

DRAYCOTE WATER SAILING CLUB

Minutes of the 55th Annual General Meeting held at the Clubhouse On Wednesday 6th November 2024 at 7.30pm

PRESENT

Officers: William Whittaker (Chair), Richard Botting, Paul Huett, Jeremy Atkins, Simon Odling, Christine Silver, and David Rowe.

Together with 62 other club members (membership subscribers to the Club and not directors).

1. APOLOGIES

Jonathon Baker, Rodger Webb, Sandra Young, Norman Byrd, and Pete Badham.

William Whittaker read the notice convening the fifty-fifth Annual General Meeting of The Draycote Water Sailing Club Limited.

2. MINUTES OF THE 54th AGM

The minutes of the fifty-fourth Annual General Meeting held on 8th November 2023 were put to the meeting.

The minutes were proposed by Richard Botting, seconded by Rob Browett and accepted by the meeting with no one voting against.

3. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

A PowerPoint presentation was given by the committee to the members attending. The key elements of the reports of the committee are as follows:

William Whittaker, Commodore:

A quick overview of the last year which we will go in to more details through the evening:

- We won the RYA Club of the Year award which is a great testament to how well our Club is ran. We initially won the Young Person Club of the Year award – big thanks to Jon Hughes for heading up a superb Y&J group – and this progressed us to the main prize. One of the winner's perks is the loan of two RS Aeros and four RS Tera boats that our members are able to use at no fee. Thank you to all our staff and volunteers for their hard work in securing this award.
- A small committee continues to be an issue though it's good to see this starting to change.
- We're creating volunteering opportunities outside of the committee which will begin shortly.
- We have struggled in recent years to meet quorum at the AGM, thank you to all attending tonight, we appreciate your support.
- Draycote Academy continues to grow and has become a blueprint which other Clubs have copied. We have seen both Queen Mary SC and Grafham SC set up their own Academies this year clearly influenced by our exemplary offering which draws in sailors from across the country. We see the success of the Academy reflected in our young sailors travelling to national and international events.
- The changing membership profiles continue with decreasing families. Simon Odling has run various models to see how this may impact us which we continue to monitor and consider options for the future. We are trialling an alternative to Young Person C membership and the Academy is also a boost to numbers.
- Membership income is up, turnover surpasses previous levels, and we're seeing stabilisation in utility costs but also increases in wages and employment costs.
- STW impact on the Club continues to increase with various proposals.

Simon Odling, Rear Commodore Sail – Water Activity Update

2023-24 has been a year of sailing success with excellent performance at the Club and also from our sailors travelling to events.

Club racing has seen an increase in participation and we're seeing newer boats, such as the Waszp, gaining popularity.

Foiling sports are also on the rise with a variety of dinghies but especially in winging with many windsurfing members taking it up.

Y&J continues to develop young sailors thanks to Jon Hughes' great sessions.

Non-sailing parents are becoming the new norm.

We are seeing less double handed sailing which we do need to push to reverse. They're ideal for new sailors to crew with someone so do approach the novices and improvers to offer a try.

The novice race start has returned with good success and the improvers group continues to have a positive impact.

There is now a greater focus on Club racing with better notice of series, scoring and prizegiving.

David Rowe, Club Manager – Site & Commercial Update

Last year we didn't undertake any big projects as we monitored the finance levels.

We did have to do a £4k repair work to the wooden support column by the wet suit room as it had rotted and was causing that corner of the building to drop down. We may have to do similar work in the near future under the front steps by the canoe club store.

The trailer park had a big clear out after it had been left to grow as STW were trying to take over the land. Once that was resolved we cut it all back and removed multiple trailers. Any there now should be tagged so we know the owners.

In terms of staffing, we had a full team last year but Andy Felthouse and Ethan Cheshire have since moved on. We have a smaller team now which is fine for over winter but will need addressing next year. We have hired a bosun on a part time basis to cover some hours.

The wet bar staff continues to be our biggest issue and forces core staff to cover it instead of doing their main job. We continue to promote this role.

The RIB replacement scheme continues to ensure we have good equipment but we have noticed an increase in their costs which means more investment.

