

Personal Water Craft Code of Conduct

Follow this voluntary code of conduct and help to maintain the good reputation of PWC riders in Kent.

Stay safe, ride responsibly

Observe these basic rules to make sure you stay safe on the water and do not endanger others:

- Always be considerate to other water users.
- Be aware of local byelaws that may restrict PWC use.
- Read and observe the rules posted at launch sites.
- Only launch from designated ramps.
- If you are in doubt about where you can launch or ride ask an official before setting off - you could be breaking the law.
- Do not exceed 8 knots within 300m of the shore.
- Do not enter areas where PWCs are prohibited.
- Always carry the correct safety equipment, including a waterproof radio and mini-flares, and wear suitable safety clothing.
- Have, at a minimum, public liability insurance.
- Attend the RYA PWC training course.
- Register with Datatag, display your "Datatag Visible ID" clearly and keep your details up to date.
- Where possible, join a local club and enjoy the many benefits to be gained!

Reduce your impact

In order to make sure you have as little impact on Kent's wildlife as possible follow these simple rules:

- Avoid sensitive areas and stay clear of islands and sand banks.
- Use designated launch sites and do not enter into restricted areas - a number of these are designed to protect the local wildlife.
- Do not launch from or approach roosting or nesting sites for birds, especially around high tide.
- Do not beach at sandbanks occupied by seals or where seals are in the vicinity.
- If you encounter birds or marine mammals (e.g. seals and dolphins) slow down and give them a wide berth (c.200m).
- When passing wildlife, maintain a steady direction and slow 'no wake' speed.
- Never harass or chase wildlife.
- Avoid shallow waters where you may erode the underwater seabed.
- Avoid the low water mark where birds may be feeding.
- Do not dispose of any rubbish or contaminants at sea.

Report incidents

In an emergency contact the Coastguard on 999 or VHF channel 16.

If you see any PWC rider acting irresponsibly, endangering other water users or breaking the law you should report this by contacting the Kent Police on 01622 798565 (Marine Unit) or 01622 690690.

Riding Personal Water Craft in Kent

Kent has plenty of opportunities for you to use personal water craft (PWC) but all riders need to ensure they do this responsibly and safely. This leaflet has been produced to offer advice to those using Kent's waters. Please follow the voluntary code of conduct and share this leaflet with other riders.

Public launch sites

There are a number of public launch sites around Kent's coast where you can launch safely and legally. Other launches should not be used for both your own and other's safety. Public launch sites include:

- Neptune Jetty, Herne Bay
- Studd Hill/Hampton Pier Avenue, Herne Bay
- Winter Gardens, Margate*
- Jet Ski World, Palm Bay, Cliftonville**
- Eastern Undercliff, Ramsgate*
- Kingsdown, Dover
- St Margaret's Bay, Dover

* To use these launches you must register with the Thanet Water User Group; ** Launch fee payable (see overleaf for contact details).



There are other slipways available throughout the county but to use these you must be a member of the local PWC club - details of Kent's clubs are given overleaf.

Out on the water

When you are out on the water you are required to comply with international regulations for the prevention of collisions at sea and any local byelaws, which may restrict PWC use. You must always observe local water safety regulations but, as a general rule, must not exceed a speed of 8 knots/10mph when your craft is within 300m of the shoreline, unless otherwise stated.

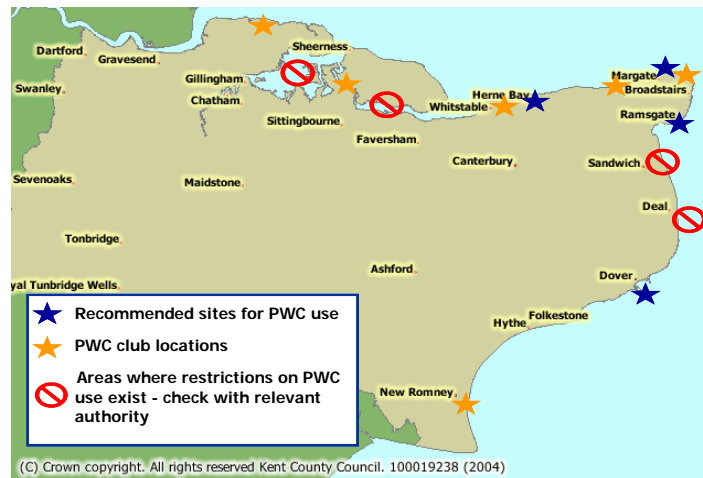
There are a number of locations along the Kent coast where PWC use is restricted, for the safety of both you and other water users. The majority of the **Medway** and **Swale** has restrictions on the use of PWCs and you should confirm with Medway Ports the exact areas where PWC use is permitted before venturing onto the water. Along the **Herne Bay** and **Whitstable** coastline there are also restrictions on PWC use near the local sailing clubs and the designated swimming areas - Canterbury City Council can advise you on these. PWCs are not allowed within 50m of any turbine tower of the **Kentish Flats** windfarm. In **Thanet** the nature reserves at Pegwell Bay and Sandwich Bay cannot be entered. You also may not launch your PWC from **Deal** beach.

The map overleaf provides further details on recommended areas for PWC use and restrictions. Where restrictions exist please consult with the relevant authority.

Where to use your PWC in Kent

The map across shows areas recommended for PWC use and areas where PWC use is restricted. Consult the relevant authority for further details.

The map also shows clubs in the area - it is advisable to join a club as there are many benefits to be enjoyed, including the use of private slipways.



