Crew Handbook

CREW HANDBOOK

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Welcome to the Rona Sailing Project

This handbook has been prepared to give you a better idea about what to expect during your Sail Training Voyage with the Rona Sailing Project (RSP) and to help you get the best out of your trip.

Most of this information will be repeated when you arrive at the marina and on board but please read through carefully before arriving and download it as the information will be a handy reference during the first day or two.

Please note that a Sail Training Voyage (STV) is not a holiday but an adventurous team activity during which you will be expected to get involved in all aspects of helping to run and live on a boat. It can be hard work, but you will also have fun!

We look forward to seeing you!

TIMINGS FOR ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

We will be offering a pickup and drop off in our minibus from Southampton Parkway train station this season. If you require a seat on the minibus, please let the office know as soon as possible as we have only 12 places available.

If you are arriving directly, directions to the Project are in the Parents' Guide.

Southampton Airport Parkway Timings

- Pickup on first day of voyage at Southampton Airport Parkway train station **10.30 – 10.45am**
- Drop off on last day of voyage **3.30pm** @ Southampton Airport Parkway train station

Timings for Universal Marina

- Drop off on first day of the voyage at the Project **11am**
- Pick up on last day of the voyage at the Project **3pm**

If your voyage is beginning or ending at any other place then we will contact you directly with timings.

WHAT KIT SHALL I BRING WITH ME?

The question everyone asks! What clothes do I need to pack? To help ensure you have everything you need we have put together a handy kit list of the essentials.

Kit bags Pack your kit in a soft kit bag or holdall – no suitcases or framed rucksacks please as there is not much room to store them. Rolling clothes saves space and allows you to bring that extra jumper.

CLOTHING AND ESSENTIALS

- Sailing boots or waterproof shoes (not dinghy boots). Trainers are great but make sure you have 2 pairs in case one pair gets wet
- Light Waterproof jacket to wear ashore (we will provide sailing waterproofs)
- Trousers/leggings (shorts if the weather is good)
- T-shirts, fleeces, sweaters (layers are the way to go)
- Socks, underwear and suitable nightwear/pyjamas
- Warm hat, scarf/snood and gloves.
- Sailing gloves are good for rope pulling but not essential
- Cap
- You will need something to fix your cap to your clothes with, so they don't fly away in the wind. Retainer clips are available cheaply online.
- Swimming costume/trunks
- Bathroom toiletries (avoid big bottles).
- Hand towel and one for showering (travel/quick dry towels are good as they don't take up much space and dry more quickly)
- Sleeping bag (pillow if you want to)
- Pocket money (£25 - £30 is ample)
- Personal medication – labelled please
- Passport or Photo Identification. If you are over 16 and the weather conditions are right, you may cross the Channel to France or the Channel Islands. If you have a passport, please bring it with you but please do not buy a passport specifically for the voyage as going to France might not be possible. Some form of Photo ID is required to enter the Channel Islands. If you don't have anything suitable then you can apply for a Citizen card here.

EXTRAS

- Head torch (or small torch)
- Sun cream and sunglasses
- DofE book (if applicable)
- RYA Log book (if you have one. If not, you can purchase one on the day of the voyage)

REALLY USEFUL THINGS

- Single fitted sheet - for your bunk cushion
- Bin bags to store dirty clothes
- Tea towels. If you are happy for these to be disposed of at the end of the voyage, that is great - so don't bring the really expensive ones! We go through a lot of tea towels during a day, so it is always great to have a fresh one pulled out of a bag.
- Power Bank. There are limited places to charge your phone during the voyage so please consider one of these, fully charged before you leave home!

Everything on the kit list! We know this is obvious, but we always have people turn up forgetting something and we are not going to be able to lend you a sleeping bag, boots, towel etc. So read it twice, pack it twice and then just check it again.

We provide you with all the appropriate safety equipment and waterproofs. You will also receive a Rona Sailing Project Crew shirt to keep.

Remember: Even in summer it can be cold on the water, especially at night, so bring suitable and sufficient clothes.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING MY VOYAGE?

Firstly, let us know you have arrived!

You will be issued with a lifejacket which you will be responsible for the care of during the week and asked to make sure that it is handed back at the end of the Voyage. Also, a set of oilskins on a hanger. Keep these in a pair and bring them back at the end on the hanger again.

You will be taken to the boat and there you will be made welcome by your Skipper and the other Leaders on our yachts. They are called the 'Afterguard'. You will be signed aboard and assigned to your Watch (team). You will also be allocated a bunk.
Please note that the yacht does not have individual cabins - but the accommodation layout is dormitory style. You can view below decks on the boats here.

Your Skipper will give a safety briefing and then you will set out to sea and will begin learning how to sail the yacht. You do not need to have any prior sailing knowledge. On the first day at sea, we will carry out a Man Overboard drill and an Emergency Stations drill.

WHO'S WHO IN THE AFTERGUARD?

