

C M Y C

THE FRIENDLIEST NEWSLETTER IN SUSSEX?



March 2026



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February – What a Month

What a month, I have been:

- threatened with court action
- challenged to do more
- educated at the Club's History social
- inspired at our Committee Strategy and Instructor Days
- excited by our new purchase.

What a Club, and that's in the quiet month of February.

Excited

Really pleased to report that we can start the new season with new equipment. Thanks to all involved that made this possible. I won't reveal what it is here, just be sure to come and take a look at one of our lake-based events. Refer to the programme on the website.

Inspired

Members of the main committee continued to meet each weekend throughout February to help progress a wide range of topics. The Instructors too met last weekend. I want to recognise here the value they bring to the Club through their dedication and enthusiasm, inspiring us to achieve and in turn inspiring us to invite friends and family to join the Club.

Saving Money

I previously explained that my wife and I have been cleaning at the Clubhouse throughout last year and now know we have saved over £1000 in cleaning fees. Our new Membership Secretary, Julian also wants to save money including postage. We anticipate that the 2026 Handbooks will be available for collection from the Clubhouse - more on this when finalised.

Court Action

On a positive note, we have completed our annual obligations to cut reeds in accordance with our approved Lake Management Plan, with thanks to Ted (VC Estate). The downside was that a bird watcher wrote threatening court action – see later in this edition.

Educated

The talk about the history of Hedgecourt was not only well attended but exceptionally informative. The thirst for social activities and events remains high and we are asking for some additional help with this though one of our new Teams – contact me if you are interested, you only need to contribute what you want to, and there is no obligation.

Challenged

Quite rightly those that organise our wealth of events would like us to participate, why else would we arrange such a diverse programme of activities? I have personally been approached to do more (see later news item) and I want you, not only to rise to this challenge, but beat me at my own game. Now it's your turn...

Richard (Commodore)



Awards Evening (Presentation of 2025 Awards)

Friday 13th March 2026 - 7.30pm to 10.00pm

Venue: The Ark, Mount Lane, Turners Hill. RH10 4RA



Although the awards are being presented – for both racing and volunteers - this will still leave plenty of time to enjoy an informal get-together to catch up and, we hope, encourage each other to take part in our sailing events over the year.

An optional light buffet will be available at a small charge (£12.50)

- Sandwiches & Wraps (with various fillings)
- Sausage Rolls
- Indian snacks and chutney – crudités and dips
- Chocolate Brownies/Flapjacks
- Tea and Coffee

(All dietary needs catered for – enter on booking)



Do bring your own alcohol/soft drinks (and glasses)

Booking, via Webcollect, now open and closing on the 2nd March



Fancy a race?

Warm Up Race - Saturday 7th March

This **1-day** race series is **open to sailors of all abilities**

We hold one race in the morning, break for lunch then complete the next two races in the afternoon.

Sailors can qualify for awards in the Warm Up by sailing just two of the three races.

If you want to try sailing with another helm or crew, why not reach out on our WhatsApp “CMYC Racing Chat” group to find a buddy for the day.

To borrow a boat for the day, contact sailing.subcommittee@cmyc.co.uk

It is a great way to get a start on the new season!

Want to take home an award this year? Beyond our Overall awards, we offer prizes for leading Single Handers, Double Handers, Ladies, Under 16s, Under 13s, Novices, and our Comet Silver and Bronze fleets. Many of these were uncontested last year, meaning that simply entering enough races to qualify puts you in a great position to win!



