

COMMODORE'S REPORT FOR AGM 2018

I am pleased to report that the Company and the Club are in good standing and good financial health.

Judged from unsolicited, positive comments from third parties, our Club continues to be highly regarded. We have been the destination for mini cruises from Cattewater Cruising Club and the Royal Western Yacht Club. Our Regatta (the last in the PPSA race series) was a very enjoyable and well attended occasion despite atrocious weather - participants knew that our Social and Sailing Teams would put on a good show. Throughout the season we have had the White Sail Challenge, which has attracted an increasing number of boats thanks to Tony Head, ably assisted by Mick Flanagan.

We continue to provide the lowest cost, serviced swinging moorings on the river and, for the first time in a few years, we have a waiting list. By careful management of the allocation of moorings, Chris Bowyer has managed a very high occupancy rate, thereby maximising this major source of income for the Club. The moorings operation is complex and time consuming and I would like to pay tribute to Chris for successfully managing this.

During the past year, we have had Working Parties producing our Data Privacy Policy in line with regulations which came into force in May and have updated the Barge Operational Protocol and Barge Health and Safety Assessment, the latter with help from Marilyn Dennis.

A couple of audits of the mooring patch have been made and in the process we have identified some concerns about a small number of neglected boats, and wish to remind everyone of their responsibility to inspect their mooring arrangements *at least* every three weeks. Clearly, neglected boats are a potential risk to all river users. We have noted a significantly higher proportion of boats left on the moorings for the time of year, and regular inspection is particularly important in the winter months.

We have introduced an 'Abandoned Boat' policy which I sincerely hope we will not need to invoke.

I am fortunate to have a very strong Committee who give their time and considerable expertise to run the Club. If we were a FTSE 100 Company I am sure that our share price would be high! Running such a well oiled machine has required engaged teamwork by many people from within the Committee and the wider membership: Ron Edwards manages our finances and brings business expertise to guide our deliberations; Ian Oram is a power behind the scenes as a very efficient Secretary also coping with the dry work of scrutinising, reconciling and bringing up-to-date our Rules and Bye-Laws; Peter Plume runs a growing Membership, now standing at some 400 individuals, and is our Data Protection Manager working with our renewed data policy in the light of GDPR.

I am sure that you will have noted that our gracefully ageing Clubhouse is well maintained, with major kitchen improvements this year. This is due to the efforts of Steve Dennis and a small ad hoc team of helpers who also look after our grounds and other facilities. Steve really is Mr. Fixit. This has enabled the Clubhouse to be used by various outside groups including for weddings and major celebrations. Excellent housekeeping has been provided by Con.

Jill Trew masterminds our social events with infectious enthusiasm together with her band of helpers. Although sailing is our main purpose, our social events help to build the inclusive spirit of the Club. James Gent, with the help of past Commodore Tony Head, ran the racing aspect of the Regatta very successfully.

Our Cadet section is, in my view, very important to the Club. It raises our profile and brings on a future generation of sailors. David Wheatley has acquired a depth of experience in this area and gives generously of his time. Besides being our Vice Commodore he is our RYA Principal. Mac Armstrong recently joined the Committee as prospective Rear Commodore and has already made his presence felt with his incisive contributions.

Yet further work is undertaken by the unsung managers of important functions within the Club. I would like to record my deep gratitude to all Officers and Managers of the Club and encourage you to re-elect them en bloc.

You will see from your agenda papers that we have some vacancies for key manager posts - we are all very grateful to Charles Evans who has agreed to serve as Acting Bargemaster, a vital post that we need to fill and Ian, likewise, is carrying the role of Webmaster. Please do not be bashful about becoming involved in the running of your Club - it's great fun!

As we approach the annual Membership and Moorings renewal process, I would like to take this opportunity to confirm that the Club's method of communication with Members is by email and to ask Members to ensure that they have an active Direct Debit mandate in favour of the Club for the payment of fees.

During the coming months your Committee will be looking at the de facto business model that the Club is working on to examine if it is fit for purpose and to evaluate financial risks. As part of this exercise we will be consulting the Membership for their comments on the future direction of the Club and what developments they would like to see.

In conclusion, I wish Members a merry Christmastide and fair winds in 2019.
John Davis, November 2018.