

**THE GLIDE SURF SCHOOL
NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURE
(N.O.P)**

**SURF and FLAT WATER SUP (stand up paddleboard)
COACHING AND INSTRUCTION ON
CROMER BEACH**

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is essential that The Glide Surf School staff is fully aware of their role and are able to recognise the potential hazards that exist or may arise.

Although Cromer beach is relatively safe, incidents do occur as a result of the public use of sea and adjoining area. In accordance with these potential dangers, this document sets out the known potential hazards together with a risk assessment and measures to be taken as and when necessary by The Glide Surf School staff, as the **NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURE**.

'Stand up paddle boarding' will be referred to as 'SUP' through this normal operating procedure.'

2. GENERAL

A plan of Cromer beach has been provided and this marks the only vehicle access points on to the beach (1 and 2), The Glide Surf School Surf and Flat Water SUP coaching and instruction area (3), The Glide Surf School premises, the walk to the beach (4-5) and the location of nearest telephone for emergencies(6).

During the months of May to September from 10am to 6pm, the east and west end of Cromer beach has lifeguards on patrol. Sea awareness/safety signs are in position at the main beach access points. Appropriate warning flags are in position on the beach to organise the public in a safe manor. Lifesaving equipment is available during the summer months, but only at the two lifeguard huts on the east and west ends of the promenade.

The known hazards are included in this report, together with a risk assessment for each possible scenario and should be read in conjunction with more detail in the Glide Surf School Surf School Risk Assessment. During the lifeguard-patrolled months, a bathing area system operates between marked flags and safety signs.

The Glide Surf School instructor will have access to a first aid kit in the Glide Surf School shop. In addition to this The Glide Surf School instructor will have access to a RNLI first aid kit and rescue tube whilst the RNLI lifeguards are on duty. The Glide Surf instructor will also be aware of the EAP procedures.

2.1 GREET CUSTOMERS

The customers will be familiarised with their instructor at the surf school / shop before the lesson. They will also have access to the relevant NOP's and EAP's whilst they are at The Glide Surf School Surf should they wish too.

The pupils will also be informed of designated meeting posts, both on the beach and at the promenade premises. This will be necessary in the case of an emergency, lost

person, when the instructor indicates a potentially hazardous situation or if the instructor wants to talk to the group.

2.2 PUPIL INFORMATION

Each pupil will also be asked if they have any medical conditions that may hinder them during the lesson prior to the start of lesson. These will be listed under their booking notes. A contact number is requested and stored under booking information or a guardian will need to be present so as there is someone to be contacted in case of an emergency.

Each pupil must be able to swim competently and be confident in the water.

Each pupil will be made aware that no jewellery or glasses must be worn during the Glide Surf School lessons.

2.3 EQUIPMENT PROVIDED

All SURF LESSON students will be provided with a soft surfboard (for beginners). Intermediate clients will be able to use a soft or hard board or their own personal equipment provided they have demonstrated competency of using it.

All FLAT WATER SUP LESSON students will be provided with a SUP board and paddle that is sufficient and most ideal for their size and height.

All FLAT WATER SUP lessons will be undertaken inside the parameters of two yellow marker buoys no more than 50 meters from the shore line and no more than 50 meters apart.

All pupils will be provided with indication rash vests (orange), to clearly show they are part of the group. They must stay fairly near to each other at all times and will so as they will be easier to spot and observe.

2.4 THE INSTRUCTOR

The instructors will also at all times wear indication vests (Blue) so as to be easily identifiable. They will carry a whistle on them at all times whilst instructing and a rescue board or rescue tube will be available on the beach during SURF lessons. For FLAT WATER SUP lessons the instructor will be using their own SUP board whilst in the water which can be used for any safety or rescue procedures. SURF and SUP LESSON group size per instructor will be no more than eight persons. In case of more pupils, an additional instructor will be provided.

The Glide Surf School instructor will hold a valid Level 1 SURF and/or OPEN FLAT WATER SUP qualification. They will also hold a SLSGB Beach Lifeguard Award or equivalent lifesaving/rescue award. They will also hold a valid DBS when above 18yrs old.

