

Support Boat Policy

Paddlers for Life Windermere

To relieve sickness and protect and preserve good health for persons facing cancer, in particular, but not exclusively breast cancer, or persons in need of rehabilitation as a result of such illness within Cumbria and Lancashire by providing or assisting in the provision for physical activity and recreation, notably Dragon Boating.



Support Boat Policy (November 2025)

See <http://paddlersforlife.co.uk/documents/> for the latest version of all documents

The dragon boat(s) are allowed onto the water even if the Support Boat (or crew) isn't available, but we must stay within 50 meters of the shoreline

Role of the Support Boat

The support boat is to support paddlers in their boats whilst out on Windermere in a variety of ways:

- The dragon boats are not restricted to staying within 50 meters of the shoreline when the support boat is in operation.
- To warn the dragon boats of other boats coming from behind, and/or their wake, and swimmers.
- To position themselves between the dragon boats and other boats that appear too close.
- To communicate between the boats and if necessary, the shore.
- To remove/swap a paddler from boat to boat or boat to shore
- To offer assistance in the event of an emergency.
- To be an extra pair of eyes on the water.
- To carry spare paddles, foil blankets and a larger first aid kit than on the Dragon boats
- To be a visible presence on the water.
- To sometimes carry bags, e.g. food if we are on a picnic
- To be aware of how many people are in each boat.

NB The support boat is NOT a Safety/Rescue boat. This would carry extra responsibilities and additional training.

It may rescue people in the event of an emergency - both ours and others, it may end up calling others, such as the Marina, Rangers or Police if necessary.

The roles of the support boat crew:

- Getting the boat from the garage onto the water and returning it to the garage at the end of the session.
- The drivers should always check the fuel level and boat in general before setting out.
- General maintenance of the rib and trailer e.g. Inflating tyres etc.
- Arranging to have the annual boat service carried out.
- Checking fuel level at the end of the session and making arrangements for one of the crew to purchase more if insufficient and giving the receipt to the treasurer for reimbursement.
- Completing the helm and support boat rota as required.
- Ensure that a radio and safety equipment are on board (spare paddles, first aid kit, rope, foil blankets)
- The drivers must always wear the kill cord whilst driving.
- Assist whenever possible getting the OC6 and dragonboats on and off the water.
- Communicate any concerns to Trustees.

Support Boat Policy

Number of people on board

- It should not normally go out with just 1 person. If it does, that person must be an experienced* qualified** driver.
- In circumstances where there is only one experienced qualified driver and no other members of the support boat crew available, another competent person (member or visitor) can go on the support boat to assist the driver.
- Regardless of how many people are on board, there must always be an experienced qualified driver amongst them.
- When the boat is being used as a support boat, 2 or 3 would be the normal, expected number of people on board.
- There may be occasions when a 4th person is aboard if they have a particular task or if training is going on. This would depend on several factors - task, weather, conditions, other boats out, who is aboard the other boats/nature of the crew.
- There are seats for 5. The owners manual states that there is a maximum capacity for 7 people on board with a total weight capacity 710 kilos.
- If more drivers are available on the day than required, they need to decide amongst themselves what role they will each play.

*Experienced – for insurance purposes, a driver in charge of the boat, must have one years' experience either on our boat or elsewhere

**Qualified – Must hold a valid Level 2 Powerboat Licence.

Reviewed: 3.11.25 by Lynne Carter, Treasurer PflW

Adopted: 7.12.25

Next review date: November 2026