

# 2026 Sailing Programme Explained



Welcome to the 2026 sailing programme! There are 47 Racing Events, 12 Sail Training Sessions, Cruise, Safety Skills, Holiday Week and more - so we thought we'd try and explain what is going on and how you join in.

## Firstly, a reminder on start times...

- 1) 10:00 start time. Recognising that your time is precious, this year we are trying something a little different – starting an hour earlier, means finishing earlier and giving you back some of your valuable day. Let's see how it goes!**
- 2) All advertised start times are the race start time, the on-water time for General Sailing, or departure time for cruises.  
Club Opening times are also noted to assist your planning. Ideally you should arrive an hour before the start time and don't forget you must sign in at least 45 minutes before the start. The horn is sounded as a reminder.
- 3) If you see TBA as the start time in the Sailing Programme the Race Officer will make the decision of the actual start time.

## March 14<sup>th</sup>, Fitting Out Day

This pre-season event serves two purposes – to ready the Club for the season and an opportunity to get your equipment to the Club. It is a case of many hands make light work, please support.

## March 22<sup>nd</sup>, Safety Training Day, 10am – 4pm

We want to encourage members to get refreshers in a number of activities – Winch, Safety Boat Equipment & basic First Aid....

**The winch is an important piece of equipment at HPYC – we will provide training on safe use of the winch at HPYC so you can assist on sailing days. This is particularly important this season – we have a new high-performance rope, technique and procedures are likely to be a little different.**

The Safety Boats hold specific equipment - use the opportunity to familiarise yourself with this equipment; weather permitting there will be opportunity to get some boat handling experience ahead of the season.

We will also host some basic first aid training – understand what equipment is available and where it is located. We hope to have a resuscitation training doll available.

## May 16<sup>th</sup> - Open Day

This is the Club's annual recruitment drive! We open the Club to attract new members into HPYC and the best way of doing that is with your help! Please support the Club in welcoming visitors, showing them around, supporting sailing experiences and generally ensuring our guests have a good experience.

*In case of poor weather, we have a reserve date of June 6<sup>th</sup>.*

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## Sailing Skills for Beginners

Is aimed at our novice members, young and old. Dinghy Instructors will be on hand to give foundational skills following the RYA syllabus using a combination of classroom, beach and on-water training with a Safety Boat present. The dates for this year are:

Month	Date	Day	H.W.	Start	Event
May	30	Sat	12:39	10:00	Sailing Skills for Beginners 1
Jun	13	Sat	11:19	10:00	Sailing Skills for Beginners 2
Jun	27	Sat	11:30	10:00	Sailing Skills for Beginners 3

The success of these sessions requires many hands; even if you are not directly involved in teaching your assistance is appreciated on the beach for launching and recovery of safety boats and dinghies.

## Sailing Skills Development

Is an opportunity for any member to take to the water with a Safety Boat present to practise and improve their skills. There is no formal structure, but Safety Boat cover is dutied in. The dates for this year are:

Month	Date	Day	H.W.	Start	Event
May	02	Sat	13:39	10:00	Sailing Skills Development 1
Jul	11	Sat	09:49	10:00	Sailing Skills Development 2
Jul	25	Sat	09:55	10:00	Sailing Skills Development 3
Aug	29	Sat	13:53	15:00	Sailing Skills Development 4
Sep	26	Sat	12:48	10:00	Sailing Skills Development 5
Oct	03	Sat	17:37	15:00	Sailing Skills Development 6

Even if you plan not to sail, your assistance is appreciated on the beach for launching and recovery of safety boats and dinghies.

## Sailing Skills for Racing

These sessions are scheduled just ahead of a Club racing event. An experienced Club member will offer strategy and rigging tips ahead of the race. The Race Officer will perform a practice start 10 minutes ahead of the scheduled race. The dates for this year are:

Month	Date	Day	H.W.	Start	Event
Sep	27	Sun	13:22	TBA	Sailing Skills for Racing 1
Oct	18	Sun	17:44	TBA	Sailing Skills for Racing 2
Nov	01	Sun	16:38	TBA	Sailing Skills for Racing 3

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## Cruises

Cruises are purely social sailing events, i.e. a relaxing sail! They will take place on dates below, with departure times as indicated (so be down early to rig up!). The route will be decided on by the Officer of the Day to allow for prevailing conditions, but the general principle will be to sail along the coast, beach and have a break, then sail home.