3 ANALYSIS OF THE HAZARDS AND RISK ASSESSMENT AT CROMER BEACH

3.1 HAZARDS ENCOUNTERED

Pupils and all water users must be kept a minimum of 20 meters away from the pier at all times.

Experience has shown that there are six main categories of hazards at Cromer East beach and these are as follows: -

- 1) The wind and its effect upon SURF or SUP boards.
- 2) The Sea at high tide.
- 3) The sea at low tide.
- 4) The use of fishing boats and other sea vessels launched at the public slipway.
- 5) The use of public personal watercraft amongst ongoing lessons.
- 6) The transport of equipment to and from the beach.

3.1.1 THE WIND AND ITS EFFECT UPON THE SEA

In order to analyse the hazards, which might arise with regard to the beach at Cromer, it is necessary to establish conditions which present the least hazards and might be described as normal.

With this scenario "normal conditions" are considered to be applicable for **SURF and/or SUP LESSONS** when: -

"There is a very slight cross/onshore wind with an incoming or outgoing tide (between 1/4 low – 3/4 high tide), with *a slight swell in the sea no more than 3ft (wait-chest high)* for **SURF LESSONS** or *flat water* for **SUP LESSONS**"

Any situation, which occurs outside of these parameters, should be regarded as a hazard, although the degree of risk will vary dramatically according to sea conditions.

The following is an assessment of sea and wind conditions, which can arise, the risk factors involved and the action, which appears most appropriate for The Glide Surf School instructor to take on.

3.1.2 A SLIGHT to MODERATE CROSS OR OFF-SHORE WIND ON AN INCOMING TIDE; WITH A SWELL UP TO 3ft for SURF LESSONS or FLAT WATER FOR SUP LESSONS.

Under these conditions for SURF LESSONS The Glide Surf School instructor will need to have particular regard to any pupils floating on their surfboards without any feet stable on the sea bed as they are more prone to being blown out to sea.

Under these conditions for SUP LESSONS the Glide Surf School instructor will keep all the pupils inside the parameters of the two yellow marker buoys and as close to the shore line as deemed safe. In the case of a slight to moderate cross-shore wind

pupils will be encouraged to stay closest to the side of the marked paddling area into the wind so avoid drifting across and outside of it. The two yellow marker buoys will also be continually monitored and moved towards the shoreline when necessary so there distance never exceeds more that 50m from the shore line.

This is especially true for SURF and SUP LESSONS if the wind speed increases. In the event that this occurs, or it appears that pupils are in danger of being carried out to sea, then both visual and verbal instructing and warnings will be given. If continued, then appropriate action re-calling pupils to the shore-line to prevent them from putting themselves at further risk. The lesson will then be reviewed as to whether to continue.

3.1.3 A SLIGHT to MODERATE CROSS OR OFF-SHORE WIND ON AN OUTGOING TIDE; WITH A SWELL UP TO 3ft for SURF LESSONS or FLAT WATER FOR SUP LESSONS.

Again have particular awareness to any pupils floating on their surfboards without any feet stable on the sea bed as they are more prone to being blown out to sea. Increased awareness of rips running out to sea should also be monitored and avoided as well. Visual and verbal warnings should be applied so that pupils should remain close to the shore line not beyond the breaking surf. Unless the instructor is confident pupils can adequately surf green waves and confidently paddle against the offshore wind towards the shoreline.

Under these conditions for SUP LESSONS the Glide Surf School instructor will keep all the pupils inside the parameters of the two yellow marker buoys and as close to the shore line as deemed safe. In the case of a slight to moderate cross-shore wind pupils will be encouraged to stay close to the opposite side of the marked paddling area so avoid drifting outside it. The two yellow marker buoys will also be continually monitored and moved when necessary away from the shoreline with the outgoing tide. This is so the distance always remains safe and consistent from the shoreline to the furthest paddling boarderline out to sea indicated by the yellow marker buoy parameter.

If the wind speed increases during SURF or SUP LESSONS and it appears that pupils are in danger of being carried out to sea, then both visual and verbal instructing and warnings will be given. If continued appropriate action re-calling pupils to the shore-line to prevent them from putting themselves at further risk. The lesson will then be reviewed as to whether to continue.

