



Minutes of the General Committee held on Monday 13th April 2026 7pm at WYC

Present: David Figgis DF (Chair), Maureen Bush MB, Philippa Bloice PB, Jo Wyles JW, Matthew Crockatt MC, Anthony Middleton AM, Steve Gray SG, Andrew Provan AP, Mike Oliver MO, Fef Griffin FG.

Zoom: Terry Davis TD.

- 1 Welcome in the new Committee-** Welcome to all including our new members Matthew Crockett - Bar Manager and Anthony Middleton - Club manager. A huge thankyou to Dicky Ledger for his time on the GC as he steps down.
- 2 Apologies for absence** - None.
- 3 Minutes of previous meeting** - Monday 9TH March 2026 approved unanimously.
- 4 Correspondence** - None
- 5 Minutes of AGM** - Agreed to finalise wording of AGM minutes. **ACTION PB**
- 6 Matters arising from previous meeting**
 - a. WYC 125-year Anniversary event in August 2027
AP proposed a meeting next week to finalise sponsor targets, packages and outreach letters. Considering local supporters. Timing and sensitivity to the local planning application were noted. **ACTION SG/AP**
- 7 Office report:** AM
 - Handover from Sally is complete, from Maureen also complete apart from accounts. Will work on handover of these in coming months so I can take over by end of financial year as agreed
 - Worked with Simon Reynolds and Jon Bloice to hopefully solve water ingress problem in Stroud
 - With SG on beginnings of membership portal for website. We should move accounting from Sage 50 to Xero; a modern operating system which would offer integration with online portal, total cloud-based backup, easier access for GC members to view financial position. Aim for beginning of next financial year.

- With AP on events, notably Sportsman dinner on 1 May. Using some of income to gradually improve kitchen.
- Also helping organise catering for Topper & Merlin events
- Worked on return from club property. Offices currently yielding 55% or less than market price. Residential property also under market value, probably by about 20-30%. Due to irregular rent reviews. Potentially £15,000+ per year of lost turnover. Suggest club policy of always increasing rents by at least inflation but need higher rises in short term to achieve realistic return. Discussed with MO.
- Also new Renters Act puts the club in a lot of new liability with regard to residential property. This needs addressing urgently.
- In long run feel need for club Treasurer to provide oversight and help and ensure that I get value for money both on investment property returns and spending.
- Regular newsletter sent out
- Consulted with SG about complaints procedure.
- Consulted with RYA Legal over whether instructors could be self-employed rather than PAYE. They can and don't need to declare under £1000. Think it's worth discussing.

Office matters

Discussion focused on rental property, tenancy risks and inspection plans.

The Renters Rights Act taking effect from 1st May will significantly reduce landlord control and affects all tenancies not just new ones. Property condition concerns on No 1 Sea Wall including damp/ ventilation issues and the limited cash for remedial works. Letting agent with DF/ AM to urgently inspect the property with tenant before end of April to create a recorded engagement and agree a way forward. A small GC group has authority to act if rapid action becomes necessary before the new Act comes into force.

ACTION DF/AM

FG requested the landlord insurance level be checked.

ACTION AM

Discussed advantages of using a letting agent - agreed to continue.

Finance reserve funds/budget report - Received

Financial reviews covered square meter rates of clubs office spaces and adding automatic annual increases so rents were kept up to date.

It was discussed whether instructors should be treated as self- employed, the consensus favoured keeping the current payroll arrangements.

AP queried Bar losses in first half of the year leading to mitigation ideas including events programming, targeted member marketing and supplier negotiations.

Marketing required to make members aware they can hold an event at the club.

ACTION SG/AM

New Members report: AM

Thank you to FG for welcoming our new members.

4 x Water User Individual, 1 x Water User Family, 1 x Young Person, 1 x Social Individual.

Membership report: AM

Membership Numbers are roughly level with last with credit given to following up outstanding dues.

