

ORWELL YACHT CLUB MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY 10th JUNE 2024 AT 7.30 PM
AT OYC CLUBHOUSE

Those present: Samantha Mills (SM): Mark Wilson (MW): Jamie Carrington (JC):
Paul Banjo (PBo): Peter Hibberd (PH): Jenny Naylor (JN): Phil Naylor
(PN): Peter Parker (PP): Mike Fry (MF): John Ling (JL): Fred Codling (RC):
Paul Belton (PB): Julia Norman (JN)

Trustees: Alan Bimpson (AB), Steve Gilson (SG), Robert Jones (RJ)

1. Apologies for absence: John Hazelton (JHn), Jim Howard (JGH), Jill Howard (JHd), John Owen (JO)

2. Approval of Minutes – Management Committee Meeting held Monday 13th May 2024

After discussion of a change requested by one member, the Minutes were agreed to be signed off as drafted subject to rewording in section 5.9 to read “... they had undertaken at their ...”

3. Matters arising:

Causeway Lease

This has been signed by RJ and JN as Directors of OYC Ltd.

JN will take the 2 paper copies to Clive Cooksey to then get ABP to sign it.

OYC Limited Company proposal

Ongoing - nothing new to report

Electrics

MW kindly offered to contact Mark Woods (07584 091451) regarding the necessary updates to OYC electrical installation.

Policies and byelaw review – abandoned boats/vulnerable adults

Ongoing - nothing new to report on the boat policy, but see further below regarding specific boats. Vulnerable adult policy – see below.

Welfare Department

JGH and JHd had met with Teresa Thorogood and John Burnell regarding the Vulnerable adult policy.

- Agreed that TT would draft something by 26/7
- Discussed P Banjo idea of MCM having a speaker re safeguarding or WO explaining their roles. Agreed

- To put to MCM the idea of 1 or 2 WO being appointed as officers of the club. One of the reasons is for the intention of sharing information. Would need a rule change

The Committee briefly discussed the above matters and noted that they will need further follow up.

Clubhouse Tree

JGH had contacted Tom Lyon (previously used for club's tree) he quoted £200 Plus VAT. JC kindly offered to contact him (07920 130341) to progress the work.

Crazy Hen – Abandoned boat / Sylda / Soup Dragon

- Crazy Hen – The owner had said he had been in hospital and in ill health but was going with 2 friends to sort out this week. PP confirmed he will assist in putting it on the Dolphin for cleaning next week. It was not clear to the Committee exactly what is the owner's plan for the boat.
- Sylda – Marek is looking to move closer to Ipswich so he uses his boat. However will now come down and tidy her up.
- Soup Dragon – the apparent owner has been seen at the Club tending her, so JHd was going to ask PH if a letter was needed. The Committee agreed that a letter is still required to be sent to the owner of Soup Dragon

The Committee agreed that there is a need to keep monitoring the situation and seek updates on progress with the boats whose owners have been written to, and to remind people about the requirement to hold valid insurance.

4. Management Action Plan – May 2024 All still ongoing

AGENDA:	ACTION:	BY WHOM:
3 Main pontoon	To organise a work party with regards to the tuning fork ONGOING – The right hand finger has been done; will now progress with left hand finger. Thanks to the working group (CC,SR,MB,MW,PB) for their efforts	PB
3. Electrics	To organise a meeting with Mark Woods and sub committee to discuss best way forward with electrics ONGOING	JGH; and MW
5.6 Mooring Master	Trot Moorings – Arrange to visit Felixstowe Ferry with PP to discuss the possibility of them completing the trot moorings and ascertain costings. ONGOING	JGH
	Dangerous and Barge refurbishment – to form a work party to paint/refurbish both with PP overseeing ONGOING – Will be done later in season	MW/JC

5. Reports

5.1 Treasurer

As usual, May's Management accounts were circulated to Committee and Trustees.