3.1.4 ANY SITUATION WHERE THERE IS A STRONG CROSS OR OFF-SHORE WIND

Any pupils in a SURF LESSON floating on their surfboards with no feet stable on the sea bed as previously described are at a higher risk. All pupils will be asked to

remain closer to the shoreline, being able to keep feet on the sea bed at all times and surf inside the area of the breaking waves. In the case of strong cross-shore winds the above will apply as well as a designated marked surfing area on the beach to avoid drifting outside. An increased awareness of rips running out to sea should also be monitored and avoided as well. Visual and verbal instructing and warnings should be constantly applied.

No SUP LESSONS will take place in strong cross or offshore winds even if sea conditions are flat.

3.1.5 A STRONG SWELL BETWEEN 3-6ft WITH LONG SHORE DRIFT

The Glide Surf School instructor will be able to proceed with the SURF lesson providing the tide state is only between low or mid tide, as well as it is deemed safe by the head instructor for each pupil and that pupils are briefed on the conditions. All pupils will be asked to remain closer to shoreline, being able to keep feet on the sea bed at all times and surf inside the area of the breaking waves. Pupils should be instructed to return back to shore after each wave and remain inside the designated marked surfing area given by the instructor.

No SUP LESSONS will be given in these conditions.

3.1.6 A FULL HIGH TIDE; WITH SWELL FOR SURF LESSONS or FLAT FOR SUP LESSONS.

High tide SURF LESSONS approximately 2 and half hours either side of the high tide time will generally be avoided unless safe conditions are deemed appropriate (eg. small swell; up to 3ft and on a neap high tide). The Glide Surf School instructor will recall pupils and finish lesson if the tide pushes up too high so there is a heavy shore break on the pebbles and stones. No surf lessons would be run on high tide if the swell has exceeded 3ft and the water line is past the high tide pebbled bank.

SUP LESSONS can offered in flat conditions over the high tide. Special attention must be given to pupils and equipment due the pebbles when entering and exiting the water. All pupils must be offered wetsuit boots. The depth of the water close to the shore line will also increase more dramatically due to the gradient of the beach increasing. All pupils should be made aware of the depth change so they can adapt to the conditions.

3.1.7 VERY ROUGH AND HEAVY SEA SWELL 6ft+, WITH OR WITHOUT STRONG WINDS

The instructor must, at the indication of a red flag or in conditions the same as this when no red flag is raised due to no lifeguard duty is present, either cancel the lesson or remove the group from the sea, as the conditions may be unsafe.

No SUP LESSONS would be given in these conditions.

3.1.8 LIMITED VISIBILITY

Where, for any reason, the instructor's visibility of the sea, their pupils and the shoreline (when instructing from the sea) for SURF or SUP LESSONS is restricted and proper observations cannot be carried out, the pupils will be recalled from the sea and kept out of the water until cleared. This sort of occurrence could occur when heavy sea fog rolls in and it becomes difficult or impossible to observe the pupils that are in the water. If conditions cease to clear the lesson will be cancelled.

3.2 NOTE

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO ANTICIPATE EVERY ASPECT OF THE SEA AND WIND CONDITIONS, THEREFORE THE GLIDE SURF SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR MUST, BY USING THEIR EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE SEA, EXERCISE DISCRETION IN RESPECT OF THE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO TAKE WHERE THE PUPILS SAFETY IS CONCERNED. WHERE DOUBT EXISTS IN ANY GIVEN SITUATION, THEN THE GLIDE SURF SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR MUST ERR ON THE SIDE OF SAFETY.

3.2.1 THE SEA AT HIGH TIDE

Special attention is required when the incoming tide reaches the vicinity of the rocks/ large pebbles and groynes at the full high tide mark on the beach.

Pupils in SURF LESSONS are more at risk in this type of situation and the danger of injury as the waves hit the rocks/pebbles and groynes must not be underestimated. The Glide Surf School Instructor must therefore exercise due diligence when the incoming tide is approaching the rocks and groynes and move any pupils to a safer position in the sea or end the SURF LESSON.

