**Personal Water Craft Code of Conduct**

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

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**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!

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**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.

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**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.

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**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
- Minster, Isle of Sheppey

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

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**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.
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.

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.

The Swale is also an internationally important area for breeding and wintering waterfowl and particularly sensitive areas include Elmley, Spitend, Shellness and Castle Coote (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.

Margate Sands and associated sand banks where common and grey seals haul out and commons pup.

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.

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. Seals also haul out in the River Stour Estuary area.

Goodwin Sands where common and grey seals haul out and commons pup.

Deal to Dover where the chalk cliffs support a large colony of breeding kittiwakes.

Dungeness where the beaches are important for wintering birds such as the sanderling and waders throughout the year.

Where to go for further advice

PWC clubs in Kent:
PWC Allhallows Yacht Club (Hoo Peninsular) - 07919 021210 or pwccaptain@allhallowsyachtclub.net
Long Reach Ski Club (Swale) - 01795 511116 or longreachskiclub@aol.com
Herne Bay & Whitstable Jet Ski Club (JAWS) - 01227 283598 or info@shoreplay.co.uk
Thanet Water Users Group - 01843 577274 or jeann.reynolds@thanet.gov.uk
Birchington Water Ski and Wakeboarding Club (Thanet) - 01794 509807
Jet Ski World (Thanet) - 01843 231703 or info@jetskiworld.co.uk, www.jetskiworld.co.uk
The Varne Boat Club (Shepway) - pmblak@globalnet.co.uk, Tel: 01797 367 750

Local authority advice:
Kent County Council - 01622 221266 or kent.coasts@kent.gov.uk
Medway Council - 01634 576245 Sports development team 01634 338761 sportsdevteam@medway.gov.uk
Swale Borough Council - 01795 667015 or sandraustin@swale.gov.uk
Canterbury City Council Foreshore Services - 01227 266719 or foreshore.services@canterbury.gov.uk
Thanet District Council - 01843 577274 or jeanc.boyce@thanet.gov.uk
Dover District Council - 01304 782239
Shepway District Council - 01303 858660 or street.scene@shepway.gov.uk

Ports and marine safety advice:
Maritime & Coastguard Agency - 0800 700600 (infoline) or www.mca.gov.uk
Medway Ports (Navigation Service) - 0151 3496520/0151 4895148, Medway Navigation@peeports.com
RNLI - 0800 328 0600 www.rnli.org.uk/seasafety
Kent Police Marine Unit - 01622 798565 or Marines Section - Coldharbour@kent.pnn.police.uk
Project Kraken - counter terrorism hotline — 0800 789321— www.kent.police.uk
Datagat - 01932 358100 or www.datagat.co.uk
The National Water Safety Forum - 0870 7772711 or www.nationalwatersafety.org.uk

Wildlife advice and local information:
Natural England - 0845 600 3078 enquiries@naturalengland.org www.naturalengland.org.uk
Environment Agency - 08708 506 506 or enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
Kent Wildlife Trust - 01622 662012 or info@kentwildlife.org.uk
Kent Police Rural & Environmental Crime - 01622 056007 or andy.smith@kent.pnn.police.uk
RSPB - 01273 775333 or ali.may@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 - www.pwpulse.co.uk