

Code of Good Practice for: Surf Club

Whilst surfing is a relatively safe sport, the sea can be extremely powerful and if vigilance is not applied, there is a risk of serious injury and drowning. However by highlighting the potential dangers and the limitations of members' surfing ability, injury can be avoided thus making it unlikely to occur. We strongly recommend that members have a basic swimming ability (we may be assessing this with a swim test), and have read the following advice on surfing safety.

Wave ownership rules: The person closest to the breaking part of the wave has the right of way. Never take off on a wave in front of someone already dropping in; you will risk damaging your boards or yourself, as well as the wave that the person has just dropped in on. Always look at who else is going for the wave before taking it; you must be aware of who is around you. This is particularly important for those that are learning. If you paddle for the same wave as somebody and find yourself in front of him or her on a wave, they probably won't be mad at you as long as you get out of their way as quickly as possible.

Paddling out: Always paddle behind a person already on a wave (through the white water) if you can't be sure you'll get behind the wave clear of them. We all make mistakes and have to learn some time, so apologize if you make a mistake and this should keep things friendly between other surfers.

Board Safety: Always be in control of your board when anywhere near other surfers. If you are taking off on a wave with people in front of you, you need to be sure that you will not fall off and hit someone on the head with your board. If you're about to wipe out or get off a wave, be very aware of your board and which way it may fly, make sure there isn't anyone in its path.

Carrying boards: In windy conditions, carrying boards along a beach can be extremely dangerous to the people around you. Make sure that when you are walking with your board, that you leave plenty of room between you and the person next to you, as if the wind blows, it can push your board sideways, which can lead you to hitting the person next to you or their board.

Know your limits and ability: If you're learning stay well within your depth and only take waves that are within your ability. If you do not, you are not only risking your own safety, but that of the surfers around you. If you hear someone shout 'Outside' this often means that there is a big wave coming in from the outside. Be sure that you either move out of the way to avoid it, or start paddling towards shore to catch the wave.

Rip currents: If you feel a rip (a current which will take you across then out to sea) pulling you then warn anyone less experienced around you, get out of the sea and walk up the shore to somewhere where the current is less strong before going back in.

Wiping out: Always protect your head and face with your arms when wiping out. You never want to fall head first into the water, although the sea may seem like it is deep, there are often a lot of shallow areas or rocks, and you don't want to hit your head on these. Falling off to the side of your board or belly flopping is often the safest way to fall off. If you do get knocked on the head by a board and are feeling disorientated or dizzy, get out of the sea and wait on the beach until you are feeling alright. When you're coming back to the surface after wiping out, be cautious of what's around you and guard your head, you may find yourself hitting your head on your board, or somebody else's board.

Getting help: If you find yourself in trouble, such as being taken out to sea or dragged towards rocks, then don't struggle on by yourself. Let someone know by shouting or waving your arms over your head to get someone's attention. We've all been in situations beyond our ability and it's not shame in admitting it when you're in danger. We like to employ a buddy system, so you always look out for at least one person when in the water. Make sure this person knows where you are all the time. Always make sure you're not far from anyone else in the club, especially if you're learning. If we're on a lifeguarded beach, surf between the black and white chequered flags and keep well away from the red flags (rocks, danger etc). Be warned that lifeguards will not necessarily risk their own safety if you get into trouble in the red flag area.

Kit: During all seasons, it is recommended that you wear the appropriate kit. Whilst we can advise you on what to wear and rent wetsuits for those that request them, it is your own personal responsibility to ensure you are kitted out properly. If you choose not to wear a wetsuit, and just board shorts, remember that British waves are cold and you need to make sure you are looking after your health.

Club boards: Whilst using club equipment, please treat it with respect. Every effort should be made to prolong the lifespan of these boards, including storing them safely and carrying them properly.

Hired equipment: When hiring equipment, please treat these items with respect. Keep an eye on items you have hired so that they don't go missing by the end of the trip. These items do not belong to us, and we often get massive reductions on our hire, so please return equipment to the store as you found it, to save us from paying for any lost or damaged items.

Personal equipment: Any equipment that is brought with you on the trip, remember that it is your own responsibility for these. You are accountable for storing your personal boards and wetsuits safely.

The club holds regular socials but during these events, no member will be pressurized into drinking alcohol. The club does not hold initiation ceremonies for new members. Committee members will always act as an impartial member to discuss any problems with.

We the undersigned agree to uphold the above code of good practice

President Adam Bell	Signature
Secretary Jessica Barrett	Signature
Treasurer Thomas Hallewell	Signature