Spring Sundays - 22nd March

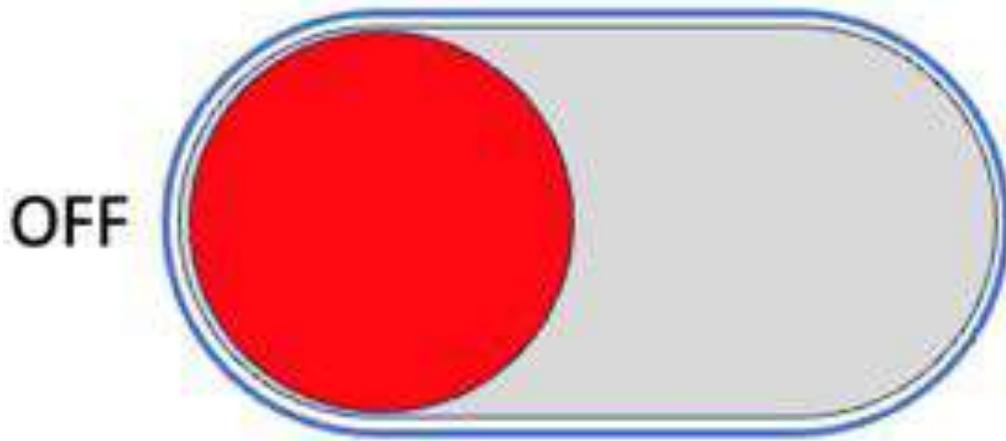
Unlike the Warm Up Race, Spring Sundays is a “race series” of 12 races over 6 Sundays, from March to May.

To qualify for an award you need to sail in at least half the races or half plus one if an odd number are sailed; however you can take part in any of the races if you just want to get some time out on the water and build up your racing experience - everyone is welcome!

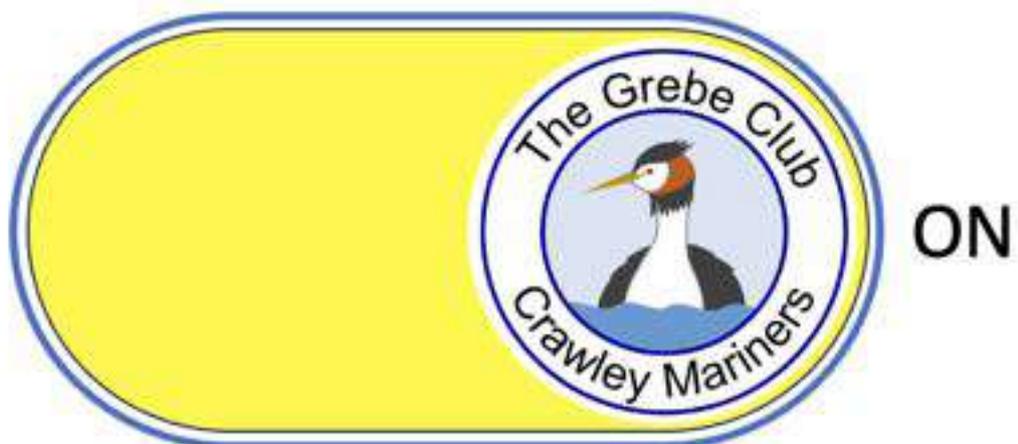
Those beginning to race are welcome at all our races, do not be put off by the more experienced racers, they will be pleased to give advice before and after the races – most of all they will be pleased that you are joining in. We were all beginners once. The [Benefits of Racing](#) gives more information on racing.



Switch On to Something New



Switch On, Join In and Participate



Next month (April 05th at 10:30) is all about working Together and our winning teams are those where the helm and crew work together.



Safe and Sure

The Grebe Club kicked off the year with a mixture of interactive activities for a wide cross section of members looking to be Safe & Sure.



Knowing where our safety equipment is and what to do in an emergency is vital and gives confidence to everyone using our facilities.

The photo shows the Grebe Club Ambassador, Liam, introducing the session (the one standing not the dummy in the corner ;-)

Don't miss the next session about working and supporting each other 'Together' at 10:30 on April 05th.

