

DYC Commodore's Report for the AGM 28th January 2023

Remarkably we have seen further growth in our membership this year with the total number standing at 1630 and subscription income increasing by over 11%. You'll be pleased to learn that, despite increasing operating costs, we have recently decided to hold our subscription charges as they are, electing instead to focus on attracting new members as a means of increasing revenue. As the current subscription rates were set in 2015, these really do represent fantastic value for money, especially taking into account the 20% members discount over the bar.

Paddlesports continues to be our most popular activity and when Karen McDermott took up her role last year she proposed the re-naming of our former "kayak section" to the more inclusive DYC Paddlesports section, also adopting Rear Commodore Paddlesports as her official title. One of the ambitions over the past 12 months has been to bring our club-led paddlesports activities as closely as possible into line with the latest British Canoeing regulations and recommendations. This has meant a raft of new safety documentation, risk assessments, approved user forms, float plans, etc., all of which – however onerous – are designed to help ensure that our club-led activities are run as safely as possible for all our members.

Karen has asked me to specifically mention that, working tirelessly to support her, are the members of the Paddlesports committee, comprising (in alphabetical order) our Taster Session Coordinator Phil Hayward, Paddlesports Safety Officer Kim Hills, Secretary Tasha James, Maintenance Officer John Mills, Sea Kayaking Coordinator Anita Newcombe, SUP Coordinator Giles Rowlinson, Paddlesports Enquiries Officer Mandy Vaughan, and White Water Coordinator Lou Wiggins.

Together they put on a busy programme of sea kayaking inductions, thrice-weekly evening paddles from May to September, SUP outings, pool sessions, and one-off events including BBQs and away days. We were also delighted when three members obtained their British Canoeing Sea Kayak Awards at the end of the season, and hope that many more DYC paddlers will want to progress to this award in 2023.

In terms of numbers, some 215 individual members took part in our club-led kayaking and paddleboard activities over the course of 2022, and many more used our fleet for peer paddles. As always, our single and double sit-on-top kayaks remain hugely popular with DYC members in summer, especially with families. For the future of paddlesports at DYC, it is vital to have continuity and progression, and we hope that our "Class of 22" (and indeed of all the previous years) will be back this coming season to support our programme and step up as the paddlesport leaders of the future.

Moving now to the Sailing section, this year has seen a return to adult dinghy training using our fleet of RS Visions. After two years of no adult dinghy training, it has been difficult to rebuild the scheme but, moving into 2023, we now have experienced Dinghy Instructors to lead the training. Meanwhile, our juniors have continued to thrive and this was reflected in the Junior Regatta back in August with some excellent performances by our young sailors.

We had the pleasure of supporting the Dartmouth Youth Group as part of our RYA OnBoard scheme, getting twenty young, local children out on the water sailing and we look to build upon this relationship this year.

Our Powerboat training always proves very popular and has continued throughout the year with many courses offered. Our old motorboat Sarah has now left our fleet replaced by the very capable Lilibet. As Lilibet is able to accommodate members more comfortably on the water, and provide a much better experience, she will be used for our training going forwards. We will also be running some familiarisation sessions in spring for those members wishing to use Lilibet.

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We now have the ability to run our own VHF and First Aid courses with DYC instructors and are looking forward to training many more of you over the next twelve months. RC Sailing Gareth wishes to thank Kate Brown (RYA Principal), Sue Thomas (Chief Dinghy Instructor) and Sophie Rennie (Chief Power Instructor) for their support in the period of coming out of COVID and help with building our training offering to members.

In the club house, we have continued to put on a series of social events to encourage members to use the club, especially out of season. Whilst not all of these were well attended, we do have an active book club, weekly yoga sessions and monthly members evenings, alongside the ever-popular quiz nights. We were pleased to have played our usual active role in town events such as Dartmouth Music Festival in May, Regatta in August and a greatly increased role in November's Food Festival. We successfully hosted the inaugural Three Club's Party in November and December saw the club being used for some large events on the run up to Christmas - all of which have contributed vital revenue for the club. Our DYC Weekly Update has hopefully kept you well informed throughout the year.

Once again, the town was very busy at times during the summer and the outdoor embankment space continued to prove popular with members and visitors alike, although perhaps not quite as busy as the year before. We, along with the other hospitality businesses along the embankment, were disappointed that planning consent for the change of use for space was not granted until September. This meant we had to operate under a last-minute temporary arrangement but with a very much increased charge in comparison to previous years. We still await details of the 2023 tendering process from SHDC.

We continued to invest in the upkeep of the building throughout the year. Projects included the installation of a new kitchen extractor system, new fire alarm system, numerous new fire doors and a fireproof curtain for the gun room. We also purchased new chairs for the outdoor space and have carried out mini makeovers of the toilets and middle floor areas. Thanks to all involved in making these works happen.

Little progress has been made on the middle floor conversion. This was due to a number of factors not least the increase in conversion costs and the economic downturn. There are no immediate plans to restart the project and the business case will need to be updated in 2023. Meanwhile we aim to make use of the space wherever possible to generate additional revenue.

Finding, and more importantly, keeping the right staff has proved as challenging for us as it has for many other hospitality venues in the town. The chef we recruited in March resigned in August and the Club Manager in November. With the support and flexibility of the staff team, we have been able to maintain a food service since August and are about to reintroduce a Sunday carvery in January. On the Club Manager front Tony Brighton, who stepped down as Treasurer this autumn, has agreed to undertake the role on an interim basis so the club is in safe hands for now. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tony for his hard work and contribution to the club during a particularly challenging five years as Treasurer.

Overall, our financial performance for the 2021/22 year was good and we made an annual profit before taxation of £23,094. Whilst this is lower than the £37,493 of last year, direct comparison is clouded by the furlough and Covid grant income we received last year. An overview of our financial performance can be found in the Treasurer's report.

We have again exceeded the £100,000 limit for non-member income under the CASC rules endorsing last year's AGM approval for the creation of a separate trading subsidiary for non-member income. To this end DYC (Trading) Ltd has been created as a wholly owned

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subsidiary of DSC (Holdings) Ltd. This, after the initial set up work, will have little impact on the day to day running of the club but has highlighted the need to review and update the Articles of Association of DSC (Holdings) Ltd. These pre-date the club becoming a CASC (2005) and do not meet current requirements. A special resolution will be tabled at the AGM proposing the changes considered necessary to bring these up to date.

Last year I closed my report with concerns about our ability to attract new committee members prepared to eventually step into leadership roles and help shape the future of the club. Unfortunately my fears were well founded and, following a number of mid term resignations, we operated with a depleted committee for many months of the year.

With several of our longstanding committee members standing down this year we really do need more members to take an active interest in the running of the club and I urge you to get involved in any way you can.

As I close my report this year, on behalf of the club, I would like to thank the committee members and all those who have helped the club in 2022, far too many names to mention individually. All that remains is for me to thank you for being a member of DYC and I wish you a healthy and happy 2023.

Tim Vaughan