



## **OPERATING PROCEDURE No. 32**

**ISSUE 1    April 2022**

### **SAILING AREAS AND HAZARDS**

#### **PURPOSE**

This document defines the areas in which Dart Sailability operate and identifies key hazards in each area.

It should be considered by OOD and Skippers when deciding on where boats will operate.

## **Sailing Areas**

For simplicity of briefing and control of operations the river and harbour entrance have been divided into different areas. The areas are detailed on the diagram and additional instructions related to them are detailed below. Any trip proceeding to seaward of a line between the Dartmouth and Kingswear Castles is to be authorised by a Chief Instructor.

It must be recognised that VHF communication between Galmpton and boats operating outside Area A is unreliable. Mobile phone communication is more reliable but again not guaranteed. Vessels proceeding outside Area A must advise departure and expected return times

### ***Sailing Area A:***

Area A is our primary sailing area. It is a large open area but includes large shallow and drying areas at low water. Owers Flats can just be seen on the photograph. Shallows also extend from Garrow Point towards the port hand navigation mark. These should not normally create a problem as sailing will not be possible at low tide because Galmpton Creek dries out preventing operations at low tide. Special care should be taken if operating in the area outside normal times. Such operations must be under the direction of an experienced skipper who knows the area.

Around High Water there is often a clockwise circulation of water in this area which can be helpful or a problem when returning to Galmpton.

Within this area there are also many moorings which can be a particular navigational hazard for the unwary.

Sailing should generally be undertaken in the open areas between the moorings on each side of the river or in the entrance to Galmpton Creek between the pontoons and the line of moorings.

Hansa dinghies and Support Boats will not generally proceed beyond this area.

Further details of the shallows etc are included in a separate document that should be read by boat skippers, particularly if they are likely to operate outside normal operating times and tide heights.

### ***Sailing Area B:***

Area B is an extension to our primary sailing area providing opportunities for longer trips. There are moorings on either side of the river but plenty of space in the middle of the river. At low tide there are extensive shallows on the West bank. Boats proceeding between Area A and B should be aware of strong currents and ferries which are constrained by the channel and submerged oyster racks around Garrow Point which may be marked by white buoys. Boats should not approach the shoreline unless certain about the location of these hazards. Boats should not enter Dittisham Mill Creek except on a rising tide and with approval of a Chief Instructor. Boats should not enter Stoke Gabriel except on a rising tide and with approval of a Chief Instructor.

Further details of the hazards are included in a separate document that should be read by skippers planning to proceed up river especially if proceeding outside normal operating times and tide heights

### ***Sailing Area C:***

Area C includes Bow Creek up to the Maltsters Arms and the river up to the Ferry Landing in Totnes.

### ***Sailing Area D:***

With the exception of the moorings along the river, this is a generally safe sailing area apart from the river traffic. It is subject to variable winds due to the blanking effect of the woods along the banks. Boats proceeding between Areas A and D should be aware of strong currents past the Anchorstone port hand marker.

### ***Sailing Area E:***

The area is subject to restriction with regard to navigational buoyage and common sense. The area on the chart listed as BRNC moorings may be used only when the Royal Naval boats and trainees are not present. If in use by the RN, this area is to be avoided. The area immediately west of these moorings known as Old Mill Creek bank is also out of bounds along with Old Mill Creek itself except with the approval of a Chief Instructor or Principal and on a rising tide. The area around the Upper Ferry is out of bounds. The exception is the DSG Hole Farm trot mooring at the outer boundary of this area.

### ***Sailing Area F:***

Serious hazards exist in Area F. These include the Upper Ferry where particular care should be taken when crossing the towing cables and also congestion caused by vessels crossing the river, moving in and out of the trots and mooring areas. Further the general river traffic is or can be very heavy with several large vessels plying the river. The Lower Ferries should be given a wide berth because of their difficulty to manoeuvre and the nature of the tide.

### ***Sailing Area G:***

In general this area is not suitable for use by novices due to tidal and sea conditions. It is therefore out of bounds except by express agreement of a Chief Instructor. It may only be used for training under direct control of an appropriate Instructor. All Dart Harbour Authority Navigation marks and rules of sailing and navigation are in force. Use of this area for practicing planing as part of Powerboat Training, which requires boats to exceed the harbour speed limit, is subject to an RYA exemption to the rules which limit training activity to within 3nm of the launch area.





### ***Sailing Areas to seaward beyond 'Homestone' to 'Castle Ledge'.***

Occasionally boats may leave the area for racing and or training purposes. This may only be authorised by one of the Chief Instructors. Such journeys must include a suitably trained person. The vessel must carry all the necessary safety equipment.

### ***Sailing Areas General:***

If navigational necessity causes any vessel to depart the sailing area it is assigned to they must advise the Safety Boat immediately (or at least as soon as safe to do so) of their intentions; and when they intend to return. This does not give authority to sailors or their respective Support Boat crews to go 'out of bounds' but is intended purely for safety reasons.

### ***Independent Operations for larger craft***

The ARC, NAB, Equalizer and Kanata because of their construction and use often leave 'Sailing Area A' and move down or up river. This is permitted if an approved skipper is onboard and the weather and tide conditions permit. However, before leaving the sailing area, a radio call is to be made to the OOD & Safety Boat with details of the planned trip.

If the route is pre-arranged, then a courtesy call should be made to the Safety Boat to inform them before departing the area. Additionally, the ARC and NAB may enter the Dittisham Mill Creek, Stoke Gabriel and Dartmouth Old Mill Creek if conditions permit but only with OOD approval.

## Sailing Area A and B Hazards

This document expands on the sailing area A and B descriptions in HoPs. It should be read by volunteers who might skipper boats and is essential reading for ARC Skippers who may operate from Greenway at lower tidal states than our normal operating times.

### **Sailing Area A**

At Low Water Springs large areas can dry out.

During normal operating times there will be adequate water over the shallows for our boats. However, it is worth being aware of the locations of the shallows in case boats do touch bottom.

At other times skippers should navigate to avoid the shallows.

This picture shows the Flat Owers shallows off the entrance to Galampton Creek.



Also see chart below

Boats should either follow the line of moorings around the outside of the bank or sail from near Greenway Quay towards the Red Port Hand buoy "Owers". Leaving the buoy to Port they should then proceed onwards to the main channel round Garrow Point.

This picture shows the sand bank extending from the end of Garrow Point, the outer end of which is marked by the Port Hand buoy.





[Dittisham Lake Chart](#)

## Sailing Area B

Proceeding up river past Garrow Point there are extensive shallows on the left bank and as the river turns left there are extensive shallows on the right bank marked by a Starboard hand Buoy. (Out of picture on the left)



Even at higher states of tide boats should not go any closer to the left-hand bank than the white buoy as there are underwater obstructions (old oyster racks)



Beyond Garrow point and the Starboard hand buoy the channel follows the right hand bank and is marked by Port hand buoys. At low water springs there are large drying areas. These are not a problem at normal operating times around high water but boats proceeding outside those hours must follow the marked channel.

The shallows visible on the left bank opposite Stoke Gabriel can catch sailing dinghies boats at any state of the tide. Power boats should not proceed in towards the houses on that bank even though there is a jetty and moored boats



### **Dittisham Mill Creek**

If entering Dittisham Mill Creek the Port Hand Marker must be left to starboard as it marks the end of a line of rocks extending from Blackness Point



Picture looking upstream from within Dittisham Mill Creek at LW Springs