Pupils in SUP LESSONS would need to be instructed on the change in depth of water. Extra care of themselves and the equipment should be taken when entering and exiting the sea. More shelter on a high tide is offered from offshore wind conditions making this safer for paddling. However, Long shore drift can increase slightly on an incoming high tide if there are cross-shore wind conditions. On a dropping high tide the long-shore drift will decrease. Pupils should be instructed on this so as they can adapt their paddling and position in the sea. The yellow marker buoy paddling area will always be positioned well away from any submerged groynes.

3.2.2 THE SEA AT LOW TIDE

Persons in the sea at low tide are at a greater risk with any offshore wind conditions as there is less shelter from the buildings, land and cliffs. So more regular observations of the pupils are necessary during that period.

As looking out to sea a low tide reef towards the right hand side of the fishing slope can be a hazard when exposed. This area is to be avoided during any SURF LESSONS unless completely covered with water and beyond the area of the breaking white water waves. This area can be used during SUP LESSONS, however the depth of water must always exceed 4ft in depth.

According to the situations that prevail at low tide and for 1-2 hours before and after flint rock areas on occasions can become exposed. The Glide Surf School instructor must be continually monitoring the area used for SURF and SUP LESSONS so as to try and avoid these. On a dropping tide shallow water patrols should be taken to detect these and if any concern the lessons working area moved. Visual and verbal warning signs can also be given to the group necessary.

3.2.3 THE USE OF FISHING BOATS AND OTHER SEA VESSELS LAUNCHED AT THE PUBLIC SLIPWAY

Towards the far end of the east beach there is a public slipway. This is used by the fisherman as part of their livelihood and by the public for entrance/exit to the sea for their sea vessels.

During the use of the use of the slipway The Glide Surf School will keep all pupils well away from any sea vessels and the slip way. On a higher tide if water space is at a minimum pupils will be kept out of the water until the sea vessel has completed entering/exiting the sea and out of the way.

Fishing vessels will also be landed at varied times on the beach during mid and low tides. During this process if in close proximity all pupils in either SURF or SUP LESSONS will be asked to leave the sea and wait in a designated safe area on the beach until the fishing vessel is safely landed.

3.2.4 THE USE OF PERSONAL WATER CRAFT

Personal Water Craft are increasingly being used on the sea by individuals, thereby causing additional hazards to SURF and SUP LESSON pupils both in the sea and on the shoreline.

The Home Office definition for Personal Water Craft is as follows:

" Personal Water Craft means any vessel referred to as a jet ski, wet bike, water scooter, fun craft or other similar description which vessel is designed to carry a person or persons standing, kneeling, sitting or prone upon the vessel and which vessel is propelled by a jet engine or other means of propulsion, the master of which vehicle steers it with or without a rudder at the stern by

means of a handlebar operated linkage system and/or by altering the relationship between the body weight of the person or persons carried on the vessel and the vessel itself."

As far as SURF and SUP LESSONS and beach safety are concerned, consideration needs to be given to all types of Craft. This means that in terms of a safe beach/sea LESSON management, the designated area for use followed and adequate space needs to be given to the following:

Power Boats
Water Skiers
Sailing Dinghies
Wind / Kite Surfers
Surfboards / Stand Up Paddle Boards
Canoeists / Kayaks

3.2.4.1 SURFBOARDS AND STAND UP PADDLE BOARDS

Most of the public persons using their surfboards / SUP's enjoy their sport most of the year round and are therefore more experienced in the way they are handled. Minor injuries may occur to other persons in the sea but incidents can be averted by surfboard / SUP users staying within the black and white flagged zone or marked areas. Every effort will be made to keep lessons away from members of the public also using the black and white flagged zone or marked areas.

3.2.5 TRANSPORTING EQUIPMENT TO AND FROM THE BEACH

All SURF and SUP equipment will be transported to and from the beach by the pupils after clear carrying instruction has been given prior leaving the Glide Surf School changing/storage/meeting area. In the case of larger surfboards and/or smaller pupils, boards can be paired up to carry together helping manage the weight and size. When walking on the promenade clear instruction will be given informing clients to take care to avoid the walking public and any vehicles that are driving on the promenade.