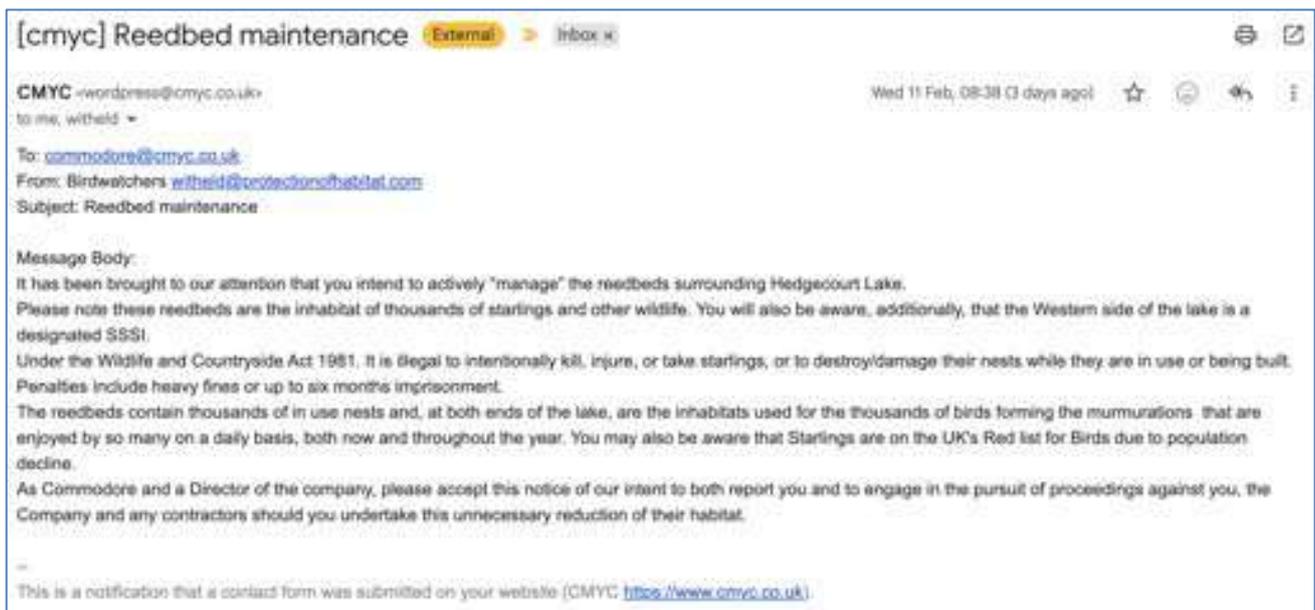


Legal Action against CMYC

On 11 February 2026 we received the following email stating:

'As Commodore and a Director of the company, please accept this notice of our intent to both report you and to engage in the pursuit of proceedings against you, the Company and any contractors should you undertake this unnecessary reduction of their habitat.'

The email in full:



Technically we cannot reply to this person - they have used a fake email address, the domain name does not exist and we have no way of contacting them, however we have recorded this in this newsletter that is publicly available via our website and within the Committee's Knowledge Base for future reference.

Should this become a valid complaint we note that:

- Starlings do not nest in reedbeds, they roost in them during the winter months.
- Starlings nest; in cavity, in occupied or empty building (often under eaves, in soffits or loft), cliff, tree (commonly old woodpecker hole), stone wall or other artefact
- We have a Lake Management Plan approved by Natural England, and this includes restrictions on the amount of reeds that can be cut at any one time and in non-adjacent reed beds
- The Club has conducted winter surveys of Water Rails and supplied the results to the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)
- BTO's dataset show that there is almost no impact on numbers of Water Rails during management periods during the winter



Legal Action against CMYC

Our response to a valid complaint would likely be:

Dear Birdwatchers,

Thank you for your letter regarding the reedbeds at Hedgecourt Lake. We acknowledge the concerns you have raised about the local wildlife and the SSSI designation on the western side of the lake.

To be clear, no unlawful activity has taken place, nor is any planned. Any maintenance or management work undertaken by the Club is carried out with full regard to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the SSSI status, and all other applicable environmental obligations. For further clarity, the reed-cutting forms part of the Lake Management Plan that has been reviewed and approved by Natural England, and any works are undertaken strictly in accordance with that plan and the ecological guidance it contains.

