

Wivenhoe Sailing Club

Minutes of 99th Annual General Meeting (AGM) Friday April 25, 19.30 hrs

The meeting was started by Kevin Hosking, as previous past President. He welcomed all members and thanked the outgoing officers for their service.

1. Attendance and apologies for absence

57 members attended the AGM. 34 members had related their apologies for absence.

2. The minutes of the 2024 AGM, which had already been agreed by the GC, were noted. No comments were raised.

3. Commodore's report on the year

Julie-Anne summarised the Commodore's report, as circulated ahead of the AGM. She noted that in the club's centenary year it was a joy to see the club thriving, with such successful events both on and off the water, and across multiple activities, for sailors and rowers and all those who loved the river. The Commodore particularly noted how many WODs were back on the water and thanked all those who had been custodians of the WODs over the years. She thought that the founders would have been proud to see the club one hundred years on. Other noted successes in the year included the installation of solar panels and introduction of a new pumping system for hard cleaning; and the training of a number of new safety boat helms. The AGM noted that the WOD association had produced an anniversary publication which was available for purchase at the Bar.

The Commodore paid tribute to the officers and the volunteers who made such great contributions to the club. The AGM particularly thanked Alan Tyne, standing down as Rear Commodore, for his outstanding service over many years.

4. Report by the Treasurer and Independent Inspector of Accounts

The accounts circulated to the members prior to the AGM were reported on. The Treasurer noted that this was the 5th annual accounts he had presented. He thanked Bill Wilson for his support whenever it had been required.

During the AGM it was noted that:

- The Accounts in the previous year had included the costs from the leak at the old hard; the Rates had also benefited from a new relief in the financial year.
- Insurance costs would necessarily go up every year as the costs were index-linked.
- The moorings charges from Colchester City Council had increased due to an error in calculating uplifts. CCC had not sought to recover previous years' increases but had applied the correctly uplifted rate to 2024 and thereafter.
- The club was custodian of funds for the Rivercare group and the WOD Association and these funds were included in the club's accounts.
- No Corporation Tax was expected to be due.
- Bar profits were down slightly (owing to the appointment of a paid bar manager) but not as much as the Treasurer had predicted at the previous AGM.
- The Cadet fund was included within the accounts but not easily shown separately; the Treasurer's commentary noted that the Cadet fund was buoyant.

- Generous donations from Sir John Ashworth (to the Cadets), the Town Regatta and others had swelled the club's finances for the year. Without these unexpected upsides, and relief on business rates, the club's increases in expenditure would be outpacing increases in income, with particular expenditure on safety boats and insurance costs.

The following questions were raised by the AGM attendees:

Q: Could the bar takings be provided to members showing the non-members' taking separately from the bar profits from members?

A: It was not possible to show bar income from members and non-members separately but the management accounts (received each month by the General Committee) separates members' events such as regular Friday and Sunday openings from public events and private hires, such as Regatta day and hosting the Harker's Yard race. These will be provided to Members.

5. Adoption of the accounts and approval of independent inspector of accounts

The accounts were adopted unanimously by the AGM attendees.

Proposed by: Bruce Anderson

Seconded by: Matt Chilvers

6. Election of Officers

The nominations were accepted by the AGM attendees with one abstention.

Post	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Commodore	Julie-Anne White	Bill Wilson	Marie-Helene Derry
Vice Commodore	Nic Cross	Chris Wood	Chris Mullins
Rear Commodore	–	–	–
Hon. Secretary	Nick White	Bill Wilson	Phil Mylrea
Hon. Treasurer	Eric Strudwick	Tony Higbee	Nic Cross
Hon. Sailing Secretary	Chris Wood	Nic Cross	Stuart Bannerman
Hon. Membership Secretary	Bill Wilson	Ginny O'Dell	Phil Mylrea

7. Election of Members to serve on General Committee

The nominations received were accepted by the AGM attendees with no absententions.

Post	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Committee Member	Keziah Deeks	Bill Wilson	Julie-Anne White
Committee Member	Tony Evans	Keziah Deeks	Bill Wilson
Committee Member	Mike McDonald	Chris Wood	Nic Cross
Committee Member	Phil Mylrea	Alan Tyne	Brian Sinclair
Committee Member	Ginny O'Dell	Bill Wilson	Phil Mylrea
Committee Member	Fiona Emms	Tony Higbee	Nic Cross

It was noted that Anthea Le Cornu and Tony Higbee had another year to serve on the General Committee having been elected in 2024.

