

**Whitstable Yacht Club - Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 26th March 2023 at 4.30pm at the Club**

Present: Andrew Jackson (Commodore), Mike Oliver (Rear Commodore House) Maureen Bush, Terry Davis and Philippa Bloice.

The meeting was quorate with 31 voting members.

**1 Introduction by the Commodore**

The Commodore welcomed members to the meeting and explained that, as time was limited, it would be assumed everyone had read the reports accompanying the agenda.

2 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Stephen Rigden, Richard Bradburn, Detlef Hofmann, Margaret Lewis, Jack Kelly, Ian & Helen Wild, Richard Maltby, John Pollitt, Catherine Pierce, Andrea Oliver, Tom Oliver, Stephen & Mei Baker, Steve & Kellie Gray & Richard Ledger.

**3** **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 19th March 2022**

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

**4** **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5** **Correspondence**

There was no correspondence not dealt with before the meeting.

**6** **Commodore’s Report**

The Commodores report had been circulated with the agenda. All reports gave a very positive picture of the club. The members survey last year showed satisfaction rates high. With the pandemic completely behind us, the club was able to deliver a full programme of undisrupted activity over the 2022 season. Membership numbers were healthy with families joining as social members so their children could take part in the thriving Cadet programme.

Additional income came from a sponsorship deal with a holiday cottage letting company, which has been renewed for the 2023 season. Last year we were nominated for club of the year but were not ready, we will try and get nominated this year.  We have a strong safety boat team, a group of really committed people together with Sam, Jo and Ruth are a reliable support for our racing.

The tireless input from Mike Oliver means our buildings are in better shape than they have been for some time. Vote of thanks to Mike.

The club’s social programme continues to flourish – coffee club, supper club, book club, games night, golf society, art club, pool league, and craft nights.

A strong music scene with 28 musicians regularly taking part, contributed to a substantial new PA system for the club.

A great team of people work behind the scenes to keep the club running well, many of them unpaid volunteers this included Maureen. There was an enthusiastic vote of thanks to Maureen from the floor.

The club requires a new Treasurer and more volunteers, please step forward if you can contribute.

**7** **Rear Commodore’s Sailing Report**

The Sailing Report had been circulated with the agenda**.**

118 races were scheduled in the 2022 programme; turnouts have been strong with many of our cadets competing in our mainstream racing. The club hosted open regional and European Championships. The RYA discover sailing event was very successful in bringing in new members. We are hugely grateful to our sponsors holidaycottages.co.uk who support a range of cadet and racing activities. The enthusiastic training team had another great year led by Jo Wyles and Ruth Oliver – a big thanks to you all.

**8** **Rear Commodore’s House Report**

A House Report had been circulated with the agenda. It detailed the considerable number of projects to the club house, men’s changing area, ladies changing area, Rigden shed and rental properties that had been completed in the previous year.

**9 Report and Presentation of Accounts for year ended 30 September 2022**

A Members’ report and presentation of Accounts had been circulated with the agenda.

Membership numbers were healthy with total number of members increasing from 468 in September 2021 to 578 in September 2022. A surplus from our training activities increased significantly. The legal expenses associated with the ongoing renewal process for the beach lease represented a significant outlay, however it is a necessary expenditure, and that process continues. The club continues to maintain a strong property portfolio, with rental income making a significant contribution to the club’s turnover.

The Financial Report and Accounts were unanimously approved.

**10 Rule changes**

The following three Rule changes were proposed by John Cooper and seconded by David Figgis.They were unanimously approved by all present.

Resolution 1 - all references to ‘his’ be changed where appropriate to ‘their’

Resolution 2 - the proposed changes to rules 5 ,6,9 and 12 be approved.

Resolution 3 - that the proposed changes to rules 16,17 and 21 be approved by the members.

**Resolution 2**

**Section 2 – Official Appointments**

5. Officers. The officers of the club shall be Sailing members over 18 years of age and shall consist of a Commodore, a Vice-Commodore, Rear Commodore House (House), Rear Commodore (Sailing) (being the Flag Officers) and an Honorary Treasurer. Where a vacancy for an officer cannot be filled by a voting member, the post may be filled by a social member who shall have one vote. Officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in each year and shall hold office for one year, retiring at the termination of the Annual General Meeting in each year. All officers of the club shall be eligible for re-election.

6. No candidate may be proposed as an officer unless he has been co-opted by a majority vote of the General Committee or shall have served as a member for one year on the General Committee or have been duly elected at the preceding Annual General Meeting to serve on the general committee for the ensuing year.

9. Employees. The General Committee shall appoint or authorise other employees to appoint employees as it deems necessary.

i) A Club Manager reporting to the General Committee may be employed to assist the General Committee

ii) A Sailing Secretary reporting to the Rear Commodore Sailing may be employed to assist the Sailing Committee

iii) A Membership Secretary reporting to the Club Manager may be employed to maintain and manage the club’s membership records.