8 Sailing Report: SG

WYC racing:

Early series – finished April 12th

Easter series – completed 3 from 4 planned races – great turnout of 34 boats on Monday. Congrats to Joe Barton who won the All-in-Handicap and Harry Newton who won the Lasers for the 2nd year running!

WYC racing: upcoming dates:

Topper training and SE traveller – April 18/19th

Spring series starts – April 25th

Town regatta – May 2-4th

Slotty: Engines serviced and steering fettled, mooring ropes to be replaced April 11th due to return to mooring April 15th.

Boat Park review: 14 abandoned boats identified for disposal were moved during working party.

9 House Report: MO verbal

Concreting of Stroud shed base in progress - thanks to Jon Bloice Anthony and Simon Reynolds.

PAT Testing completed; Gas pipe & valve replaced.

10 Bar Report: MC

- Introduced a new local ale as the “house” ale. This is selling well and we seem to have found one that is acceptable to most people! This is going to be rebranded for the club as Windward Mark. The pump clip is being designed for us by the brewery, Canterbury Ales.
- Some cellar work is pending to try and extend the length of time a cask of ale lasts. This should help reduce wastage and allow a wider selection (2 ales) when there are events etc.

- New supplier account set up with local business Page & Sons of Ramsgate. Good range of wines and a supplier of Gadds (including in polybags)
- First order is about to go in where we aim to stock slightly more premium wines, including Chapel Down Bacchus, by the bottle.
- Meeting with Shepherd Neame - idea to stock local stout Iron Wharf and Spitfire Lager. Supporting local business and looking ahead to possible sponsorship opportunities.
- Staff costs are 18% higher in Q1 2026 than Q1 2025. This is because of living wage increases and some extra recent staff training.
- This has led to a reduction in net contribution from £5089 to £2414 in Q1 YOY.

11 Social report: AP

Social events in March included Music Club gig and Thames Barges talk, both of which went down well. For the talks next winter, probably need some ideas to entice people to stay around afterwards, or come early, and spend more money at the bar. Glass of fizz, capapes?

Anthony Middleton has done a great job in enticing Stephen Harris to talk about his time at The Sportsman complete with a tasting menu on Fri 1st May. All sold out, and we are all really looking forward to that.

Schedule for this summer's Acoustic Sessions on the deck continue to be filled in (see attached spreadsheet). These are for Saturdays, May to August, with 2 afternoon races, and no other events on (e.g. Opens etc). We are looking to get catering/food available to some of these events.

Further winter talks for Autumn 2026/Spring 2027 being prepared. "History of Whitstable Yacht Club" speaker tba and "Politics and Reporting" – Jo Philips.

12 Training Report: JW

Inspection for Westbere went well, will a few bits of paperwork required. Also met with Head of Sailing at Kings School regarding use of their boats, very happy for the arrangements to continue, but we are also going to be using their safety boats at Westbere in the future.

First cadet course of the year last week at Westbere. Very lucky with the warm weather, all went well and 2 new cadets from the course have joined the club.

First powerboat course running on 16/17th April for our Assistant instructors, all very keen, so running a 2-boat course with 6 in total.

Weekend of 18/19th April is the LSE Topper Open Training and Racing weekend. So far, we have 27 boats booked for the Saturday training, with 9 from Whitstable taking part and then racing on the Sunday.

Easter Saturday was our Cadet set up day, with a reasonable number of cadets and parents coming along to help turn the boats and rig where necessary.

First Cadet session of the year is Friday 24th April and first improver session is Sunday 26th April.

13 AOB

A prior complaint was discussed in a separate meeting and recorded in confidential minutes. Attendees consider the matter resolved.

AP wrote an email to the GC containing several major points for consideration. DF proposed forming a small committee to review this, to include memberships and subscriptions that must be finalised by June. To report back at next meeting.

ACTION DF

The meeting closed at 20.10pm

Date of next meeting Monday 11th May 2026