



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE HELFORD RIVER SAILING CLUB
HELD AT THE CLUBHOUSE
at 19.30hrs on Friday 19th January 2018**

The meeting was attended by 75 Members. The Commodore, Mr. Mark Buckley, was in the chair.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr. E. Jones, Mr. E. James, Mrs. J. Lake, Mrs. M. McPherson, Mr. I. Dodwell, Mr. & Mrs. P. Scannell, Mr. M. Wills, Mr. & Mrs. A. Miller, Mr. & Mrs. D. Ashworth, Mr. & Mrs. M. Gregory, Mr. K. Goy, Mrs. S. Hewett, Mr. & Mrs. R. Claxton, Mr. & Mrs. J. Skewes, Mr. P. Harman.

2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 20th January 2017 were circulated to Members attending. There being no matters arising, it was proposed by Nick Glossop and seconded by David Whitmarsh that the same be adopted as a true and accurate record. Approved unanimously.

3. Commodore's Report

2017 started well with the eventual appointment of our new stewards who did a good job this year by increasing the membership as a result of their great food menu, good beers and wines and providing a welcoming atmosphere in the Club once again. The previous year had been a difficult time with the stewards deciding that HRSC was not for them. The Committee then took the mantle and ran the Club in the best manner it could and did a sterling job in the circumstances. They did this voluntarily at a difficult time but the Club had a kitchen and bar that was open all year. The revised changing rooms are now finished and fully operational with two separate cubicles, one for showering and one for changing privately where clothes and valuables are safe. A decision had to be made to cure the problem with heating the showers - either a £50,000 spend on a new electricity supply or by utilizing the club boiler. The ladies' showers are heated by the boiler with a large hot water tank now and with immersion heaters to cope with busy periods. The men's showers are heated electrically and now both are working well. This now completes this part of the club. We have also put two cold water showers at the bottom of the slipway. This will enable junior and adult members and visitors to remove excess sand and mud before entering the clubhouse. There is now a children's play area again in the clubhouse with toys and games provided very kindly by Members and the Club. We have bought two new TV sets this year, one for the sun lounge to replace the broken one and one for the multi-functional end room. Sailing and other sporting events can now be viewed by Members. Thank you to Peter Lethfead-Currie for installing these.

The Club ran some very well-organised Open Days last summer so that potential new members could come and see what the Club has to offer in terms of sailing and social facilities. I would like

to thank all Members who helped to run these events which did in fact increase the Club membership. I think these events need to be better advertised in future.

L'Aber Wrac'h Champagne Party in June was, as usual, a great success with the 60

bottles disappearing in the hour! Not bad for £5.00 for absorbing this French liquid! The evening progressed with great food and drink and dancing to the music of the versatile Bob Seymour. We always hope that drinking will slow the French sailors down for the following day's race, but does it work? Special offers in supermarkets allow the club to purchase the Champagne at very favourable rates which makes this an annual event not to be missed.

The 2017 L'Aber Wrac'h Race was postponed to the Saturday morning due to bad weather conditions and safety concerns. However all competitors arrived safely at their destination on the French coast and the race was again won by a French yacht. The first HRSC yacht to cross the finishing line was Xenia skippered by Wally Royal, then in his 90th year!

We have increased our membership by 76 to a current total membership of 894. This is in part due to the atmosphere created by our stewards and also by the opportunity of taking out a Wayfarer or Drascombe Lugger for a sail, subject to the Club rules.

John Lake has kindly sold his Drascombe Lugger to the Club on very favourable terms. David Blanning also offered his boat to the Club free of charge and Chris Newman and I offered the Club the use of our Soling keelboat.

We have a new Social Secretary in Angie Watson who now sits on the Committee and with her Social Committee will be planning many exciting events for Members to enjoy. Please check your emails for details. We look forward to Angie being elected as Vice Commodore for 2018.

This summer there was a visit for Club Members to HMS Severn in Falmouth, organized by Chris Newman. The Club then returned the invitation for members of the crew and officers of HMS Severn to enjoy our hospitality. This proved very popular for all.

Tuesday night adult sailing is the fastest expanding activity in the Club at present. It is run by a group of very enthusiastic Members, both new and old. New potential members are given a couple of trial sessions and then have to join as Members to carry on this activity. The freedom of using the Wayfarers has led to one of them not only racing with the dinghy fleet but also sailing on Saturday afternoons which is also well attended. Many thanks to Angie Watson and her team for organising this activity and also thanks to Paul Randall for his hard work.