The AGM expressed their appreciation to Bruce Anderson who had not stood for re-election to the GC on this occasion, having served for 15 consecutive years.

8. Motions submitted by Members

Full motion recorded in "Motions submitted by Members" document, circulated ahead of AGM. This item was chaired by Bill Wilson, Hon. Membership Secretary.

Motion 1: To publish a strategy to allow wildlife to flourish.

Jenny Gifford presented the motion to request the club adopt a wildlife-friendly approach to gardening. The approach had normally been taken, but a formal protocol had not been in place, and there had been an occasion when a wildlife-friendly gardening had not been respected and carefully-tended wildlife-friendly plants had been harmed.

The AGM attendees discussed the motion, and shared the following views:

- The natural environment surrounding the club is very important to the members.
- By formally adopting a wildlife-friendly protocol there might be the opportunity for national recognition of the club as leading in the field.
- The work of the gardening group and members joining hard working parties had been excellent over many years and was much appreciated. The damage had been done by someone acting outside the usual gardening or hard working days.
- There was already an Environmental Policy in existence although it had not been reviewed and monitored on an annual basis as intended. The GC did not appear to have complied fully with the policy and were urged to review and update it in the light of the membership's support for wildlife-friendly gardening.

The AGM accepted the motion with four abstentions and no objections.

Motion 2: To adopt the Cadults Group as a recognised group within the club

Julie-Anne White presented the motion. She referred to previous Commodores' recognition and praise for the team getting new adult members afloat. She drew attention to the efforts to create a welcoming community for them and highlighted we are not a RYA training centre but this initiative offers the chance for novice and lapsed sailors to get into sailing in a supportive way.

Her motion asked for this group to be recognised and supported by club members. This would promote fair representation on the Sailing Sub-Committee much as cadets and other groups/activities already have. It would also facilitate the promotion of these activities through the website and resolve some anomalies around bringing the Cadults WhatsApp group within the Club's Social Media Policy.

The AGM attendees shared the following views:

- Encouraging and supporting novice sailors is absolutely core to the identity of the club, which was founded to allow more people to enjoy being on the water, and is part of the club's ethos. The members recognised the role that the Commodore had played in this, which was an important part of the current success of the club.
- The opportunity to learn as a beginner should apply to adults as well as to young people and children. The AGM also recognised the benefits of offering returning sailors and those new to the area an introduction and the opportunity to sail with an experienced member to gain confidence.
- The "Cadults" or adult novices were not well represented as an entity, but it was queried whether they needed to be a separate organised group (equivalent to the rowing clubs, for example) in order to be recognised and supported by the club.
- A member queried the position with insurance and the RYA. Both were confirmed to provide cover and be supportive of the club's existing practices.
- A member queried if this would mean that Cadults would take priority in boat bookings. It was confirmed that these are made on a first-come-first-served basis and this would continue.
- "Cadults" as a brand seemed to be generally understood and appreciated but the details of the proposal needed some refinement. Some members were unsure that the wording of the motion itself aligned to the intention and questioned whether the proposed motion was necessary to achieve the objectives.
- The AGM was in support of the continuing help for novices and improvers to learn to sail and the sentiment of the proposed motion. It was commented that if everyone supported the principle, then the details can be worked out later.
- Some members spoke of the importance of the Cadults to supporting new members to come and to begin sailing; greater public awareness would increase the number of prospective members who would approach the club.

The AGM voted on the motion as follows:

32 members present voted in favour of the motion; plus 16 proxy voters. In total 48 votes in favour.

13 members present voted against the motion; plus 11 proxy voters. 24 votes were against. 5 members abstained. The AGM therefore approved the motion, 48 to 24.

Votes were counted by Bill Wilson and Keziah Deeks.

The remaining items were chaired by Nick White, Hon. Secretary

9. Appointment of Independent Inspectors of the Accounts

The AGM resolved unanimously to request the independent inspector of accounts act for the club again for the following year.

10. Any Other Business

- The matter of silt around the pontoons was raised. Proposals would be presented to the GC later in the year.
- There would be an information session regarding laying and improving moorings the following Saturday.
- To promote the club's centenary, Members were invited to try a new watersport -target 100 sign-ups for 100 years.
- The Town Regatta would be held on 12 July and the club open day on 13 July.
- Members were invited to celebrate Julie-Anne and Nick White's ruby wedding anniversary on 4 May at a barbecue following the sailing that day.

Meeting closed at 21.15.