Month	Date	Day	H.W.	Start	Event
Oct	10	Sat	12:46	10:00	Cruise 1

## Series Racing

This season, there will be 8 series of racing: Spring, Summer, Autumn, Evening and Twilight, additionally there will be Novice Series to be raced at the same time as the Autumn series. To develop our Saturday sailors, there will be a Saturday series, and back by popular demand – the Dog House series for Bank Holiday Mondays.

There are typically 5 races in each Series. Not all the races in each series are counted for the final standings, a proportion of the races are discarded to allow for duties, bad weather days etc. this makes for a fairer system.

See the HPYC website <http://www.hpyc.org.uk> for:

- The Sailing and Social Programme in various formats
- Club rules/instructions on racing at HPYC

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## Cup Racing

There are a number of celebrated trophies in the Club, and each year we race for them! These are single events, but may actually be multiple races on the day. This is a great opportunity to race without committing to a full series. The trophies up for grabs this year are:

Month	Date	Day	H.W.	Start	Event
Apr	05	Sun	15:09	15:00	Easter Cup
May	17	Sun	13:20	TBA	Spring Cup
May	31	Sun	13:12	TBA	May Shield
Jun	07	Sun	17:24	TBA	Hampton Cup
Jun	14	Sun	12:12	TBA	Kent Trophy
Jun	28	Sun	12:13	TBA	Founders Trophy
Jul	05	Sun	16:23	15:00	Ganges 1&2#
Jul	12	Sun	10:57	10:00	Ganges 3&4#
Jul	19	Sun	16:42	15:00	Pursuit Race
Aug	02	Sun	15:27	15:00	Gower Sprint (2)
Aug	16	Sun	15:32	15:00	Presidents Cup (2)
Aug	30	Sun	14:26	15:00	Commodores Cup (2)
Sep	12	Sat	13:48	12:00	St Georges Cup
Oct	18	Sun	17:44	15:00	Odds & Ends / Novice Cup

Just to highlight a few of the sailing events....

## Presidents Cup (2) & Commodores Cup (2)

These will both be raced as 2-race events. The Race Officer will make a decision on the day on the course and duration of each race.

## Ganges

The Ganges Bowl is important to our Club due to its history. H.M.S. Ganges was originally a Napoleonic Warship which later became a boys training ship (Seaman Training 1939-46). Talking in the Club bar one day, it was discovered that three long-standing and influential Club members (Fred Kent, Dave Finnis and Terry Taunton) had links to the Ganges, and it was decided to present the Club with The Bowl.

This season Ganges will be 4 races, over 2 days.

## Gower Sprint (2)

Richard and Christine “Dickie and Chrissy” Gower were prominent and popular members of the Club. Before emigrating to Australia in 2019, Dickie and Chrissy donated the ‘Blue Horizon’ trophy – the Gower Sprint is in honour of them and celebrates their dedication to HPYC and programmed as a 2-race event.

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## Pursuit Race

This is a different format of racing at HPYC; the slowest boats start first building up to the fastest boats starting last. The start intervals are worked out based on the handicap, in theory, if every sailor sailed to their boat to the best ability everyone gets to the finish line at exactly the same time!

## Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September, St. Georges Cup

St. Georges Cup is a Club competition race between HPYC, Herne Bay Sailing Club (HBSC) and Tankerton Bay Sailing Club (TBSC). Geographically HPYC sits in the middle so we will host the event (but may not be Race Officers).

This is a fun, friendly event and the more HPYC sailors turn out, the more opportunity of winning we have! It was close, but HBSC were winners the last few years, it would be great to get the Cup back!

After sailing there will be a social event – the plan is a BBQ, more details to follow, we hope to see you there!

## 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> August, Holiday Week

Holiday Week is another traditional feature of the HPYC programme. We encourage Club members young and old to join us for some holiday fun and sailing – tides are great this week for afternoons on the water.