Your correspondence contains a number of assertions about “intent” and implied allegations of criminal conduct. These are unfounded and are not accepted. If you believe that any specific proposed action would contravene legislation, please set out precisely:

- the factual basis for your allegation,
- the specific activity you believe would be unlawful, and
- the evidence on which you rely.

Generalised threats of reporting or legal proceedings, without clarity or substantiation, are neither constructive nor necessary.

The Club remains committed to responsible stewardship of the lake and its surrounding habitats. We are open to discussing any genuine concerns in a factual and proportionate manner.

Yours faithfully,

My thanks to everyone that helped review and respond to this email in a very short space of time given the potential gravity of the situation.

With particular thanks to Matt K., (for our Lake Management Plan and its approval by Natural England), Ted T., (VC Estate), Martyn F., (IT), Ursula B., (Club Secretary), Julian T., (Membership), Jeff S., (Principal), Jerry G., (VC Finance & Admin).

Richard
Commodore



Participation Challenge

The new year had just started and I was challenged. To put it bluntly - I have been challenged to sail more than a couple of times at the lake this year.

This is in addition to the challenges of writing grant applications, seeing off false allegations threatening legal action, or even writing a monthly newsletter contribution – these are all fine with me, they are part of what I signed up for, but you want me to sail as well?

The answer was - *No, we want more than that! The programme has many opportunities, and we think that as Commodore you should participate in as many as you can.*

Below, for the record, is my achievement since January, but I challenge you to join me in participating, or at least attending, as many as you can too.

This in turn will encourage our event organisers when they see more faces come along and you know what a positive impact that can have:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Year Party	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work Party	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instructors Day
<input type="checkbox"/> Race Duty	<input type="checkbox"/> Powerboat Duty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Galley Duty
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior Saturday Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Grebe Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Race coaching
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior Helm Week	<input type="checkbox"/> An Open Meeting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hedgecourt History Talk
<input type="checkbox"/> Cobnor Weekend	<input type="checkbox"/> Have A Go Racing	<input type="checkbox"/> Model Yachting
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday Volunteer Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday Social Sail	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dinghy Show
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Watch SailGP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Take Green Blue Pledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Awards Evening NEXT

This is just a small selection of what is on offer and I'll expand on it next month. We appreciate that not everyone can attend mid-week events, and some may be 'specialised' but you can always ask to be included and you can also participate in our new teams that we will be coordinating and starting this month (March), including:

Funding Our Future – seeking grants to bring things up to date rather than increase fees.

Social Friends – help to shape the two; early and late, summer socials

Special Projects – DIY to support the Tuesday Volunteer Group (TVG) and our Sailability initiative

✓ **Swim Safe** – We now have this covered with thanks to your support

Natural World – Share your passion and interest in mother nature with the Membership.

Richard – Challenge Accepted, What will you do.



Membership Renewals

Dear Member,

Things might be a little different this year, so we wanted to make sure you know ahead of time. Our renewal period ends on 01 April 2026 and you are likely to get a reminder as shown below (apologies if you have already completed your renewal).

We have added this to the newsletter because it is also aligned with any boat park space you may have and to ensure your boat doesn't get moved, we are asking:

- Please renew it would be great to keep you on-board
- Please be sure to apply your boat park sticker to your boat
- Please ensure you only occupy your space
- Please do not tie anything to the trees
- Please keep your boat space grounds tidy and the leaves moved to the compost

The reminder email from WebCollect will look like this:

FINAL REMINDER: Renew Your CMYC Membership for 2026

Our renewal window closes on 01 April, and this is your final opportunity to secure your membership for the year ahead.

If your subscription and payment are not completed by this 01 April, your membership will lapse. Should you wish to rejoin after that point, you will need to submit a new application and pay the joining fee — something we'd much rather you didn't have to do.

We genuinely hope you'll continue to be part of CMYC this year.