Wednesday night keelboat and 707 racing numbers have increased slightly with the races very competitive.

Thursday night dinghy racing has gone very well again this year and has been very well run.

Friday night is for the children's junior sail training. This year it was over-subscribed again and run well. It is a lovely sight to watch them all go out in small dinghies on the river. Thanks again to all Instructors, Members and parents who make this evening work so well.

There have been two new positions created on the Committee for 2018. Firstly Captain Adult Sailing to accommodate the ever increasing numbers of Tuesday night sailors. The second new position is for a Captain Water Activities to reflect the increase in paddle boarding, canoeing and kayaking on the river. Our Club has to change with the times and take on these new challenges to survive long term and to keep and increase our membership. Hopefully these sports will continue to increase so we can hold a Watersports Regatta in future. However this will not be to the detriment of our keelboat and dinghy sailors.

While I have not been able to devote the time I would have liked over the summer period due to

illness, I would like to thank all the Committee for taking over and running the Club in my absence. Special thanks go to Clive Dudley for his continued hands-on approach despite his major health problems this year.

Due to the present stewards' resignation we have new stewards starting early in 2018 and we wish them all success in their new venture.

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The 2017 stewards were subsidised by the Club in an effort to attract and keep good stewards, this was to counteract the issues that had arisen in the previous year which it has done.

Thank you to all the Members, Trustees and Committee for all the excellent support given to me over the past three years and your new Commodore will find he has a very good Committee to work with.

This year I would like to award the Robin Preston Memorial Trophy to someone who has worked hard on Tuesday night adult sailing. In addition to that she also very successfully re-introduced Saturday sailing. The trophy goes to Angie Watson.

Lastly I wish you all a great summer either on land or sea, hopefully with some lovely weather.

Mark Buckley
Commodore

4. Honorary Treasurer's Report and Approval of Accounts

Summary

The Club entered this financial year in a turbulent operating position without stewards for six months through the summer and winter and with the Vice Commodore struggling to provide a bar and restaurant service. This not only came at a personal cost of time, effort and frustration but also a financial cost.

Running without stewards has been a significant contribution to the large deficit that the Club has had and comes from high food, staffing and related costs such as wasted food. This also has created a lot of knock on effects not least the cleaning and waste disposal which had to be outsourced and so this line in the accounts is significantly higher than normal.

Early in 2017 a proposal to contract out the running of the bar and restaurant to August Rock concluded that this was a necessary expense to ensure that the Club functioned through the next season. The decision would necessitate reducing our reserve funds but it was decided that we could not afford to have a second season with poor reviews about the bar and restaurant service. It was determined as necessary to subsidise the contractor to an agreed level in order to make the business profitable. This turned out to be a good decision in that August Rock provided an excellent bar and restaurant facility which in turn provided the Club with an outstanding season of well supported activities and we benefitted with a surge in membership. We were unable to continue with this contract for two reasons. Firstly, August Rock tendered their resignation to the Committee for operational reasons and secondly, on reviewing with August Rock the profitability of their operation, it was made clear by them that the level of subsidy could not be reduced if they were to continue. The Committee therefore accepted their resignation as we could not afford to continue subsidising at the rate we were doing so and they could not operate at a profit without this subsidy. There were other factors, mostly operational.

A new contract has been signed with Alex and Patrizia Nutt and we are confident that the Club can turn a small profit under the terms negotiated. A level of subsidy is still required but is smaller than

that previously negotiated and it should be noted that this subsidy equates to a higher percentage of the bar gross profits and is purely a start-up subsidy rather than a continuing one.

Summary

Cleaning costs have surged this year and these will be brought under control during this financial period.

Our foreshore rent has almost doubled from £3350 pa. to £6000pa and is backdated to 25th March 2015. This means we have to find in the region of £14,000 this year as foreshore rent.

Administration costs will remain approximately the same as Penny has reduced her hours by two days and we have increased Helen's hours by one day. This will give us an overall saving of one day per week and we hope that sharing the admin and bookkeeping load will work well.

Sailing Club Manager will be phased in this year and with the new Data Protection laws coming into force in April, we plan to have this in place by then. This is of course an additional expense that we hope will take us into the future with regard to our administration system.

