



RYA South West Connected Conference 2026

Saturday 28th November 2026, 9:15am–4:30pm

The Castle School, Wellington Road, Taunton, TA1 5AU

TIME	SESSION
9:15AM	Registration & Networking
9:45AM	Welcome & Morning Plenary
10:30AM	Refreshments & networking opportunity
11:00AM	Forums – A chance to talk to others in a chaired environment around a specific topic (select one)
12:00PM	Buffet lunch with time to socialise and connect
1:00PM	Learning from Others presentations – Session 1 A chance to listen to an expert or another club's story (select one)
1:30PM	Learning from Others presentations – Session 2 A chance to listen to an expert or another club's story (select one)
2:00PM	Afternoon Workshops – A longer session with a combination of presentation, activities, and discussion (select one)
4:00PM	Final Plenary Connecting to deliver Together on Water
4:30PM	Close

Please note, timings are approximate and subject to change



11am – Forums

Disability:

We want to grow the opportunities for disabled people to get on the water. What do what we already know about growing capacity to do more, what ideas do you have, what support is needed?

Racing:

Connect with others leading on the organisation and delivery of club racing activity; share your successes, challenges and learning.

Young People:

Connect with others delivering activity to young people from learn to sail to race training; share your successes, challenges and learning. What changes do we need to make to ensure our sports are attractive and relevant?

Training:

Connect with other Principals and Chief Instructors; share your successes, challenges and learning. Share with us your views on the barriers to completing and instructor course and what you think we could change.

Yacht and Keelboat Activity:

Connect with other clubs and classes that run activity for yachts and keelboats to share ideas, successes and overcome challenges.

Women & Girls:

Connect with others that run activity that's targeted for women and girls. Explore what makes women and girls feel more welcome and want to get on the water regularly.

Better Blue Spaces:

Connect with others who are working to reduce the environmental impact of our clubs & classes, share your feedback on our incoming Green Blue Sustainability Accreditation for affiliates, and explore practical guidance and shared learnings on various topics including water quality.

Welfare Officers:

Connect with other welfare officers within clubs and with your local Sport Welfare Officer; share your successes, challenges and learning. Increase your collective voice and celebrate the impact of what you do to keep our sport safe.

Club Management Tools:

The digital tools we use to manage our organisations have the potential to make it easier for people to get involved and increase engagement with those taking part. Share with us your successes and challenges, the tools you use, and the support you think the RYA could provide.

1pm – Learning from Others presentations – Session 1

Safe recruitment: who is eligible for DBS checks:

The Government is due to remove the 'supervision' exemption from regulated activity, meaning more roles are eligible for enhanced DBS and barred list checks. Find out the latest.

Get Wing Foiling:

What are the benefits of introducing wing foiling and how can you integrate it into club activity.

Accidents & Incidents:

Each year we capture incident reports and safety issues from across the RYA network, and we want to explore a few examples where the lessons learned can be applied more widely.

IQ Foils World Championships:

The world's best came to Weymouth and Portland in September for a high-speed showdown at event where we tried lots of things to make it as environmentally friendly as possible. What did we learn? What could you do?

Working Together to Secure the Future: Poole Sailability:

Hear how Poole Sailability responded to uncertainty around its venue by planning ahead, finding a new home within a local sailing club, and building the governance and agreements needed to secure the future of both organisations.

Partnership in Practice: Beer Sailing Club and Lyme Regis Sea School:

Hear how Beer Sailing Club worked together with Lyme Regis Sea School to expand its training offer, create new opportunities for members and reduce pressure on volunteers.

1:30pm – Learning from Others presentations – Session 2

Supporting your race team

Find out about the resources, initiatives and support available to your race teams.

Using AI:

How are clubs using AI to help to reduce the burden on volunteers & improve decision making?

Harnessing the power of content:

Discover how clubs and training centres can use content and content creators to reach new audiences, showcase their club and inspire more people to get on the water, with insights from UK Sport and the British Sailing Team.

Engaging the Next Generation at Weymouth Sailing Club:

Hear how Weymouth Sailing Club is rethinking how it engages local young people, developing opportunities for both young sailors and those new to boating. Discover how its ethos and small practical changes are helping more young people get on the water.

Creating Change for Growth at Durleigh:

Hear how Durleigh brought two organisations together, diversified its club offer and created new opportunities to grow membership and strengthen its role in the local community.

Strengthening Safety Boat Teams:

Hear how clubs are supporting volunteers through safety boat training, helping to build confident, capable teams that can support more activity on the water.

Powering a More Sustainable Future at Axe Yacht Club:

Hear how Axe Yacht Club has invested in solar panels to reduce running costs and support a more sustainable future. Discover how the club funded the project, what has changed day to day and how the finances have worked out.

2pm – Afternoon Workshops

Handling complaints and safeguarding concerns with confidence:

It is OK, and common, for participants and members to raise concerns. Build confidence in how you respond; explore when to listen, when to act and when to refer. Discuss practical tools and skills to handle complaints raised. Reflect on the policy and process you have in place.

Growing instructor and race coach teams:

Explore practical ideas and support, discuss the challenges you face and find out what has worked elsewhere. Start developing a plan for your organisation.

Growing racing activity & race teams:

Explore how to get more people competing more often, while developing race teams with the skills and confidence to run great racing. Discuss the challenges you face and find out what has worked elsewhere.

Getting it right for women and girls:

Practical ideas and support to create environments that are social, safe and self-affirming for women and girls. Help more women and girls feel welcome, confident and motivated to take part regularly. Discuss the challenges and find out what has worked elsewhere.

Funding future growth:

How do clubs and affiliates fund growth while keeping participation accessible and affordable? This workshop explores practical approaches to increasing income, securing grants, planning investment and building compelling cases for funding. Learn from real examples and leave with practical ideas you can apply in your organisation.

Young people:

How do we build programmes that get more young people on the water more often, so they are more likely to become the next generation of sailors and leaders? The workshop will explore the landscape of youth participation, share examples of what has worked elsewhere, and work through practical ideas and strategies you can take away and apply.

Understanding and meeting members needs:

Explore practical ways to understand what current and future members want from your organisation. Discuss how to gather insight, shape your offer and improve communication. Leave with ideas to create better experiences, increase activity, and support stronger member satisfaction and retention.