The email will also provide a link to WebCollect but you don't have to wait as it can easily be found via our website or <https://webcollect.org.uk/sec/index.php?page=subscription>

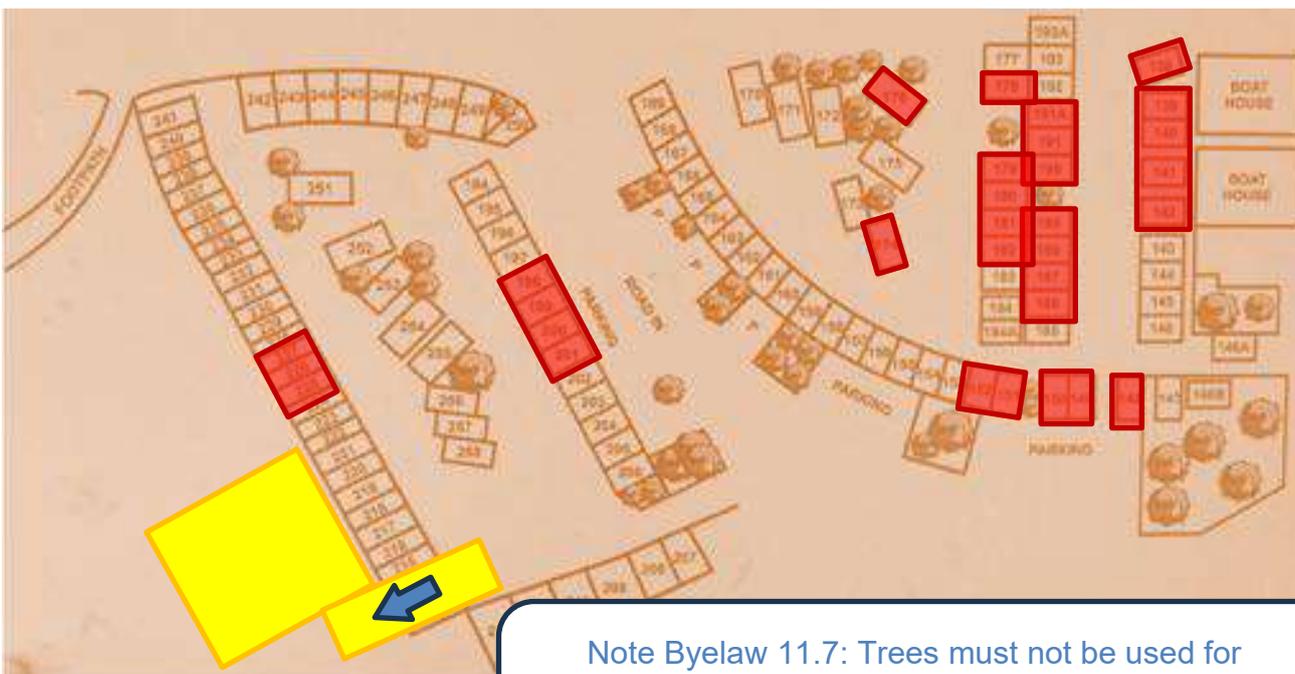
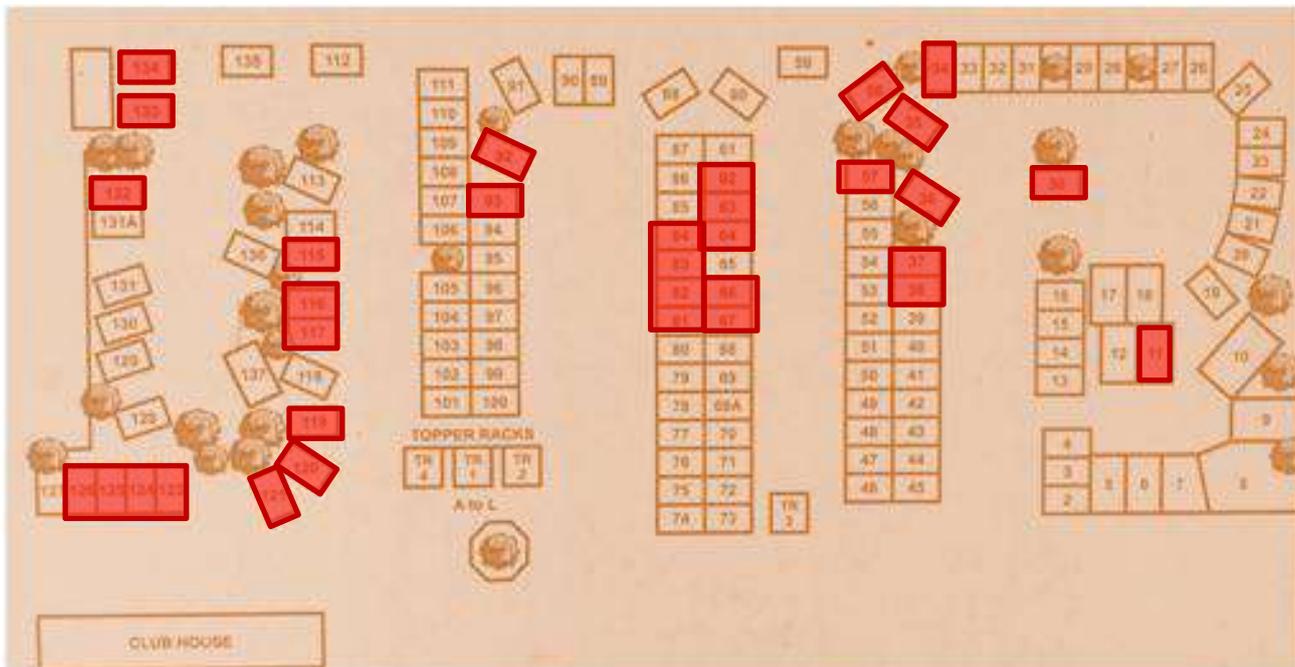


