

RYA

TOGETHER ON WATER





INTRODUCTION

As an island nation the water defines who we are: our identity, our communities, our economy and our future. Yet, for too many people being out on the water can still feel out of reach. We believe this must change.

Why shouldn't more people grow up with a connection to the water, just as they do with football, cycling or walking in the countryside? Why shouldn't spending time afloat be recognised as a natural part of living in the UK?

If the RYA is serious about connecting more people with the water, we must be prepared to evolve. Relying on our heritage alone is not enough.

Our Together on Water strategy has always championed the joy, freedom and lifelong benefits that sailing and boating can bring, while placing safe, welcoming and inclusive environments at the heart of everything we do.

This refreshed strategy builds on those foundations, setting out how we will go further and faster to connect more people with the water, strengthen the communities that make our activities possible, and, importantly, secure a sustainable future for sailing and boating across the UK.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Michael Arthur'.

Professor Sir Michael Arthur
Chair, RYA Board

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Water has always been a part of my life, like it has for so many of us. It inspires, challenges, and connects us, bringing a freedom that stays with us for life.

Since launching Together on Water, we've embedded our community at the heart of everything we do, and we're seeing the impact. More people are discovering the value of time on the water and the benefits it brings.

But the world is changing, and too many still feel that spending time on the water isn't accessible to them. That must change. Because whatever you're looking for, you can start on the water.

This next chapter sharpens our focus: opening up access, challenging perceptions, and making our activities more inclusive and relevant to all.

Our ambition is bold, but our strength is collective. Together, we can reach more people, inspire the next generation, and help our communities thrive by conserving the places that connect us.

Together, we will open up the water for everyone.



Sara Sutcliffe MBE
RYA Chief
Executive



OUR IMPACT



1875
Year founded
with 120
members



100,000+
Members supporting
the future of
our waters



290,000
People worldwide
take an RYA
training course
annually



24,000
RYA instructors
delivering our
training schemes
worldwide



55,000
Young people
introduced to sailing
and windsurfing
with OnBoard
annually



2,200
Recognised
Training
Centres



40,000
Sailability
sessions a year



1,400
Affiliated
organisations
helping you get
on the water



1,600
Environmental
Boating
Pledges
annually



1
All-time top
Olympic medal
winning sailing
nation



1,650
Qualified racing
coaches



100+
RYA publications
helping you
learn and train

OUR WHY



**WE'RE HERE TO ENABLE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE
TO THRIVE ON WATER**

OUR VISION TOGETHER ON WATER

Everything we do will contribute to one shared ambition – **creating a connected, inspired and inclusive community on water:**

- Where being on the water is a natural part of British life
- Where everyone can access the benefits of being on the water and our communities afloat reflect the communities ashore
- Where young people see opportunity, women and girls thrive, and more people than ever before feel connected to the water
- Where our connection inspires a shared commitment to protect the waters that bring us together





OUR MISSION

**AS AN ISLAND
NATION BEING
ON THE WATER
SHOULD BE
PART OF OUR
NATIONAL
IDENTITY, WHERE
EVERYONE CAN
GET INVOLVED**

INSIGHT & ACTION: WHAT WE'VE LEARNT

MOTIVATION

People are drawn to the water because of how it makes them feel.

Motivations include:

- Spending time outdoors/on the water/ in nature (97%)
- Enjoyment (95%)
- Freedom and independence (93%)

EASY ACCESS

Reducing barriers will help more people get on the water, more often.

- 17% of adults say they want to try sailing in the future
- **23% want motorised watersports**
- 80% want to do some form of watersport **in the future**
- **58% of the current boating base** say they participated less than they hoped last season

INCLUSION UNLOCKS GROWTH

Future growth depends on reaching and welcoming more people.

- Interest is growing among younger and more ethnic minorities

- Key barriers include swimming confidence, belonging and safety confidence

COMMUNITY

Strong communities help more people thrive on the water. Balancing the needs of today's community with the expectations of tomorrow's participants will support long-term growth.

- **74% have been involved for 10+ years**
- Future demand is strongest among **16-34s, urban and more diverse audiences**

BLUE SPACES

Those who connect with blue spaces are more likely to protect them.

- Access to healthy water improves people's experience and inspires greater care for the places they enjoy
- Access to blue spaces is linked to higher satisfaction
- Boaters demonstrate higher environmental awareness than the wider population
- **Protecting blue spaces supports participation, retention and future growth**

Underpinned by 2026 Reflections on Water and Watersports Participation surveys





Over the next ten years, our work will be guided by four cross-cutting priorities that sit at the heart of the strategy.