Your Afterguard will be sailing with you for your Voyage. They all have the necessary qualifications and are all volunteers. This Voyage is their holiday too, so they want to ensure everyone has fun in a safe environment.

Skipper: responsible for the running of the yacht and for the people on board during the Voyage

Mate: the second in command

Watch Officers: responsible for their own Watch (one Watch Officer per Watch)

Watch Leaders: assists the Watch Officer in the management of the Watch. Their primary responsibility is to help, train and guide you in running the yacht (one Watch Leader per Watch)

Who will the other Crew Members be?

We take a wide range of individuals and groups to sea. You may be coming with a group, or a friend, or on your own. You will soon get to know your other Crewmates and very quickly form new friendships. It is not uncommon for these to survive beyond your week on board.

WHERE WILL WE GO?

The Skipper decides the itinerary at the time of the Voyage, taking into account the weather conditions and the abilities and age of the Crew.

This season we will be sailing along the South Coast and exploring the Jurassic coastline, the Isle of Wight and potentially the Channel Islands or France.
There will be lots to enjoy where ever you go and lots of fun to have! Particularly swimming off the boat!

You are important members of the crew and your participation in all activities is essential to the smooth running of the Voyage. For example you will help to put the sails up and down and trim them by winding the winches. You will take a turn at steering the boat under supervision. You will be able to learn a bit about how we navigate the boat if you want to. You will help keep the boat clean and tidy and take your turn at cooking and washing up in watches.

There is also time ashore including beach games, BBQ's and treasure hunts.

Feel free to ask any questions and share any problems with your Watch Leader or other Member of the Afterguard. Above all, sailing is a team adventure activity and we hope that you will have fun.

WHAT DO WE DO?

What rules are there on board?

Alcohol: occasionally the Skipper may permit the drinking of alcohol by those of a legal age on board when the vessel is not underway. Drinking ashore in moderation is only permitted if you are 18 or over and if you are not going to sea later the same day. If you are under age then no alcohol is permitted.

Behaviour: you are expected to carry out the duties assigned to you by the Skipper and Afterguard. Any serious behavioural problems will result in immediate dismissal from the Voyage. If this happens, your parents/leader will be informed and you will have to get home at your own expense. We have a code of conduct which you must adhere to.

Drugs: the RSP has a zero tolerance regarding the use of drugs. If the Skipper has reasonable suspicion that they are being used on board or ashore the person concerned will be sent home immediately or turned over to the appropriate authorities.

Mobile Phones: Of course, we understand that these are an essential part of everyday life now but there will be certain times when you won't be permitted to use your mobile (on deck, meal times for examples). We appreciate that you will want to take photos and stay in touch with friends and family but you are there to enjoy yourselves and sometimes that is better through your own eyes and not the camera on your phone. We give access to the Project Instagram account to the Afterguard only for the duration of the voyage so people can see where you are and what you are doing. But as mentioned there are limited power supplies to charge phones, and 20 people all wanting to do that at the same time, and the signal at sea is not great. There is also the risk of losing your phone over the side or getting it wet. Any damage will not be covered by the RSP.

Kit: your kit should be kept tidy and stowed at all times.

Medication: you should have informed us on your Berth Booking Form about any long-term medication or condition but if you are on any prescribed medication that you have not told us about, please tell the Skipper on arrival.

Smoking/vaping: no smoking or vaping is allowed below decks. If you are on Watch please ask your Watch Officer if you can smoke. Please respect the safety rules and your non-smoking Crew Members and be considerate of their needs as well as your own.

Hygiene: there are 2 heads (toilets but more of that later) on board each boat and we have ensured that there is hand wash available throughout the boat.
We understand that at certain times of the month it is daunting to think that you will be on a boat. There are sanitary disposal bins in all the heads along with sanitary bags available. There will be regular visits to marinas which will all have fantastic shower facilities and also laundry facilities if necessary. We carry some emergency sanitary supplies on board but please ensure that you do bring ample for the voyage. Speak with your Watch Leader if you have any issues and they will help you feel comfortable.

Rona Sailing Project Code of Conduct

In order to make sure that everyone has a safe and enjoyable Voyage we all, including the Leaders running the Voyage (known as the Afterguard), agree to the following, both on and off the boat:

- **We will treat others with respect and consideration**
- **We will not engage in criminal or anti-social behaviour**
- **We will cooperate and join in all activities**
- **We will follow all safety instructions**
- **We understand that the Skipper has the final say in all disputes**

The Afterguard (the Volunteer Crew) also agree that whatever enthusiasm and effort you put into the Voyage, they will match it and beat it!

WHAT OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION CAN YOU GIVE ME?

Homesickness: being on board is a new and sometimes strange experience. It may seem very strange to be away with a group of people that you don't know. Please remember that almost everyone will be feeling the same. For some of you this is your first time away from home on your own. After the first day you will have started to get used to living on board and to get to know your fellow Crew Members. There is so much going on you will soon feel part of the team. However, please speak to any of the Afterguard if you are feeling unsettled and they will be able to support you.