TREE CUTTING



Please be advised that tree work is being completed in the Boat Park on the following days 15, 16, 17 & 23rd March – apologies for the short notice.

If your boat space is in the red areas marked below please unlock your boats and move them, ideally to the yellow area. You are also welcome to help on these dates. Don't forget to put your boat back afterwards.



Thank you,
on behalf of the Committee.

Note Byelaw 11.7: Trees must not be used for anchoring to, nor for leaning boats, masts, boards or trailers against. These actions are also against the planning policy of Tandridge District Council.



Crawley Mariners Cruising

A busy day for the club with the first Itchenor cruise taking place.

Please contact Donal Roche if you are interested in going along to that, either with your boat, or crewing.



Adult Saturday Club

Also, the first Adult Saturday Club of the year is taking place (09.30 start). Please go onto WebCollect if you would like to book a spot for this. Club instructors are available to help with your sailing, from beginners through to racers.

The afternoon of the 28th also brings the first Beginners Race (13.30 start) of the year. If you want to see what racing is like in a relaxed atmosphere - please come along.

The Beginners Race is followed by the start of the One Per Month series (15.00) start.



Junior Saturday Clubs 2026

Dates

Dates: 14 March, 11 April, 9 May, 13 June, 11 July, 8 August, 5 Sept, 10 Oct, 7 Nov

Booking & Cancellation

Book via WebCollect. Booking Opens on the date of the prior Saturday Club and closes at midnight on the Tuesday before a Saturday Club. You cannot cancel your booking on WebCollect, please email alison.cmyc@gmail.com or if after 8:30 on the day phone the clubhouse on 01342 717548.

Morning Session

Oppies - 6 to 10 years

Topper Beginners (June, July & August) - for those moving up from Oppies or just starting in Toppers.

Toppers - 10 to 16 years, ideally those working towards Stage 2.

Race Coaching - Must be able to sail efficiently on all points of sail, Stage 2+.