Development Plan

We have now rectified the toilet and shower area deficiencies. A lot of this cost both could not be capitalised as it was repairs and modifications to the installation. We were not able to recover the VAT as was previously done on the initial installation.

Taxation

VAT is an area that is hard to predict accurately as the level of unrecoverable VAT varies with turnover. We get a partial exemption and the calculation is not very straightforward. Our VAT liability this year was high due to unrecoverable elements in the remodelling of the toilets and shower areas.

Having carried out the annual calculation for VAT partial exemption purposes, there is an amount to be reclaimed from HMRC. This movement each year between the quarters and the year end will occur and the final position can only be established when the accounts are finalised and the turnover for the year is known as it is the turnover which dictates recoverability of residual VAT (on overheads). This amounts to £853.05.

We also have an overpayment of £7,136.65 which has to be reclaimed but this is offset by an underpayment from previous years of almost £14,000.

We are now paying Corporation Tax on our mooring and pontoon rentals. These do not fall under the mutual trading laws which do not apply to rents for land and buildings. We do not believe that we should be paying Corporation Tax as we are a non-profit organisation so we are investigating this liability with the RYA legal support team.

Revenues

To cope with these increases in costs, we have had to raise our subscriptions and rentals by 12.5% in an effort to remain solvent and hopefully to run a small surplus by the end of this financial year. If the new contract works out for our stewards for a few years, we will hopefully be able to bring the Club back into a situation where our reserves can see us through a run such as the one we have just had.

We have looked closely over the last two years at how to increase our revenues by finding legal ways in which we can attract members of the public without encroaching on our own Members' territory. This has proven to be virtually impossible under the rules of running a Private Members Club with a Private Premises licence to sell alcoholic beverages. The only option that we have is to periodically apply for a temporary event licence in which we can invite members of the public

during the event. There are administrative burdens associated with taxation attached to this and it will have to be carefully thought through although at this stage it looks a promising way of increasing Club revenues during quiet times.

The Committee is working on the basis that we must attract more contemporary members and we are looking closely at creating attractive facilities for popular activities such as kayaking, paddle boarding and the like.

John Lake
Honorary Treasurer

Copies of the accounts to the end of year 30th September 2017 were circulated with the minutes and had been displayed on the Club noticeboard in accordance with Rule 31. It was proposed by Clive Dudley and seconded by Rob Matthews that the accounts be adopted. Approved on a show of hands.

5. Election of Club Accountants

It was proposed by Peter Lethfead-Currie and seconded by David Whitmarsh that Messrs. Kitchen and Brown, Chartered Accountants, be retained as the Club accountants for the coming year. Approved on a show of hands.

6. Proposal for two new Committee Posts

It was proposed by Clive Dudley and seconded by Carol Lawrence that Paul Randall be elected as Captain Adult Sailing and Daniella Wilson as Captain Water Activities. This was passed unanimously.

7. Election of Officers

POSITION	Candidate	Proposed by	Seconded by
Commodore	John Bolitho	M. Buckley	D. Blanning
Vice Commodore	Angie Watson	C. Dudley	P. Lethfead-Currie
R C Sailing	Chris Hosken	P. L-Currie	C. Dudley
R C Amenities	J.C. Skewes	J. Bolitho	C. Hosken
Hon Secretary	P. Lethfead-Currie	H. Ibotson	M. Buckley
Hon Treasurer	John Lake	H. Ibotson	C. Dudley
Captain Yachts	Dom Brandreth	C. Hosken	P. L-Currie

Captain Dinghies	Stephen Brooks	3rd Year	
Captain Juniors	Nick Glossop	3rd Year	
Capt Safety Boats	Simon Drakeley	C. Dudley	D. Blanning
Captain Moorings	David Blanning	C. Hosken	P. Randall
Captains Social	Suzanne Smith Di Best	H. Ibotson	J. Bolitho
Captain Amenities	Robert Matthews	P. L-Currie	J. Bolitho
Co – Opted			
POFSA Representatives	Rear Commodore Sailing Captain Yachts and Commodore		

8. Any Other Business

There was a short question and answer session regarding the Club’s financial situation.

Mark Buckley thanked everyone for their attendance and handed over to the new Commodore John Bolitho who closed the meeting at 20.55 hrs.

..... Commodore

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