

Organised Sailing for Disabled Club Members

When the current lockdown came into effect the Government made two specific exemptions from the regulations. One is for “organised disabled sport” and the other for elite sports.

In allowing “organised disabled sport” the Government has recognised the disproportionate impact that the pandemic is having on the health and wellbeing of disabled people because of the barriers they face in maintaining their physical activity. The aim is to keep opportunities accessible for them as far as is practicable. This approach has been reinforced by research published by the Activity Alliance which received extensive media coverage and was flagged up to FPSC by its landlords, Waverley Borough Council.

“Organised sport” refers to sport which is formally organised by a national governing body, club, public body, qualified instructor, company or charity, and which follows the relevant sport’s national governing body guidance. More background can be found through the following link:

https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus/return-play/frequently-asked-questions-national-lockdown-restrictions?fbclid=IwAR3uVbbgh9ghE2jDWxgWbtW3demXrKUQxAo1N8sqginsFkEj45fwl1_5kBM#outdoorexercise-11512

The Club is therefore permitted to organise sailing for disabled members provided it follows RYA guidance and ensures that COVID secure measures are in place and adhered to at all times.

The Club now has procedures in place to enable organised disabled sailing starting on Saturday 20th February. There will be two sessions per week on Thursdays and Saturdays from 12.00 to 3.00 pm. The sessions will be run along similar lines to the successful disabled sailing held during the summer of 2020.

This activity is open to sailor members of Frensham Pond Sailability who have their own boat and to other FPSC members who, on consultation with the Flag Officers, fit the criteria for a Sailability sailor. Non-disabled sailors are NOT allowed to sail.

The Club cannot judge what may or may not be appropriate for individual disabled sailors so it is for each member to decide whether they are able and comfortable to participate based on their personal circumstances. If you are disabled and would like to sail then please register your interest with Kate Whyatt by email to rear-commodore@sailfrensham.org.uk. Kate will discuss the COVID Secure procedures the Club has in place with you and help you and, if applicable, your carer to reach a decision on whether this activity is suitable for you both. As ever with our sport, it is the sailor’s decision whether or not to sail.

Please will anyone who is interested in helping to run coaching/racing sessions also contact Kate. Volunteers need to be able to work in a household bubble with one person who is an FPSC Approved Powerboat Helm.

The GC is very aware of public perceptions. Waverley Borough Council are fully supportive and are helping with the Club’s press release and signage in their car park to inform the public. Similarly the RYA have offered support through their communications team.

The GC shares everyone’s frustration at not being able to sail at the Club but asks that non-disabled members respect the needs of our disabled members and continue to understand that the Club remains closed for other activities. Rest assured that we aim to open for all members at the very earliest opportunity.

The General Committee
18/02/21