3.3 SUSPICIOUS/HAZARDOUS OBJECTS AND SUBSTANCES WASHED ONTO OR EXPOSED ON THE BEACH

Move persons in the vicinity to a safe distance and try to prevent others from entering the location. Notify appropriate the RNLI and other services with a description and location of the object or substance. Continue with lesson once it is deemed safe.

4 EMERGENCY RESCUE

Procedures for dealing with emergencies are detailed in the Emergency Action Plan.

4.1 FIRST AID EQUIPMENT AND TREATMENT

In the case of a minor injury, a first aid box is available at all times in The Glide Surf School premises. Minor incidents can be dealt with by the instructor, however, a qualified RNLi lifeguard, if present will be able to help assist as well in dealing with more serious incidents.

In the absence of a lifeguard patrol on Cromer beach, normal 999 procedures would be followed.

The First Aid Kit must be checked on a regular basis, this consists of:

4.2 RECORD KEEPING OF FIRST AID INCIDENTS

Full details must be recorded on the appropriate form of any incident which occurs, with particular reference to names and contact details of the persons concerned. This is kept inside at the Glide Surf School shop premises at all times.

5 EQUIPMENT

All SURF and SUP equipment will be of a high standard and quality and suitable for the activity and the pupils size, weight and ability. This will be checked regularly and replaced if deemed unsafe to use.

Surfboards must be of the soft variety unless the client is competent and then hard boards may be issued.

Rescue equipment i.e. a rescue board or tube, must be available to the instructor on the beach during SURF LESSONS at all times. During SUP LESSONS the instructor will be able to use their own board for any safety of rescue.

5.1 BUOYANCY AIDS FOR SUP

These items and their use are under review during April and May lesson operation in 2018 by the head instructor at Glide Surf School as well as consulting the WSA (water skills academy) on March 10-12th during a 'SUP Safety & Rescue' and 'Foundation SUP' course. Once a decision has been made if it is deemed necessary for use during SUP LESSONS then new buoyancy aids will be purchased accordingly.

5.2 STATIONARY EQUIPMENT ON THE PROMENADE

All equipment belonging to the surf school and shop will only be put out and put away by the Glide Surf School employees. All equipment will be placed in safe area out of the way of the public who are walking and driving on the promenade as well. This includes the following items (a-frame signs, flags, deckchairs, free seating area for clients, wetsuits rails, shoe racks, items for sale buckets)

6 COMPLETION OF SESSION

All pupils will be provided with sheltered changing facilities and a hot shower if necessary. Any additional individual feedback from the session can be available to the pupils if required.

6.1 THE END OF DAY

All SURF, SUP boards and wetsuits must be cleaned/disinfected and checked for damage, and prepared for the next day. The Glide Surf School area will be cleaned thoroughly and any preparations for the following day's activities will be carried out before leaving. All areas (shop: front/back doors, trailer, changing rooms, shed, valuables container) to be checked, securely closed and locked before leaving.

7. EQUIPMENT HIRE

All persons hiring SURF or SUP equipment must leave personal contact details and credit card/driving licence as a deposit at the point of hire. In the case of non-return of equipment at the end of a session, staff should attempt to contact hirer to ascertain whereabouts of equipment and client.

All persons hiring SURF or SUP equipment must sign the Glide surf School equipment hire waiver form releasing the surf school from any liability. Any users under the age of 18 years old must obtain parental/guardian permission who also then sign the Glide surf School hire waiver form.

The Glide Surf School instructor is to check with hire clients whether they have experience using equipment and if so at what level so appropriate equipment can be issued. If not, lessons would be recommended as well as the provision of RNLi safety leaflet on water use. A brief explanation will also be offered of location of lifeguards, safe SURF (black and white flags) and SUP areas, advise not to surf near rocks/pebbles and groynes, current and expected sea and wind conditions.

No surfboard or SUP board equipment is to be hired during any swell size over 1ft when the high water line is passed the high tide pebble bank unless the hirer is competent of use in such conditions. A professional judgement will be made by the head instructor or staff in charge on the day as to whether hire would be issued. Bodyboards and wetsuits may be hired during this time.

No equipment is to be hired during when red flag is displayed by the lifeguards or also in such conditions when lifeguards are not on duty.