



STOUR SAILING CLUB



Rowing with Stour Sailing Club 2025

To Get Rowing: email rowing@stoursailingclub.co.uk



About Stour Sailing Club

Stour Sailing Club was founded in 1937 and has been part of the local community for over eighty five years. The club is owned and run by its members and exists to promote access to and quiet enjoyment of the river, including and members' activities include of course sailing, as well as rowing, canoeing, paddle boarding and swimming. Many Club members are involved in a range of different activities on the water. Everyone involved in running the Club and its activities, including rowing is a volunteer.

Rowing at Manningtree

Stour Sailing Club set up organised Club Rowing at the beginning of 2016 following on from several years of groups of members rowing in their own Claydon Skiffs. Rowing has become a well established and very active part of the Club.

Rowing is a fantastic team and social activity for people of all ages and is a great way to meet people and to enjoy our beautiful estuary from a whole new angle. You can row for fun or to get fit or to compete – and many of us enjoy all three.

Rowing at Manningtree is mainly traditional fixed seat coastal rowing with four rowers each with a single 'sweep' oar, and a Cox, in the Club's two Harker's Yard Gigs. However we also have access to a Claydon Skiff (also a four oared sweep boat), and in addition we have a single sliding seat coastal scull.

We row as men's, women's and mixed crews and you do not have to be under twenty five, super fit and over six foot six to get rowing (although if you are you are also welcome).

We row all year round, and the winter is our main racing season.

Whilst sweep rowing is not suitable for those under sixteen, there is no upper age limit and many of our rowers are 'super-veterans' with many rowing and racing in their seventies.

As well as rowing we also need Coxes, and if you love being on the water but are unable to row (or just don't want to) we will help you to gain the experience to become a 'Competent Cox'. If you want to row regularly then we will also expect you to be willing to take a turn at Coxing.

Manningtree is very tidal and we can only row around two hours before and after high tide – so rowing sessions vary in time and day depending on the tides. When light and tide allow we plan 'open rows' that any rower can sign up to at least twice a week, with increasingly popular weekday sessions as well as opportunities at weekends.

We use Team App to organise rows. You don't need to have any rowing experience, just sign up, turn up and be prepared to lend a hand and handle an oar.

We also hold indoor rowing and circuit training sessions on Wednesday evenings from 6-7.15pm using 'Ergs' (Concept 2 Indoor Rowers). During the summer months this takes place outside under the Club Marquee, in the winter we relocate to Mistley Village Hall.

How to get Involved

Both members and non-members are welcome to come and have a go at rowing. Whether you are a member or not you can come out for three rows free of charge to see if it is for you.

After your three free rows you can pay £9 which will provide for a further three rows. If you are not already a member and want to carry on rowing after that you will then need to become a member of the Club. A family membership of the Stour Sailing Club is currently £96 a year.

In addition we ask all Rowers to make a rowing contribution, currently £75 annually, paid in December each year, or PAYG £3 per person per row, capped at £75 a year. This goes towards replacement of equipment and the maintenance of our beautiful Gigs and equipment. A thole pin is roughly £3 and a single Gig Oar costs over £500 and yes they do break!

The Club Harker's Yard Gigs

The Harker's Yard Gigs are built by the Pioneer Sailing Trust in Brightlingsea by marine apprentices. The first nineteen Gigs (including William Rose which is number 17) were made of cold moulded mahogany ply. Hunter was the 22nd to be built and the 3rd to be made of 'plastic' (GRP) fitted out with wood. There are currently 24 Gigs in total.

William Rose, the Club's first Harker's Yard Gig joined the Club in October 2016, with the help of a £10k grant from the Sport England Lottery Fund and additional funds from the Rose family in memory of William Rose for whom the boat is named.



In 2020 we received a further £10k grant from the Sport England Lottery Fund towards the purchase of a second Gig for our third Coastal Rowing Project 'Rowing On'. Our second Gig 'Hunter' is named in memory of Ian Hunter Edmond whose family provided additional funds for the project.



Racing with Stour Sailing Club



Before the start – Gigs at Manningtree on 6th October

We row and also race all year round, and our busiest racing season is during the winter months when increasing numbers of Clubs and Harker's Yard Gigs compete at different locations around the Essex coast with men's, women's and mixed crews. The 2024-25 Winter Series again started here at Manningtree with the first event on 6th October and continues through to March 2025.

'Adventure' Rowing

We also try and fit in some longer rows during the summer and have rowed from Manningtree to Walton Backwaters, round to the Orwell, and of course Harwich and Shotley. Due to tidal constraints these longer rows from Manningtree have to go out on one tide and back on the next. Venturing further afield we have towed the Gigs to row on the Deben, the Ore and the Thames.



Lunch break at Waldringfield with friends from Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club June 2024

'Social' Rowing

Much of our rowing is 'Social Rowing' just going out on home water for an hour or two, enjoying the scenery and the company of fellow rowers with an opportunity to see the estuary and the local wildlife from a whole different angle. Along the way we improve rowing techniques, gain fitness, have fun and partake of the odd jelly baby or two.



Getting Started

You don't need lots of special equipment to row. Just wear comfortable clothes that you can move in. Shorts, trousers or leggings without pockets are most comfortable. You will get hot when you are rowing so wear layers that you can take off or put back on as needed.

During the summer months you will need trainers or shoes/sandals that you do not mind getting wet or muddy. In winter you will need waterproof footwear (short, loose 'wellies' are fine).

We usually row wearing gloves – any old leather gloves or flexible work gloves that you can wriggle your fingers in and grip with will do to start. In warm weather a cap and sunglasses + sunscreen are important. In cold weather a woolly hat is helpful. Remember to bring water with you – rowing can be thirsty work – but no metal drinks bottles please as they damage the Gigs when dropped.

We do not generally wear buoyancy aides whilst rowing, but the Gigs carry them for all rowers on board (and other safety equipment) and any rower can chose to wear one if they prefer.



On home water

Basic Rowing Rules

We want everyone to be safe on the water and to enjoy rowing and we have three basic rules:

- One: The Cox is in Charge!
Be ready to listen and respond to instructions.
- Two: Rowing is a Team Sport – the team work includes getting the boat and equipment ready, getting the boat in and out of the water, washing down and putting equipment away afterwards.
- Three: Have fun – the more you put in to rowing, the more you will get out of it

Get in Touch

If you would like to come rowing please send us an email at rowing@stoursailingclub.co.uk and we will get you on the water as soon as we can. We will ask you to fill in a contact form and will add you to the 'rowers in waiting' list on Team App so that you can access the information that you will need to get rowing including dates of rows.

When you come out on the water for the first time we will take you out in good conditions, usually as a 'rowing passenger' for a first row with experienced rowers so you can sit in the Bow (the front of the Gig) and watch the crew for a bit and then swap in and have a first go.