These plans will shape our decisions, our investment and our actions:

MORE PEOPLE, MORE OFTEN

Growing participation and lifelong connections with the water

MORE BACKGROUNDS

Opening opportunities and creating a community where everyone belongs

BETTER BLUE SPACES

Protecting and enhancing the waters that connect us all

BRILLIANT BASICS

Providing strong, integral foundations that enable everything we do

TOGETHER ON WATER

VISION

A connected, inspired and inclusive community on water

MISSION

As an island nation being on the water should be part of our national identity, where everyone can get involved

MORE PEOPLE, MORE OFTEN

INTENT

As an island nation, everyone should have the opportunity to get involved, stay involved and enjoy life on the water

FOCUS AREAS

- Next generation
- Inspirational performances
- Active habits
- Future ready network
- Thriving workforce

10-YEAR GOAL

Double active participation

MORE BACKGROUNDS

INTENT

As an island nation, communities on the water should reflect those they are drawn from on shore; our waters should be open and accessible to all

FOCUS

- Careers and personal development
- Coastal and inner-city communities
- Scale up programmes

10-YEAR GOAL

Our active community matches Office for National Statistics (ONS) national diversity data

BETTER BLUE SPACES

INTENT

As an island nation... water is our lifeline: we should feel united in our desire to conserve and enhance the blue spaces that connect us

FOCUS

- Connection to water
- Community action

10-YEAR GOAL

10 million experience a connection to blue spaces

BRILLIANT BASICS – OUR FOUNDATIONS

INTENT

Lead by example, building the credibility and trust needed to fulfill our role in shaping our island nations future

FOCUS

- Change perception
- Strong foundations
- Fit for future

BENCHMARKS

- Position the RYA and British Sailing in a modern society
- Long-term financial resilience
- Excellence in Governance

INTENT

As an island nation, everyone should have the opportunity to get involved, stay involved and enjoy life on the water

10-YEAR GOAL

Double active participation

FOCUS

ACTIVE LIVES

Create opportunities that help more people enjoy active lives and bring communities together on water

NEXT GEN.

Connect the next generation to a life on the water and make sailing a valuable part of growing up for children across Britain

FUTURE READY NETWORK

Evolve and support a diverse network of providers so that getting on the water is easy, flexible and welcoming for everyone

THRIVING WORKFORCE

Make sure the people who make boating possible, from volunteers to professionals, have clear opportunities to learn, grow and be recognised

INSPIRATIONAL PERFORMANCES

Support world-class performances and success stories that inspire more people to get on the water

TARGETS

- Double the number of young active participants by 2030
- Grow the largest annual boating mass participation event by 2032
- Identify, develop and deliver 6 key location masterplans by 2028
- Grow the UK instructing, coaching and officiating workforce by 20% to meet participation demands by 2032
- 100 world medals in the next 8 years



INTENT

As an island nation, communities on the water should reflect those they are drawn from on shore; our waters should be open and accessible to all

10-YEAR GOAL

Our active community matches ONS national diversity data

FOCUS

CAREERS & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Help more people, especially those from under-represented backgrounds, get involved, stay involved and discover the opportunities it can offer beyond taking part

COASTAL & INNER-CITY COMMUNITIES

Support community led activity that responds to local priorities and brings people together through a shared connection with the water

SCALE UP PROGRAMMES

Expand proven programmes to widen their reach, strengthen local delivery and encourage greater diversity across our community

TARGETS

- Accelerated year on year growth to close gaps, for:
 - female participation
 - ethnic diversity
- Workforce reflects ONS diversity benchmarks (workforce goal, 15yrs)
 - * Annual reduction in the representation gap
- $\geq 20\%$ disability representation sustained annually
 - * % participation and annual growth



INTENT

As an island nation, water is our lifeline: we should feel united in our desire to conserve and enhance blue spaces that connect us

10-YEAR GOAL

10 million experience a connection to blue space

FOCUS

CONNECTION TO WATER

Working with partners to create and deepen connections to blue spaces across society to build a community committed to action

COMMUNITY ACTION

Mobilise our community to champion access to water and help conserve and enhance the environments we enjoy

TARGETS

- 75% of affiliates & RTCs commit to act (4yr)
- 20% of network community committed to act (4yr)
- Validate and deploy “guiding training” across 5% of active workforce (4yr)
- Grow direct engagement across our network community to 250,000 (4yr)



INTENT

Lead by example, building the credibility and trust needed to fulfill our role in shaping our island nations future

BENCHMARKS

- Position the RYA and British Sailing in a modern society
- Long-term financial resilience
- Excellence in Governance

FOCUS

PERCEPTION CHANGE

Challenge outdated views and ensure sailing and boating are recognised as open, welcoming and accessible to everyone

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

Build and maintain governance, systems and capability needed to support a high performing organisation

FIT FOR FUTURE

Grow our financial resilience and flexibility so we can invest more in our priorities and respond to future opportunities

TARGETS

- Annual increase in awareness of sailing/boating and understanding of RYA purpose
- Annual increase in positive affiliate engagement
- Increasing investment in strategic goals and downward trend in overhead (as % of income)
- UN Compact commitments, net zero targets and audit outcomes



HOW WE GET THERE MATTERS

Achieving our vision isn't just about what we do. It's about how we do it.

'Together on Water' is brought to life by people. By the commitment and enthusiasm of all those who play a part in our community.

Our values guide how we work together, define who we are today and who we want to be in the future, and shape the culture that will turn our ambitions into reality.



RESPECTFUL



OPEN



IMPACTFUL



RESPONSIBLE

RYA

