response List for the sailor)</li> <li>DO Takes SILVER Command – i.e. tactical decisions, CS resource management.</li> </ul>	<p>Person at scene declares <b>Code Red &amp; location</b> on our VHF channel</p> <p>Shore First Aider to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess situation.</li> <li>Check MRL (Medical Response List for the Sailor)</li> <li>Confirm key info to Duty Officer</li> <li>Take immediate action needed to minimise harm as BRONZE command</li> </ul>	<p><i>SBL or Reception or Pontoon or Skipper</i></p> <p><i>Inform Duty Officer</i></p>
<p>First Safety Boat keeps DO informed.</p> <p>Unless otherwise indicated priority will be to return casualty to the CS Pontoon as quickly as possible.</p>	<p>DO to inform key CS roles of Code Red on the water</p> <p>DO acts as primary link to Coastguard.</p> <p>Base/Reception records all comms &amp; timing and keeps the Academy informed.</p> <p>Defibrillator to be taken to the Pontoon/ location of casualty</p>	<p>DO to call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>999 (Serious Injury or Life-threatening) or</li> <li>NHS 111 (Urgent but not Emergency care)</li> </ul>	<p><i>On the Water /Shore First Aider to assess and treat.</i></p> <p><i>Can use First Aid room.</i></p>
<p>DO to offer and provide support from CS resources as needed by Coastguard.</p>	<p>DO/Reception instructs volunteer to go to Gate 4 with gate card &amp; VHF. Card pad is on the external side of the gate.</p> <p>Allocate Volunteers to open lifting barrier (code needed) and direct Emergency Services to the location of the casualty</p>	<p>Shore First Aider to provide ongoing support for casualty.</p> <p>Reception to provide any medical specific info on casualty, and incident timing for Emergency Services when they arrive</p>	<p><i>If any serious deterioration, or need external medical support, declare <b>Code Red</b> and follow process.</i></p>
<p>Other Safety Boat to bring all other boats back to Marina to Moor up on eastern pontoons and/or sail up and down</p> <p>Consider buddy Hawk and Hansa.</p>	<p>Reception to cancel session for sailors not arrived yet.</p> <p>Reception to contact family/carer if on site.</p> <p>Provide volunteer support for family/carer</p>	<p>Reception to contact family/carer if on site.</p> <p>Provide volunteer support for family/carer.</p>	<p><i>Ensure casualty is fit to travel home.</i></p> <p><i>If not, contact family/carer to escort home.</i></p>
<p>Once casualty is evacuated, other Safety Boat to oversee all boats back to pontoons</p>	<p>All volunteers to be reassuring to sailors and carers</p> <p>Provide support to volunteers.</p>		<p><i>DO to complete Accident Book.</i></p>
	<p>Emergency Services arrive and take responsibility for casualty.</p> <p>Work to Emergency Services instructions.</p> <p>If Major Incident, DO to initiate <b>Major Incident process.</b></p>	<p>DO / Reception to inform family / carer (if not on site) re situation and external medical venue.</p>	
<p>DO to declare Code Red closed. Close down session, debrief volunteers and write up Accident Book</p>			

A **MAYDAY** call is only to be used when a vessel or person is in *grave and imminent danger* and *immediate assistance* is required.

A **PAN PAN** call indicates that a vessel or a station has a *very urgent message concerning the safety of a ship or a person* and *assistance is needed*.

A Pan Pan call may be used when the situation does not warrant a Distress call, however an urgent response is required.