



**HISC
FOILING
POLICY &
STRATEGY**

Review date: as required

2025

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Authorized by
General Committee

Review Period
As Required

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1. Introduction

Hayling Island Sailing Club was an early adopter of foiling in dinghies, and it is the policy of General Committee to continue to support the development of foiling activities that comply with the Bye-Laws of Chichester Harbour, and to encourage best practice in the management of these activities.

2. Background

Foiling craft, led by the International Moth Class, have sailed and raced in and around Chichester Harbour for around 20 years – so the Harbour’s users have considerable experience of seeing and sailing alongside fast foiling and skiff style dinghies over the many years of their evolution. As foiling technology, techniques and materials evolve we are likely to see a much wider range of sailing, motorboats and other craft starting to foil. This applies equally to pleasure and commercial craft, with several manufacturers already producing a range of foiling leisure boards, sailing boats, ribs, motorboats and ferries. A number of cities and commercial shipping organisations are now increasingly looking to foiling technology to help them decarbonize their operations and reduce operating costs – this trend is only likely to grow.

There has also been a significant increase in the numbers of experienced sailors, as well as those new to the sport of sailing, trying out this exciting new form of sailing. Most recently we have seen a large increase in Wing Foiling, Kite and Board Foiling users to compliment the more typical foiling sailing dinghies. Kite Foiling as well as the IQ Foil are now both Olympic disciplines for men and women and it is likely that Wing Foiling will be added in the coming years – so foiling is firmly becoming part of our established range of sailing equipment. Finally, we are now seeing self-propelled foiling craft eg. foiling bikes, rowing boats and surf boards that initiate and maintain foiling purely by body movements – this will increasingly become a form of water-based exercise, just like paddleboarding.

3. General principles – what is different?

The biggest challenges that face new “foilers” are no different to any new sailor starting out in the sport:

- Whilst they are learning the techniques of how to get up on their foils, they do not have as much control as an experienced user.
- They inherently have less control of what happens to their equipment when they fall off - which can be confusing to other boat users, particularly motorboat and yacht drivers.
- Many participants, new to the sport of foiling have not sailed before, so they do not have the inherent awareness of other craft and an understanding of the basic rules of sailing in open and sometime congested waters. Likewise, some yacht and other boat users are not sure how to react to foiling craft, particularly if they do not appear to be in control.
- The variety and development of foiling craft is increasing, thereby making the sport more accessible and bringing inexperienced new sailors wanting to try foiling, whereas historically to sail an International Moth required considerable skill.
- The hardest part of sailing a foiling craft is launching and initiating foiling, because once foiling they are generally in more control and have far better manoeuvrability to avoid most other vessels.
- Most of the new wind driven foiling craft need a minimum of 8-9 knots to get foiling, but with foil technology and techniques advancing at a rapid pace this minimum wind requirement will continue to drop.

Having set out all these challenges, foiling on any craft can be very exciting and will bring in and help retain younger participants which must be good for our sport and sailing generally. So, our focus should be on understanding, engagement with the various user groups, education on the maritime “rules of the road” and working out how best we incorporate this latest form of “sailing” into our wider boating activities.

4. Chichester Harbour dynamics

The natural waters of Chichester Harbour have always attracted a wide range of water borne craft, either based at one of the various marinas or sailing clubs or through its visitors. The Harbour has its own geographical challenges with a long number of sand banks and at times narrow channels plus strong spring tides. So, to accommodate the volume of craft that use the expanse of water has always required co-operation from all users as well as adhering to the standard maritime “rules of the road”. Obviously, activity levels range widely depending upon the time of year, bank holidays, weather conditions and the racing programmes of each sailing club within the harbour.

The vast majority of foiling activities tend to be focussed in and around the vicinity of each club. Only when racing is taking place do foiling craft travel further distances or transition from their own local club waters. So each club needs to develop their own local solutions and guidance to where their foilers launch and interface with other wider Chichester Harbour boat users.

5. Training and guidance

As mentioned earlier, we are seeking to incorporate the growing foiling sailing community into the wider activities within Chichester Harbour, so the best way for this to happen is to provide guidance for both the foilers and other boat users. So, the recommendation is for the following:

- Maintain and share, on an annual basis, the current HISC Voluntary Foiling Code of Conduct
- Engage and meet with the HISC marine team and foiling community leaders on a regular basis
- Engage, on a regular basis, with the Chichester Harbour Master to update on any proposed changes to the HISC Code of Conduct
- Provide the foiling sailors with training on the Racing Rules of Sailing as well as general marine “rules of the road”
- Produce “what to expect from a foiling craft” and “how to react” guidance notes for motorboat and yacht users.
- Ensure that any local Notice to Mariners is provided to the HISC Foiling Group for distribution – if applicable
- Provide all foilers/potential foilers with the existing HISC WhatsApp Group details.
- Consider forming a Chichester Harbour wide foiling group to encourage best practice and sharing of knowledge!

6. HISC location specific- Foiling Code of Conduct

Hayling Island Sailing Club has seen a number of members become early adopters of the newer forms of foiling technology – specifically Wing Foilers and Foiling Boards e.g. similar to the IQ Foil. This trend is increasing, and we now have a growing community of regular participants who simply enjoy learning to foil and sailing around for leisure. We have seen our regular dinghy and keelboat racers try foiling but to date little foiling racing has taken place – although this will no doubt change in the coming years, when their competitive instincts start to kick in. We have also seen a number of new members joining who have come from other sports e.g snowboarding and skateboarding, and we now have a strong contingent of members taking up Wing Foiling.

To date, the existing HISC windsurfing sailing group have led the way in terms of helping the new foiling and providing guidance to each other in terms of safety, techniques, equipment and a code of conduct. This group has worked well and proved to be very successful in “self-helping”. In 2022, this group produced a safety guidance note, which has recently been updated to incorporate lessons learnt since it was first drafted. Please see the attached the latest version, which has been shared and adopted with their foiling community. They have drafted this Code of Conduct as a “Controlled Document”, so it has not been amended and it has been working well. It should be recognised that this document is focussed on launching and sailing in the vicinity of HISC. We should consider sharing this document with wider Chichester Harbour Clubs and Harbour Master but must respect the original authors and how the document has been used to date. Obviously, other clubs could draft their own version specific to their sailing waters.

In addition, they have a 100 + members of a HISC Foiling WhatsApp group which shares latest updates, weather forecasts and the proposed activities of the coming weekends. Again, this is a notable example of how the group have organically developed and could act as a catalyst for other groups and harbour clubs to adopt their version of this foiling community group.

- The HISC Foiling Code of Conduct can be accessed via the link here. [HISC Foiling Code of Conduct](#)

Tim Hancock

March 2024 v2