



Ribble Cruising Club

Covid-19 'Lockdown 3' Restrictions

(A note clarifying RCC's position regarding sailing activities and the use of club premises following the imposition of a third 'lockdown' by HM Government.)

Having read the latest rules and guidelines published by HM government following the imposition of a third 'Covid-19 Lockdown' and taking into account the advice on the subject published by the RYA it is quite clear that there can be no 'club supported' or 'club organised' sailing at RCC until the latest lockdown is lifted.

The general rules require us to remain in our usual place of residence, leaving only for limited, specific reasons, including 'local' exercise.

Please note that the 'Rule of Six' no longer obtains, rather under the new lockdown rules you can exercise in a public outdoor place: by yourself; with the people you live with; with your support bubble (if you are legally permitted to form one); in a childcare bubble where providing childcare or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household.

Whilst it appears, according to both HM Government's promulgated rules and the advice published at the time of writing, by the Royal Yachting Association, Sport England and the Environment Agency, that 'Sailing' and 'Canoeing' are both permitted forms of exercise under 'Lockdown 3' restrictions, it is recommended that club members should adhere to the spirit of the Government's advice and protect themselves and others (including potentially members of the 'blue light' services) by refraining from sailing / kayaking during 'Lockdown 3'.

In terms of Ribble Cruising Club's activities, just as in 'Lockdown 2' very little is permitted:

- Water sports centres must close
- Private Land may not be used for launching
- Private Land Facilities should be closed
- Private Land may not be used for recreation (including Angling, Walking and Sailing)
- Dinghy Parks should be closed except for absolutely essential maintenance only (Dinghies should not be removed unless essential)
- Access for Essential Maintenance only may be performed in Marinas / Private Land
- Working Parties are not allowed

The Clubhouse, Dinghy Tanks and Dock are, for the purposes of the lockdown rules, all designated as private land

A Public Slipway may be used by a member of the public in their own boat.

However you are not permitted to enter a club dinghy park to collect a boat and then launch off a public slipway – so if you keep your dinghy at home you may self launch (if necessary sailing with a member of your household / support bubble) but if your dinghy is in the dinghy tanks or at the dock then that is effectively where it should stay

Obviously our Clubhouse and Dinghy Tanks are very much in the public eye and any activity taking place at the site is easily observed by the (seemingly ever increasing) army of dog walkers, cyclists and pedestrians. Police on the Fylde Coast have indicated that they intend to actively patrol to ensure that that lockdown rules are complied with.

The new lockdown rules mean that until at least Mid February:

- RCC Clubhouse is completely closed (this now includes the garage and downstairs toilet)
- The club tractors may not be operated.
- The club safety boats will not be available.
- Club dinghies cannot be hired.
- Dinghies, both club owned and privately owned, may not be moved from the dinghy tanks and launched from the jetty (or from the clubs dock slipway).
- Members are not permitted to carry out 'routine maintenance' on their dinghies (essential maintenance is permitted but please discuss this with me first)
- A member may only remove their dinghy from the dinghy tank (e.g. to take it home) for essential maintenance (again please discuss this with me first)

A notice explaining the impact of the latest Covid-19 regulations on RCC Dock activity has been approved by Main Committee and is displayed on the Dock notice board.

Whilst a further lockdown was the last thing any of us wanted, in reality relatively little dinghy sailing activity takes place at this time of year and non-essential maintenance activities are not going to spoil for a few weeks delay – a small price to pay for the safety of our more vulnerable club members and indeed of the public at large!

On a brighter note, other than a good wash down of boats, equipment and the dinghy tanks (and the inevitable need to re-inflate trailer & trolley tyres!) we are pretty much 'good to go' once restrictions are lifted and hopefully, given the improvement works currently ongoing at Fairhaven Lake, we can look forward to some great sailing in the not too distant future.

Best Regards – Richard Freeman
(*Chairman – RCC Sailing Committee*)