Insurance: the RSP carries all the legal liability insurance that it is required to have but does not carry Personal Accident cover. If such insurance is desired you should make your own arrangements to take out holiday cover suitable for Sailing.

Lost belongings: you are responsible for your own personal kit. Any property left behind and having little value, will be disposed of. Please remember to pack everything at the end of the voyage.

Problems: if you have any problems with anything, or anyone, don't keep it to yourself, talk to your Watch Leader or Watch Officer.

Space: Although there is enough space for everyone, it is limited. You will, however, have your own area to keep your kit, either on your bunk or in a locker, depending on the boat. Please respect others personal space when below decks. Wet clothes: be sensible! Keep your wet clothes separate from your dry clothes. There isn't a washing machine or tumble dryer on board!

Seasickness: even Nelson got seasick! If you know that you suffer from seasickness or travel sickness please bring your usual anti-travel sickness medication with you. Remember it only works if you start taking it before you travel to us! If you are taking travel sickness medication please let a member of the Afterguard know. If you start to suffer whilst on board please tell your Watch Leader. It will pass!

Swimming: you will get the opportunity to swim if the weather conditions are correct. We make this as safe as possible but it is a lot of fun, especially on a hot summers day!

HOW DO THINGS WORK ON BOARD?

Fresh water: fresh water is stored in holding tanks on board, therefore the supply is limited. Be careful only to use the minimum otherwise it will run out!

Food: the food is wholesome and there is plenty of it. You are the cooks, but if you have never cooked before don't worry. You cook in Watches and the Watch Leaders will support you and show you what to do. We eat things like pasta bake, pasties and beans, soup, pizza, and roast dinners. And there are always plenty of cakes being prepared on board. Please make sure you tell us in advance if you are allergic to anything, are vegetarian or vegan, or can't eat certain foods for religious reasons.

The heads: the toilets that is! Sea toilets are flushed by seawater hand pumps and are different to the toilets you are used to ashore. You will be shown how to use the heads when you come aboard. Please remember that they can easily be blocked, so you should not use too much toilet paper and should not put anything else into them unless it has been eaten or drunk first!

Remember, if you are not sure how to work them, or find that there is a problem with them, please ask your Watch Leader. We will be asking that everyone clean the heads (including the taps and handles) after they use them. Make sure they are as clean as you would wish to find them.

FEEDBACK AND AWARDS

Your Skipper will give you feedback at the end of the Voyage. If you came through an organisation, they will automatically be emailed a copy. If you booked direct, you will need to request a copy from our office after the voyage. These will be emailed to you.

Our aim is to give the Project experience, on a one-off basis, to as many young people as possible. However, if your Afterguard decide that you have 'given of your best' during the Voyage, you may be awarded either a Scott or Amory Award. Crew Members aged 14 to 15 are eligible for Scott Awards and anyone aged 16 and over are eligible for an Amory Award.

A Scott Award means you will be invited back to sail the following season before the programme is opened up.

An Amory Award means you will have the opportunity to take part in the Tall Ships' Race/longer voyages.

Voyages can count as the residential section of your Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award only. Please contact the Office before your Voyage if you are intending to use this trip as a qualifying residential week. Also ensure that you have the relevant details for the reports to be submitted to the DoE organisation. At the end of the voyage you need to send us your ID number and we can upload your report.

Tall Ships' Race

Normally each year a boat is entered for a Tall Ships' Race and the Amory Award holders from the previous year are invited to bid for a berth. The RSP has been entering this event for many years and each time the Crew come back having had an amazing time.

It's an amazing opportunity to sail to different ports and make lifelong friendships with your crew and others.

Can I become a volunteer with the Project?

A young person over the age of 17 years of age (unless they prove to have exceptional leadership skills at 16 years of age) who demonstrated marked leadership ability can be recommended for Watch Leader training. The Watch Leader training is carried out over two weekends on the Solent, on the three yachts. The first weekend is in September or October and the second will be in the following Spring.

If you are chosen as a Watch Leader you are invited to join the RSP. You will then be in a position of responsibility and will be expected (with help, and after training) to lead a group of young people and help run the yacht. You will be allocated a mentor for your first season to guide you through that season.

If you continue with the Project you should have the opportunity to further your skills and move up through the ranks and progress towards being Watch Officer, Mate and even Skipper. Over forty of our sixty Skippers started in the Project as Crew Members.

We hope that this handbook helps you to prepare for your Voyage. Remember, you will get out of this Sail Training Voyage as much as you put into it. We look forward to seeing you on one of the boats soon.

Good luck and have fun!

RONA SAILING PROJECT

Don’t forget to follow us on Instagram and Facebook and your friends and family can see photos when you are sailing.

They can also follow the boat on Marine Traffic and see where you are!