Where to go for further advice

PWC clubs in Kent:

PWC Allhallows Yacht Club (Hoo Peninsular) - 01634 270273 or zyggyamlot@aol.com
Long Reach Ski Club (Swale) - 01795 511116 or longreachskiclub@aol.com
Herne Bay & Whitstable Jet Ski Club (JAWS) - 07932 970699 or chairman@jaws.org.uk
Thanet Water Users Group - 01843 577274 or jean.reynolds@thanet.gov.uk
Birchington Water Ski and Wakeboarding Club (Thanet) - 07974 509807
Jet Ski World (Thanet) - 01843 231703 or info@jetski-world.co.uk. Day visitors welcome.
The Varne Boat Club (Shepway) - 01797 364640 or hbagshaw@aol.com

Local authority advice:

Kent County Council - 01622 221487 or kent.coasts@kent.gov.uk
Gravesham Borough Council - 01474 337227 or alan.ridgers@gravesham.gov.uk
Medway Council - 01634 576245
Swale Borough Council - 01795 667015 or mikewilliams@swale.gov.uk
Canterbury City Council Foreshore Services - 01227 266719 or foreshore@canterbury.gov.uk
Thanet District Council - 01843 577274 or joe.mccarthy@thanet.gov.uk
Dover District Council - 01304 821199 or jessica.murray@dover.gov.uk
Shepway District Council - 01303 858660 or street.scene@shepway.gov.uk

Ports and marine safety advice:

Maritime & Coastguard Agency - 0870 6006505 (infoline) or www.mcga.gov.uk
Medway Ports (Navigation Service) - 01795 663025 or Navigation@medwayports.com
RNLI - 01843 296604 or gaddington@rnli.org.uk
Kent Police Marine Unit - 01622 798565 or 6374@kent.pnn.police.uk
Datag - 01932 358100 or www.datag.co.uk
The National Water Safety Forum - 0870 7772171 or www.nationalwatersafety.org.uk

Wildlife advice and local information:

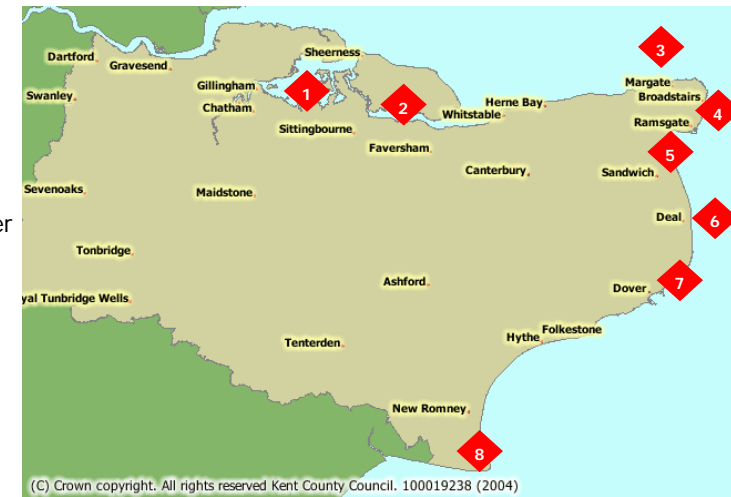
English Nature - 01233 812525 or kent@english-nature.org.uk
Environment Agency - 08708 506 506 or sokent@environment-agency.gov.uk
Kent Wildlife Trust - 01622 662012 or info@kentwildlife.org.uk
Kent Police Rural & Environmental Crime - 01622 654007 or andy.small@kent.pnn.police.uk
Medway Swale Estuary Partnership - 01795 590112 or sarah.draper@kent.gov.uk
RSPB - 01273 775333 or alison.giacomelli@rspb.org.uk
Thanet Coast Project - 01843 577672 or thanet.coast@thanet.gov.uk

PWC and water sport bodies:

RYA training - 0845 3450326 or www.rya.org.uk/Training/PersonalWatercraft/
Personal Watercraft Partnership - 01725 513775 or chris@pwpu.org.uk

Protecting wildlife

The majority of the Kent coastline is protected by various national and international nature conservation designations, so at all times you should consider your impact on the area's wildlife. However there are some areas on the coastline where the disturbance caused by a PWC could have a lasting effect on Kent's important wildlife sites and details of these are given below.



- 1 The Medway** is an internationally important area for breeding and wintering waterfowl. Particularly sensitive areas are Stangate & Sharfleet Creek, Burntwick and Deadmans Island and Stoke Saltings. The saltmarsh of the area is also of value and is susceptible to erosion from craft wake.
- 2 The Swale** is also an internationally important area for breeding and wintering waterfowl and particularly sensitive areas include Elmley, Spitend, Shellness and Castle Cote (shingle spit). There are also common seals present at Horse Sands, a sand bank exposed at low water. The saltmarsh of the area is also of value and is susceptible to erosion from craft wake.
- 3 Margate Sands and associated sand banks** where common and grey seals haul out and commons pup.
- 4 The Thanet Coast** is an important site for wintering birds, in particular the turnstone. The extensive chalk shore habitat can be fragile and easily damaged.
- 5 Sandwich & Pegwell Bay** is important as a site for wintering birds, especially the golden plover, and breeding birds in the summer. Seals also haul out in the River Stour Estuary area.
- 6 Goodwin Sands** where common and grey seals haul out and commons pup.
- 7 Deal to Dover** where the chalk cliffs support a large colony of breeding kittiwakes.
- 8 Dungeness** where the beaches are important for wintering birds such as the sanderling and waders throughout the year.