The dinghy and board replacement scheme also continues though we have made the decision to reduce the number of boats we have – currently around 50 which is too many to maintain – but to have better qualities of boats.

William Whittaker – Severn Trent Water, Landlord Update

We continue to have a good relationship with STW but staff changes there have meant it has gone quiet and we are concerned about being left out of consultations for various upcoming issues:

- ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) is being installed on site and we've now been told January 2025. We will communicate the details as we know them.
- A new lease has been granted to run the fisheries following the death of the previous owner and subsequent closure. The lease has been given to Anglian Water who run several other sites already and the return is planned for March 2025.
- The dam works will restart in 2025 as the contractor, Bentleys, will be returning to site to install the siphon electrical connections that is currently still run by generators. We still don't know details of the landscaping work that is needed on our land.
- Water levels - we have been told that STW need to increase Draycote's capacity and will be raising the water levels by 0.6m in 2026-2027. They have been doing scoping work so far and we await more news. As part of

our lease, STW are required to give us equivalent alternative land which we will negotiate with them.

Jeremy Atkins, President – Membership Engagement Feedback

Back in July we ran a consultation exercise with our members for the following reasons:

- We were struggling to communicate with members, often hearing that people didn't know what was happening at the Club and also how it was run.
- The Committee needs new people and we wanted to put out details of the tasks we already cover and the areas we need help with.
- We need members with specific skills, expertise and enthusiasm to help the committee.

Jeremy proceeded to go through the response to the Membership Engagement Project.

A full report has been provided online at: <https://draycotewater.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Member-Engagement-full-report.pdf>

A summarised report is also online at: <https://draycotewater.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Member-Engagement-summary-report.pdf>

Questions on the Committee reports –

Chris Brown – How many members do we have?

William gave a full breakdown from Simon Odling's membership data.

John Rohde – What type of membership do our Y&J members have?

William – Most are Young Person A members where the parent(s) are social members, some are part of Family memberships.

Chris Mulhall – What's stopping us from getting kitchen staff?

Simon & William – We believe it's the low wage we're offering but also the hours don't suit many people, though would be ideal for someone looking to top-up their main jobs wage.

John Tippett – STW were onsite recently measuring the water depth and clay levels for possibly dredging the lake to create capacity instead of just adding more water, is this going to happen?

William – We don't know any more than you. They are looking at possibilities but dredging comes with the risk of breaking the clay levels which would be catastrophic.

Robin Verso – Can the windsurf rigging area issue be added to the committee's list of investments as it's an ongoing issue?

William – It can be but the proposed water level increase may not suit any development of that area. It will be monitored and reviewed when we know more.

Adrian Jackson – Why are STW increasing the water capacity?

William – Due to increased local populations and it's cheaper for them to increase current sites than to create a new one.

John Rohde – Would the proposed water level increase cause issue with erosion especially with northerly winds? Last time STW increased the water they used boulders to reduce erosion which limited our launching areas.

William – It's an issue we will bear in mind during our consultations with STW.

John Rohde – What is the capacity of the flat in terms of fire risks?

William – We have had a fire risk assessment completed and an audit by Warwickshire Fire & Rescue which doesn't impose a limit. There is a fire exit up there with fire alarms and smoke detectors. We are investing in fire doors as well.

Sergio Pagliarini – Can the wet bar breakfast menu be expanded to all day breakfasts as they're cheaper and filling?

William – Once we have solved the staffing issue then the menu will be reviewed.

4. PROGRESS OF THE CLUB'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN

William Whittaker

1 – Increasing income:

We have revised the targets in response to increased membership income, and the commercial income had previously hit the target.

2 – Enhanced Club Management:

An ongoing challenge with a small committee though we welcome a new committee member this evening. Staff levels have changed slightly this year but are appropriate over the winter. Budgeting & forecasting continue to improve and is ongoing.

3 – Lease & Site Issues:

We have plans to develop our family & disabled changing facilities.

The boat park work will restart this year though we won't be doing any work below the lower road that we believe will be impacted by the proposed increase in water levels.

