

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BEACH AND COASTAL WATERS CODE OF PRACTICE (COP)

SAFETY NOTICE:

Without proper training, using a Personal Water Craft (PWC) (including jet skis) can be dangerous to the user as well as to other coastal water users – e.g. swimmers. Machinery failure is the main cause of incidents, leaving users vulnerable in a potentially busy waterway. There are also risks from the effects of cold water, currents, tides and exhaustion.

A. CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESPONSIBLE BEACH AND COASTAL WATER USE BY USERS OF PWC

1. Respect our beaches and coast, respect our wildlife, respect property that does not belong to you, respect other beach and coastal water users.

2. Requirements for all PWC:

- a. PWC must not be modified.
- b. PWC must not have silencers removed.
- c. PWC must display prominently the Unique Registration Number/Datatag Visible ID.
- d. PWC must be properly and regularly maintained and must be used in safe working order.
- e. All PWC must have a dedicated engine cut-out system or a kill cord, (for clarification a kill cord is a coiled lanyard that has a quick release mechanism attached to the console which stops the PWC in the event of the master becoming dislodged from his vessel); and this dedicated engine cut-out system or kill cord must be used in its intended manner at all times when the PWC engine is running.

3. Requirements for users of PWC:

- a. Users (including passengers) must be over the age of 17.
 - b. Any master of a PWC underway must hold a RYA personal Watercraft Proficiency Certificate (Jet Ski License) which is recognised worldwide. This is a one day course which covers theory and practice of navigation, reading the weather, launching, handling, recovery and what to do in an emergency. Increasingly more local authorities across the country are asking for this and Parliament are currently looking at making it mandatory for all PWC masters to have this licence.
 - c. Users must have a minimum of £5 million public liability insurance.
 - d. Users must carry identification with photo such as valid driving licence or passport
 - d. Users must always carry a mobile phone or VHF marine radio in a buoyant water-proof case.
 - e. User must provide evidence of any of the requirements within this paragraph 3 to an authorised officer of the Council upon request.
- F. A person must not use, operate, navigate, conduct, drive, ride (whether as passenger or otherwise), allow himself to be carried, launch, recover or be in charge or in control of a PWC, or attempt to do any of the specified things, while unfit by reason of drink or drugs.

A person is unfit for the purposes of this Code of Practice if his ability to safely use, operate, navigate, conduct, drive, ride, be carried, launch, recover or be in charge or in control of a PWC is impaired.

4. Requirements for the use of PWC:

- a. PWC must not be launched and/or recovered other than from the permitted site listed in paragraph 5 below.
- b. PWC must not be used in a manner that poses a risk to the safety of people, wildlife, property, vegetation, mudflats or property.
- c. PWC must not be used in a manner that has the potential to cause harassment, alarm and distress to any other beach or coastal water users or residents.
- d. Users must read and observe the Byelaws and rules posted at designated launch sites.
- e. All persons (including passengers) riding a PWC must wear a Personal Flotation Device providing no less than 50 Newtons buoyancy and which complies with EN 393 / EN ISO 12402
- f. All users must wear foot protection, gloves, goggles and should check appropriate wear for the weather conditions of the day.
- g. Users must show consideration to other water users, particularly with your wake, which must not interfere with, harass or cause danger to them,
- h. Users are encouraged to join a RYA affiliated PWC/ sailing school.
- i. Users should have basic engine maintenance skills.
- j. Users must show consideration to other coastal water users and always comply with the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collision at Sea (IRPCS) as power driven vessels.
- k. PWC must not be used within 400 metres of a berth, jetty, public beach, bathing place or residential property with the exception of the launch channel displayed in Yellow on the PWC Restricted Area plan.
- l. PWC must not be used within 400 metres of Southend pier.
- m. PWC must not exceed 8 knots within the launch lane either over the ground or through the water.
- n. PWCs must not ride the wakes of other vessels and are reminded of their obligation to abide by the COLREGS ([understanding-colregs \(rya.org.uk\)](https://www.rya.org.uk/understanding-colregs)) under Section 4j.
- o. PWC must not generate wake when passing through moorings.
- p. PWCs must not be used between the hours of sunset or sunrise or when visibility is restricted i.e. any condition in which visibility is restricted by fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rainstorms, sandstorms or any other similar causes.
- q. PWC must not land on salt marsh, mudflats or sandbanks.
- r. PWC must maintain a good distance from salt marsh and exposed mudflats, and must avoid shallow waters or the riverbed where submerged vegetation could be disturbed.

s. PWC must not approach any wildlife, in the water or on land, and must not get closer than 200m to any such wildlife. If encounters with wildlife are unavoidable, users must maintain a steady direction and a slow speed away from the wildlife, creating no wake.

t. Users must not decant petrol or use chemical treatments in the water and must not drop litter into the water or on the foreshore.

5. Designated Launch Sites

Site designated for launching, recovering and using PWC: a. Shoebury Common Slipway, Ness Road, Shoeburyness,

6 Exceptions

This code of practice does not apply where a personal water craft is being used for (i) search and rescue, fire brigade, ambulance, law enforcement or police purposes or for training for such purposes; or (ii) for public or recreational safety purposes with the consent of Southend on Sea City Council; or (iii) for the purposes of the Port of London Authority harbourmaster or of Southend on Sea City Council.

EMERGENCIES

Coastguard – 999 or 112

INCIDENTS

For non-emergencies:

Essex Police Marine Unit - 01621 782 121

FURTHER ADVICE

RNLI – 0845 1226999

RYA – 0845 3450326

Datatag – 0845 0700440

EA – 03708 506506

RSPB – 01273 775 333