

## Best ever PTBO in Eastern region

In one of the most successful PTBO events in the Eastern Region the week of 13 to 21 May saw hundreds of people visit the largest number of clubs to open their doors to newcomers to try sailing.



Several Suffolk sailing clubs and centres took part over the nine-day period; St Edmundsbury Sailing & Canoeing Association (SESCA) was one of those taking part, with a successful open day at Lackford Lake, near Bury St Edmunds. Over 100 visitors enjoyed perfect weather on the water.

<< *Happy first timers on Lackford Lake*

Felixstowe Ferry SC, which recently became an RYA Recognised Training Centre (RTC), enjoyed a great day with over 70 people trying sailing on the River Deben, whilst further up the coast both Southwold SC and Aldeburgh YC saw strong turnouts. Alton Water Sports Centre ran over 50 sailing and windsurfing sessions for adults and young people, and Shotley Point YC combined their day with a display of cruising equipment and passage planning software, attracting a number of people interested in big boat sailing.

Other events included taster days at Slaughden SC and Waveney Sailability. The East Anglian Sailing Trust, based on the Orwell, had its biggest turn out for visually handicapped and disabled people during the week, culminating with a celebration of its 21st year for over 100 guests on the Saturday.

Thirteen Norfolk sailing clubs and centres took part on the county's broads, rivers and coastline. First event to take place on 13 May was at Blakeney SC on the North Norfolk Coast, where visitors were rewarded for the early morning start with either a leisurely sail to see the seals on the Point, or taking part in club racing. Hickling Broad SC welcomed a number of visitors to sail in dinghies on the largest of the Norfolk Broads.



Norfolk Broads Yacht Club' visitors included BBC Radio Norfolk's Treasure Quest team, and Whitlingham Adventure ran over 60 sailing and windsurfing taster sessions. Eastwood Whelpton at Upton held its first PTBO event, the Yard heaving with over 65 visitors going for a sail on Broads cruisers and half-deckers. Ouse Amateur SC enjoyed an open afternoon with visitors aged between four to over 60 taking part in activities on the banks of the River Ouse.

Hickling Windsurfing Club's 'Come and Try' day was a great success with over 100 visitors and 45 trained to enable them to go windsurfing on the water, with plenty signing up for beginner training courses. Norfolk Punt Club based on Barton Broad had

a breezy afternoon, but guests aged 10 to almost 70 years old enjoyed trapezing on a Norfolk Punt.

Horning SC, based on the Broads, and Snettisham Beach SC on the North Norfolk Coast, also held successful events. Over 100 people aged 18 months to 80 got on the water at Horning, sailing in keelboats, dinghies and broads cruisers. Coldham Hall SC on the outskirts of Norwich ran a successful open afternoon on Sunday, and welcomed a steady flow of families wishing to try sailing in dinghies, keelboats and broads cruisers on the River Yare at Surlingham.



Essex clubs Marconi SC and Fishers Green SC both received a visit from Rio 2016 Gold Medallist Saskia Clarke to inspire the next generation of the sailors, in her home county of Essex.

She said: "It's been fantastic to see so many people turning up and trying sailing and windsurfing."

*<< Saskia Clarke takes youngsters out at Fisher's Green*

Marconi celebrated their most successful open day ever, with the public flocking to the club to try sailing, the event aimed at getting all ages on the water. With over 200 trips out on the water, activities had to be extended to cope with the demand. Meanwhile visitors of all ages enjoyed trying sailing for the first time at Fishers Green, some even lucky enough to be taken around the lake by Saskia.

Amongst other venues taking part was Upriver YC in Hullbridge, which had a record breaking open day for the club, with over 130 people going sailing, on their fourth and most successful PTBO event to date.

Maldon Little Ship Club, sailing from Bradwell, in challenging weather conditions provided exciting sailing for the visitors who attended, while Royal Corinthian YC welcomed 45 visitors from Essex and London, and Eyott SC saw 20 families take part in activities. Other events included taster days at Blackwater SC, Maylandsea Bay SC, ESSA, South Woodham Ferrers YC, Essex YC and Shotley Point YC, and Walton & Frinton YC.