9:00 General Briefing for all parents and children. Children should be changed ready to sail.

9:05 Group briefings for children, prior to rigging and launching.

9:30 Parents invited to join the work party, it's your club please help to look after it.

~10:40 Oppies may come ashore for a short break and drink

11:30 All boats ashore and if not needed in the afternoon derig and stow. End of work party

11:40 Group debriefs

11:45 End of session

Fun Race

12:00 Briefing & Sign on (Boat type, sail size & sail number)

12:15 Launch and head to the start line at the Maid Of Kent

12:25 Warning signal (Yellow cylinder up) - 5 minutes before the start

12:30 Race Start (all cylinders down)

13:00 latest race finish. Head to shore after finishing.

Afternoon Session

Oppies - 6 to 10 years

Toppers - 10 to 15 years, ideally those who have achieved Stage 2.

Fevas & Lasers - 13 to 16.

13:30 General Briefing for all parents and children. Children should be changed ready to sail.

13:35 Group briefings for children, prior to rigging and launching.

13:45 Parents invited to join the work party, it's your club please help to look after it.

~15:00 Oppies may come ashore for a short break and drink

16:00 All boats ashore, derig and stow. End of work party

16:25 Group debriefs

16:30 End of session





Now we are six



Now we can learn to sail!

Our Junior Saturday Clubs for 2026 start again on the **14th March**, and we are really looking forward to introducing some of our newer members, who are now 6, to learn all about sailing. Plus welcoming those back who have already found how exciting and fun this sport can be.

For those starting at the beginning let me introduce you to the boats that we use, and they are fondly called Oppies. These are used for sailors aged 6 to 10. By which time most sailors are ready to move on to the Toppers.



It should be mentioned that these boats have been raced by world class sailors (such as Sir Ben Ainslie who raced in one up until he was 15). So, as you can see Oppies are a very good place to start.

We are looking forward to seeing you at Saturday Clubs during 2026. Times of these sessions are shown elsewhere in the March Newsletter.

Do remember it can still be **cold** in March so you will need warm clothing (preferably waterproof) and a change of clothes just in case you get wet.

Make sure to wear a warm hat and gloves. If you do not have dinghy boots, old trainers will do but wear thick socks (with a plastic bag over) to keep feet as dry as possible. The club has buoyancy aids of all shape and sizes available for you to use, and we do have some 'nearly new' wetsuits you may want to take advantage of.

Diana - (RYA Senior Instructor)



Training & Development

Upcoming Training & Development Opportunities

- RYA Seamanship - 8th & 15th March - [book on WebCollect](#)
- Junior Saturday Club - 14th March - booking on Webcollect
- Adult Saturday Club - 28th March - booking on Webcollect
- Powerboat refresher - 28th March - (see below)
- Social & The Grebe Club - Together - 5th April (the first Grebe Club of 2026)
- Topper Race Coaching - 18th April - details to come in March
- RYA Powerboat Level 2 - 19th & 26th April (see below)

Feedback

Please give feedback on any CMYC training, click [here](#) to complete the form, there is a link to form on the club Website in Members Area – Policies and Documents.

New WhatsApp groups

Two new WhatsApp groups have been created within the CMYC WhatsApp community to provide more timely and better directed communication for training. Information will continue to be supplied via Newsletter and noticeboards. The groups are:

CMYC Training - Adults

CMYC Training - Juniors

Please join these groups if you are interested in our training programme.

Powerboat refresher

This year we are introducing powerboat refresher sessions as part of Adult Saturday Club, places are limited to two per morning. Booking will be via WebCollect - Adult Saturday Club, but won't open until later in February.

RYA Powerboat Level 2

If you are interested in gaining your RYA Powerboat Level 2, then please add your name to the waiting list. Our Chief Powerboat Instructor, Mike, will then contact you. It is not possible to book directly onto a specific course and just because you are on a waiting list doesn't mean that there isn't space on the next course.