The flat development has gone well and is being used by Academy training, reducing the usage of the bar area.

The kitchen redevelopment is going to be looked at in conjunction with the energy & boiler plans.

A member, Matt Blackmur, has started working with the committee to review our energy usage and make plans for the future.

5. PRESENTATION OF ACCOUNTS

Paul Huett, Treasurer,

Income/Expenditure

We have returned to a year of surplus at £20k and our turnover has gone over the £500k mark for the first time. Membership income is up and we're higher than the 2009 levels again but commercial income is still greater than membership.

Overall Financial Performance

We've seen a reduction in utility costs from the installed solar panels but wages and employments costs are up around 10%. We have limited any investments over the last year in response to site uncertainty from STW.

Where are we after the first 6 months?

We look to be on par for last year. Membership income is up again though the figures are different as the accountants have changed how they defer income from the previous year. We're still seeing lower levels of commercial room hire income.

Questions submitted by Helen Angell prior to the AGM and Answered by Paul Huett:

H.A. - Please advise why the admin cost is lower than last year but still is high?

P.H. - All costs for the Club are split between water and land activities. Administrative expenses describe all costs for the land-based activities (club house/staff etc). Reduction from previous year is mostly due to utility cost reduction.

H.A. - What are the regatta costs as there were none in the previous year's accounts?

P.H. - These are the NSSA costs which we hosted in the summer of 2023.

H.A. - Why has rents received reduced by 7k from 2023?

P.H. - We no longer have a tenant in the old stewards flat.

H.A. - I note the utility costs have reduced from £42k to £18k is that due to the solar panels.

P.H. - Solar panels and reduced contract costs.

H.A. - Property maintenance and repairs has reduced, is this due to no longer having a gardener to maintain the site?

P.H. - We undertook less infrastructure projects in 2023/24 due to site uncertainty.

Robin Verso – What is our policy on reserves & what do we need to hold considering financial commitments?

William – We do have a reserves policy which is coming up for review. The current policy is to cover 12 months of expenses.

6. PRESENTATION OF THE COMMODORE'S CUP

William Whittaker

Each year we award the Commodore's Cup to someone who we feel has made a significant contribution to the Club.

This year we have awarded the Cup to Roger Darbyshire for his dedicated and enthusiastic running of the Improver's Group each Sunday.

Roger has taken this on and organises it all by himself. He welcomes new and nervous sailors and his help and support has seen many go on to sailing with confidence. Many thanks to Roger for all his hard work.

7. APPOINTMENT OF PRESIDENT

William Whittaker

Harry Sayers has made the decision to step down from his role as Vice-President owing to family health. We thank him for the tremendous contributions he has made to the Club over many years. His extensive knowledge and wisdom have been invaluable.

Jeremy Atkins is continuing in the role of President. He's very knowledgeable and supportive to the committee and we're very pleased he's continuing.

8. ELECT OFFICERS (DIRECTORS)

There has only been one nomination received for each office, therefore no election is needed.

OFFICE

Commodore
Vice Commodore
Rear Commodore Sail
Rear Commodore House
Treasurer

NOMINEES

William Whittaker
Richard Botting
Simon Odling
Christine Silver
Paul Huett

ELECTED

William Whittaker
Richard Botting
Simon Odling
Christine Silver
Paul Huett

9. ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (DIRECTORS)

On the committee, Robin Warren and Sian Clark have stood again and we thank them for their continued work. Chris Mulhall has also stood for committee and has been duly elected.

10. APPOINTMENT OF ACCOUNTANT & AUTHORISE COMMITTEE TO FIX REMUNERATION

Bernard Rogers & Co to be appointed as our accountants and the committee authorised to fix their remuneration.

Proposed by John Rohdes, seconded by John Tippett. Approved by the meeting – passed nem com.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

John Rohde – Back in 1998 it was discussed to put a heat pump in the reservoir to generate energy, is this still an option to look in to?

William – STW won't allow us to put anything in the water as it's a drinking water reservoir. A ground source heat pump is one of our avenues to research though.

This concluded the business of the Annual General Meeting