**Section 3 – Duties and responsibilities**

12. The Rear Commodore (House) shall have delegated to him the maintenance and management of all club properties.

**Resolution 3**

**Section 4 - Membership Categories of Membership and Votes**

16. Eligibility as a candidate for membership of the club is open without discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, sex, age or disability except as a necessary consequence of the requirements of sailing to any person, whether the owner of a yacht, boat, sailboard, kayak, paddleboard or not. However, limitation of membership according to available facilities is allowed on a non-discriminatory basis. There shall be two categories of membership:

1. Sailing membership. All sailing members over the age of 18 years are entitled to vote at all meetings of the club.

Sailing subcategory:

1. Sailing Life members is proposed by the General Committee and appointed by the members at an Annual General Meeting. Maximum 10 members.
2. Social membership. Social members have no voting rights.

Social Subcategories

1. Social Block membership shall be available to educational, sporting or charitable organisations having a common interest with the club in sailing. A list of such members covered by a block membership shall be made available to the club at the beginning of the month in which fees are due each year. Any change in membership shall be notified immediately to the office. Block membership shall be awarded by the general committee on terms fixed by the general committee at its absolute discretion.
2. Social Honorary membership is proposed by GC and appointed by the members at an Annual General Meeting. Maximum 10 members.

The General Committee has the authority to create sub categories within those memberships.

Changes to voting rights may only be authorised by a majority vote at an Annual General Meeting of the members.

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**Membership Fees**

21. The fees for each category, subcategory of membership and storage for the subscription year 1st October to 30th September shall become operative on the first day of October. The fees, which shall be set by the General Committee no later than 1st August each year and displayed in the club house and on the club website, shall be capped at 5% above the Consumer Price index for the year ending July 31st.

**11** **Appointment of Independent Advisers**

A vote to appoint MHA MacIntyre Hudson as Independent Advisers for 2023-24

Proposed by John Cooper, seconded by David Figgis and was unanimously approved by those present.

**12** **Election of Officers and General Committee** **for 2023-24**

Proposed by John Cooper, seconded by David Figgis unanimously approved by all present.

The following were elected: -

  Commodore Andrew Jackson

Vice Commodore Vacant

Rear Commodore – Sailing Steve Gray

Rear Commodore – House Mike Oliver

Hon Treasurer Vacant

General Committee Maureen Bush, Terry Davis, David Figgis, Robert Govier,

Fef Griffin, Richard Ledger, Jo Wyles, Philippa Bloice.

**13** **Election of Honorary Members**

The following were elected: The Lord Mayor of Canterbury and Whitstable Harbour Foreshore services manager. Unanimously approved by all present.

**15** **Any Other Business**

Maureen reminded anyone paying club membership fees in split payments the 2nd Instalment was due.

Bob Bell asked for an Update on Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company Beach Lease*.*

Terry Davis replied that he had negotiated with the WOFC for the previous 25 years and

Is working with David Figgis as the negotiating team.

WYC and WOFC agreed after large amounts of monies spent that they were very close to securing a deal with negotiations continuing.

As we stand the day-to-day operations of the club carry on, we continue to pay the beach

lease, holding over on the old lease.

The Commodore thanked Terry and David for finding a way forward.

Bob Bell asked for an update on the Oyster Racks.

Paul McNally reported that Canterbury City Council (CCC) issued an Enforcement Notice for the removal of the trestles within its jurisdiction (those above the mean low water mark) in 2018. However, the Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company (WOFC), appealed the enforcement notice and won, following a Public Inquiry in 2021. As a result of the safety concerns raised at the Inquiry, the Planning Inspector ordered a Beach Safety Assessment (BSA) to be carried out and approved by CCC as a condition of the planning approval. The timeline for this was one year from the date of the planning decision.

(25-10-21). The condition stated that if the BSA was not approved within a year then the trestles within CCC’s jurisdiction would have to be dismantled and removed.   
 Last October the WOFC submitted their BSA to CCC to discharge the planning condition. However, the BSA submitted by the WOFC was refused nearly unanimously by the CCC

Planning Committee (25-10-22) and the Decision Notice stated that "The Beach Safety

Assessments submitted by the applicant are neither a sufficiently reasoned nor robust appraisal of the level of risk associated with the installation of the trestles and how they impact on users of the beach". This was in line with evidence submitted to CCC by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, the Herne Bay & Whitstable Water Safety Committee, the RYA and a large number of local stakeholders including sea swimming groups, kayakers and Whitstable Yacht Club.  
 The WOFC subsequently appealed against the CCC decision to refuse the BSA, the oyster trestles are still in place and the matter is now with the Planning Inspectorate who are formulating a timeline for the Appeal. WOFC’s grounds for the appeal have not yet been

submitted so are still unknown.

The meeting closed at 5.15pm. Chairman – Commodore – Andrew Jackson  A picture containing whip

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