

Personal Risk Assessment checklist

Before setting sail we advise all members to carry out a risk assessment taking into account the following (for themselves, their crew and anyone they are responsible for).

- The **weather forecast** (before leaving home and at the club)
 - Wind strength – What wind strengths are you comfortable and confident sailing in?
 - Wind direction – Does this affect launch and recovery?
 - The weather conditions at club – Are they as expected? Should you change plans?
- **Boat:** Check all fixtures and fittings to ensure that your boat(s) is/are seaworthy and can cope with the conditions you plan to sail in.
- **Useful safety equipment to consider carrying**
 - Masthead buoyancy
 - Paddle
 - Bailer
 - Mobile phone
 - Water
- **Clothing:** Make sure you, your crew and those you are responsible for are wearing buoyancy aids and are suitably dressed for the current and forecast conditions.
- **Temperature:** Consider the temperature of the air and water in what you wear so as to avoid the extremes of hypothermia and sunstroke.
- **Sunscreen:** The sun may not appear strong but it is always advisable to wear sunscreen on exposed skin.
- **Make a plan for your sailing based on**
 - Wind direction and strength – Best practice is to sail upwind first
 - Weather forecast – Is there a front coming in which will limit your sailing time?
 - Temperature (of air and water) – How long do you intend to sail for?
 - Sailing area
- **Tell someone** of your plan to sail and the timing of your return.
- Have a **launch and recovery plan**, taking into account wind direction. For single-handers a long painter or tow line may be useful to hold onto or for tying off if the conditions are right.
 - How will you move your trolley after launching boat?
 - How will you recover your trolley when boat is on the water?
- When on the water always **stay alert** for changes to weather patterns.
- **On return, inform your nominated person.**

Weir Wood Sailing Club – local hazards

- Wind direction:
 - Northerly: launching will be from a lee shore
 - Southerly: may be deceptive – calm and fluky likely along the club shore can cause problems getting away from and returning to the shore. Winds can get much

- stronger midway across the lake and there may be large and unpredictable gusts and shifts – looks for “cat’s paws” along the club shore.
- Easterly: can be very deceptive as you are looking at the back of the waves. Wind tends to funnel down the valley and can be quite strong beyond buoys 5 and 6. Returning to the launching area will require sailing upwind.
- Westerly: the prevailing wind and generally the best sailing conditions – the dam wall will become a lee shore.
- Dam wall: the dam wall is very slippery and almost impossible to climb unaided – always keep clear particularly in westerly winds when you may be blown on to it if you encounter problems.
- Aeration plant: there are large revolving blades leave plenty of room at all times and in all winds.
- Slipways:
 - The fishing lodge slipway shelves steeply either side of a line from the garage doors.
 - The pontoon slipway shelves steeply at the eastern (dam) end.
- Pontoon: Slippery when wet and when covered in goose muck.
- Sailing area
 - Zone A is considered to be the area of least risk as it provides shelter in almost all conditions.
 - Zone E represents the area of highest risk especially in Easterly winds
 - The race marks are shown as a reference to sailing areas, they may not be located exactly where shown.

