



Volunteering at GWSC

Volunteering by members is a critical part of running the Club and its activities. Following consultation with and feedback from members Council has finalised plans to amend and refine the volunteering and duty process necessary to support the Club's activities. Implementation will begin straight away and revisions will take effect gradually over the next few months. The final plans are very much in line with the outline set in the November 2016 newsletter. Inevitably as the changes we are making are tested in practice, ways in which further improvements can be made will become evident, but this represents the first steps.

The full details are set out below, but you can also refer to the FAQs at the foot of this document.

Grafham is a members' Club and its continuing success relies on support from all of us. An important part of membership is supporting the Club in various volunteer roles both on the water (supporting racing and sailing more generally) and off the water (helping at major events and helping maintain the Club's infrastructure). A guiding principle is that those who benefit the most from the Club should contribute the most but we accept that work and other commitments will on occasions make this difficult for some members.

Whilst we have always succeeded in getting volunteers to support our various activities there has been too much "last minute" resourcing for comfort, and the burden often falls disproportionately on a small number of people. By these proposals we hope to get a system which is both fairer to all and gives the Club and its members a greater degree of assurance.

We want volunteering to be a positive experience. Everything we do is for the benefit of the membership as a whole and we hope that volunteering can be a key part in developing and strengthening the Club's camaraderie.

Duty recognition

There are various ways in which members can (and do) support the Club. There are roles supporting racing and sailing: either in a safety/mark-laying boat or on a Committee Boat, for Club Racing, Open Meetings, or Leisure Sailing. But there are a number of onshore duties which are equally important. These include car park marshalling, tractor marshalling and shrimping control at our large events, and working parties (both mid-week and weekend) to help maintain the site, buildings, Club boats, Committee Boats, and safety boats. All of these are important. We intend that members be invited to express a preference, at the time of joining or membership renewal, as to which of these duty types they would prefer to do.

The voucher scheme will continue. This is a way of saying thank you from the Club, on behalf of all members, to those who volunteer. Currently vouchers may be used in the bar, to purchase regalia, and since November in the café. Their use will be extended to the café at all times and to Jonti.

This year we introduced annual awards for volunteers who have given most generously of their time, and we will continue with this.

Training

A number of members express concern that they do not have the necessary skills for what they are being asked to do. We will try to ease this by the following measures.



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For those who express a preference for safety boat duties we will offer, free of charge to participants, an introductory course to RYA Level 1 Start Powerboating.

We will continue to offer a free First-Aid course (and three-yearly renewals) to safety boat volunteers.

Hitherto we have charged those who do the RYA Level 2 Powerboat Handling course (PB2), with reimbursement of the course fee if they carry out eight or more safety boat duties in the following year. This will change to a system in which anyone who has completed safety boat duties on six separate days within a twelve month period will be eligible for a PB2 course at the Club's expense.

We will offer a half day induction course for those members who elect for Committee boat duties.

We will continue with the "refresher days" which started last year, for safety boat and Committee Boat volunteers, and we will introduce short "taster" sessions for members who want to see what it is like driving a rib or manning a Committee boat

Moderating the duty burden

In future all duties will be expressed as half days. Whilst we expect (and hope) that many will continue to volunteer for the whole day (ie two duties), we did receive feedback that for some, setting aside a whole day is difficult. This measure should give more flexibility to those who cannot set aside the whole day. In practice what this means is that we will allocate Sunday Committee Boat and safety boat duties supporting Club Racing, and Saturday safety boat duties as half days (ie am or pm). Open Meeting duties, for which activity is continuous, will be allocated for the whole day but most will count as "double" duties

Compared with previous years, the number of duties is being reduced in some areas. The Race Committee Boat crew numbers on Sundays will reduce to three in the morning and two in the afternoon, and the number of safety boats rostered for Club Racing on a Sunday afternoon will change from two to one. Sunday afternoon duties are not required in the winter months (November to February) when we do not have organized racing. Also, on Saturdays during the winter months, duty rib crews will be rostered only when there is unsupported organized Club sailing activity.

In the longer term we are also looking at ways of automating the Committee Boat processes which may enable us to make further reductions in the number of people required.

Responsibility for duties

Non-sailing members are a key part of our volunteer team and include, in particular, safety boat and race officer teams who give most generously of their time. We are grateful for this and will continue to appreciate those non-sailing members who are willing to do duties. Also we welcome our junior members who would like to volunteer.

For sailing members, we believe the duty burden should be shared across the membership but with a greater responsibility on those who race regularly. Hitherto we have not always been explicit in stating what the expectation is of members, so we are now setting it out in the following terms.

All Adult and Youth Sailing members will be expected to do one duty (ie one half day) (on the water or onshore)



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In addition, those who race should do further duties to support their racing, so:

Wednesday evening racers will be expected to do one duty supporting Wednesday evening racing

Sunday racers will be expected to do two Sunday duties (ie two half days or one full day) supporting Sunday racing.