Participants will set the programme for the week on Monday morning; the general idea is an activity in the morning, sailing in the afternoon, a social event in the evening. Previous years activities have included crabbing, kite flying, crazy golf, ten-pin bowling, beach cricket, beach team challenges, treasure hunts, cycling (usually in the evening with Fish & Chips), movie nights, games nights, Club history, ukulele band, magician, quiz nights, “guest ales” .....oh, and sailing!

It is school holidays - our mission is to tire out the cadets and any accompanying friends, more usually it's the grown-ups, but we have a great time doing it!!

*Note the sailing times! On Friday there is opportunity for an evening sail and of course, the bar will be open.*

## November 21<sup>st</sup>, Laying Up Day

This post-season event serves two purposes – an opportunity to remove your equipment from the Club, and to ready the Club for winter. It is a case of many hands make light work, please support.

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## Joining In with Racing

Race days are sometimes a bit intimidating to new sailors - lots of equipment being moved around, and people concentrating in a hurried but efficient way to get ready to race.

Firstly, let's say it is not too difficult if you understand the basic sequence, and secondly "hurried and efficient" is often an illusion!!

The format of the race will be drawn on the Race Board in the lower lobby (between the changing rooms). It is generally written up 45mins before the race start, and often there is a crowd there heckling the Race Officer. The details shown will be the race course, the direction to sail, information on tide and wind, and the start times, which may vary depending on the class of boat and which fleet it is in.

Make sure you have time to study this! There may be 1, 2, or 3 starts depending on the race format and number of boats. If you are unsure which fleet you are, or which start sequence you should follow, try and catch a quick word with the Race Officer.

*Calling the more experienced club members - let's help people get on the water and join in Club racing! Please support the Club by allowing the time, perhaps with advice on rigging, racing or actually taking a less experienced sailor with you for a Series!!*

## How do we get ready for a race - boat first or me?

Well, this one comes down to personal preference and the weather!

Many sailors arrive, sum up the conditions and sign-in if they intend to sail.

Next they will wheel their boat down to the beach, collecting their spars (mast, boom) and foils (rudder, centreboard), sails and other equipment from the sail locker, perhaps then start with some rigging.

After that exertion, they will go and get changed - that can be a battle in itself! To recover, they will grab a last snack and drink and head on to the beach via the race-board to check the course.

Finally, finish rigging the boat, eye-up the competition and launch in plenty of time to check that everything is set for racing.....sounds easy doesn't it!

## So, lets race!!

Try to give yourself plenty of time to be the right side of the start line, and have a think about where on the line you want to start - sometimes races are won and lost on the start line!

On the water the start sequence will be indicated by the combination of the horn and lights on the race tower - actually, the horn is to attract your attention - the signal is actually the lights, but the Race Officer will typically operate both signals together. The signals will be at 5mins, 4mins, 1min, Go!

Complete the race, avoid the hazards - other sailors and marks! and cross the finish-line to a complimentary toot of the horn (if the Race Officer is feeling generous!).

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## **OK, the race is over, how do I pack away?**

Congratulations! You've had a sail!! Once you get back to the beach you need to get up the ramp. At HPYC we are a helpful bunch and sailors assist each other to get back up the ramp, as they say "*many hands make light work*", plus there is a winch for the larger boats.

*The winch is a powerful and potentially dangerous machine to be operated by trained Club members - if you don't know how to use it, we can train you.*

Our objective is to get boats up and clear of the ramp as quickly as possible - this is so we can recover the Safety boats as quickly as possible, and also in an emergency get additional safety boats launched, so please try not to obstruct the ramp.

At the side of the garage is a hose-pipe, rinse your gear and then you are free to pack away, sample cake and drink tea at your leisure and compare your race to others.

## **Feeling Hungry?**

You may notice that there are some dates have more than one race. The Club canteen is anticipated to be open for light refreshments whenever sailing is scheduled for very reasonable prices. Volunteers man the canteen and help is always welcome – please help out if you are not sailing.

Food safety is very important at HPYC; in the past we have organised food safety training to comply with the law. If you are interested please let us know. Lunch, tea and cake are a very important part of sailing/racing at HPYC, so let it continue!

We always gratefully receive and consume any cake donations, however legislation requires we list allergens, so please supply this information with any food donations you make.