We will allow flexibility as far as possible so that, for instance, someone who would find it easier to do an additional (half day) Saturday or Sunday duty than a Wednesday duty may do so.

All members will be asked if they are willing to carry out duties beyond this expectation: we hope that, as is currently the case, many will do so.

Administration

The web-based programme DutyMan will continue to be used for the administration of sailing duties and will be extended where possible to onshore duties. DutyMan lists will be populated twice per year in advance (April to September and October to March). There will be a period within which people may sign up for duties; following which duties will be allocated in accordance with the expectations set out above, and the preferences expressed by members on their joining or renewal form. Members will be expected to notify the Office if they cannot do a duty originally selected or allocated but thereafter the burden of reallocation will lie with the Office.

January 2017



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Summary FAQs

- 1 I pay my membership and boat fees. Why should I have to volunteer to do duties too?**
Grafham is a large Club, so we can afford to employ some paid staff – but they cannot do everything required. If the Club used paid staff to do all the work needed, your fees would have to go up – a lot!

- 2 What is a voluntary duty anyway? How much time is all this volunteering going to take?**
An 'on the water' duty will be half a day ie a morning or afternoon.
An 'off the water' duty will be a half day session or equivalent (for example car park marshalling which starts early around 8, and normally finishes around 10:30 would count as one duty).

- 3 My life is too busy already! How often am I expected to volunteer my time?**
The minimum expectations for Club members volunteering duties are
 - All Adult and Youth sailing members – one half-day duty per year;
 - Wednesday evening racers – one additional duty supporting Wednesday evening racing;
 - Sunday racers – two additional half-day duties supporting Sunday racing.

- 4 Ok, that's not so bad! What sorts of things can I volunteer to do?**
 - On the water for Leisure Sailing, Club Racing, or large events like Open Meetings:
 - You can do a volunteer duty in a safety boat or a mark-laying boat, or
 - On a Committee Boat, helping manage racing.





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- Off the water
 - You can help manage large events eg
 - car park marshalling,
 - tractor marshalling, or
 - shrimp control
- Grounds working parties, (both mid-week and weekend).



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5 I'm a non-sailing member. Does all this apply to me?

Our volunteer duty expectations are for our sailing members, so we don't expect you to volunteer. We would though be delighted if non-sailing members choose to volunteer – many do so at present and some of our most valued and experienced safety boat drivers and Committee Boat teams are non-sailing members. The Club is extremely grateful for this support.

6 I'm a Club member aged under 18. Can I volunteer?

Yes you can! You don't have to volunteer, but if you would like to volunteer, we would welcome your support and will train you!

7 Do we really need all these duty slots?

We have carefully gone through the Club's whole programme and made adjustments where practicable. For example, we think we only need three people on a Committee Boat for Sunday Club Racing (we roster four at present) and we only need roster one safety boat for Sunday afternoons.

8 I don't really know how to do those volunteering duties. How will the Club help me learn?

The Club will offer appropriate training to volunteers:

- Free RYA Level 1 Start Powerboating course for safety boat volunteers
- Free RYA Level 2 Powerboat Handling course for safety boat volunteers who have completed safety boat duties on six days within twelve months



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- A free half-day induction course for Committee Boat volunteers
- “Buddying-up” guidance, working with a more experienced volunteer for your first off-the-water duties.

9 Is there any other “reward” or recognition for my volunteering?

Yes! The Club will give vouchers to recognise Volunteers’ work which can be reimbursed:

- at the Bar,
- in the Café,
- at Jonti,
- to purchase club regalia/clothing – polo shirts, caps etc.

GWSC is a sailing club run by its members. The Club wants to give appropriate recognition and thanks to those who contribute to keeping the Club going. We publicly recognise our most generous volunteers with annual awards.

10 How is this volunteering going to be managed? How do I “sign-on”?

The Club has a system called DutyMan – it is an online system on the Club website. The office staff will also take emails and phone calls, and complete DutyMan on your behalf. Some modifications are required to DutyMan to manage the new arrangements and these should be complete by the end of March 2017.

11 Why does the Club need to improve the volunteering system now?

- The system needs to work better; it does work at the moment but a little too close to the edge for comfort.
- It’s about fairness. Those who benefit the most from the Club should contribute the most, and people need to know what is expected from them

12 When will the improved volunteering system start?

- Vouchers you’re given for doing volunteering duties may be exchanged for Club clothing, at the Bar, at the Café, and at Jonti immediately.
- The new, half day duty system will roll out from 1st April 2017 onwards
- Some modifications are required to DutyMan to manage the new arrangements. Those modifications will be done by the end of March.

13 I am a Winter Member. How will this affect me?

We do not expect Winter Members (those who join from December to March) to do duties in this four month period because it is so short, though we would be delighted if they offer to do so.

14 I am a Three-Month Member. How will this affect me?

Three month members join us in conjunction with taking a course at the Training School. We do not expect them to do duties in this three month period, though we would be delighted if they offer to do so.