MW asked about tractor repair costs/charges from last year. JN confirmed that £500 had been paid in the case of the disputed invoice, where £1400 had been requested by the supplier. Noted the need to think about possible alternative supplier in future, and/or manage them better? Also noted that John Dickerson is happy to carry on looking at tractor issues for the club.

5.2 Membership Secretary

RC signed up one new member, Jonathan Yates, since the last meeting.

There was discussion about the membership cards and stickers.

It was agreed that it is better, for gate code security reasons, to keep having the cards printed without inclusion of the OYC name.

It was agreed to keep the stickers as they are, ie. not to have different stickers for dinghies, tenders & kayaks – RC's records will show what the member has paid for.

It was noted that in 2021 it cost £380 for 3 years worth of cards & stickers.

The Committee voted and unanimously agreed that RC should proceed with the next 3 year order of cards & stickers.

5.3 Bank Master

A meeting was held with JD Lifting to discuss testing the SLW of the carrier. This was prompted by an email received from Robert Jones which was not widely circulated at the time. In the email Robert said;

"Please find attached photo of the Club's carrier, I believe, in 2010. One can see SWL and 8250Kg.

I know from my enquiries that in practice all boats weigh significantly more than their brochure dry weight, even when totally empty. The brochure weight is often the design weight, but hulls are normally fabricated with more material to best ensure structural integrity. The Club has regularly hauled vessels with brochure displacements of 7711 Kg, 7500 Kg, 6848 Kg, 6740 Kg without incident, which is, perhaps, confirmation of the good design and construction of the carrier since, almost without exception, boats are hauled in a fully loaded, commissioned state and therefore could weigh more than 8250 Kg.

Since the carrier was first commissioned in autumn 1999, it has been

strengthened, and latterly, a hydraulic powered lifting system added. This has changed the strop lifting angles to nearer vertical which has the benefit of reducing the torsional loads demanded of the carrier's structure as a result, one would expect the carrier's SWL to be increased.

It would be reasonable to conclude that the carrier has lifted and can lift more than 8250 Kg safely. I am unaware of there being a re-assessment of the carrier's lifting capacity since its first commissioning. I therefore suggest that a committee be established to: Establish facts.

Consider if the Club should consult with a mechanical engineer to determine the capabilities of the carrier in its current configuration and specify a SWL.

Report to the MC.

I must declare an interest and note that I am a Trustee. That said if the MC agrees I am willing to contribute to the process."

Following receipt of this email a meeting was held with JD Lifting to discuss the practicalities of testing to establish the SLW. The report of this meeting is as follows;

Carrier SLW report in response to an email from Robert Jones on 2nd May 2024.

Meeting with J D Lifting to discuss an SLW test for the carrier;

JD say they would be able to do this but only after receiving a report by a structural engineer. They have to be advised of the potential SLW before testing. Once the test has been carried out the SLW would stand at 25% below the maximum test weight.

The provision of weights would cost approximately £1000. The costs of JD Lifting and a structural engineer were not guessed at.

A boat of sufficient weight would provide a more accurate test. Obviously, that weight would have to be established first.

Jon, from JD Lifting pointed out that areas of interest to the structural engineer would include welds and the capacity of the hydraulic system.

Questions were asked;

Would the inspection by a structural engineer "open a can of worms"?

How many more potentially "heavy" boats joining the club would justify the added expense?

However, is this a subject which we can ignore?

In responding the Commodore has written;

"I think it's too risky to even consider and I cannot see any benefit for the membership in general.

The carrier, as I understand, was built for 10 tonnes. Lose 25% and it's down to 7.5 tonnes maximum which is less than our current 8 tonnes.

My response is NO.

Regards

John"

In the meeting there was discussion within the Committee about what the hoist carrier was designed for and how we arrived at the current rating limit of 8250kg. It was understood that the last testing was carried out after the hydraulics were fitted to the carrier and the test load used was 10 tons.

RJ said he was willing to do some research into what the carrier was designed for.

The Committee voted and agreed unanimously that RJ should investigate further the carrier's design limits.

The official launching programme has finished with only a couple boats left, Drom and Waikera. These are delayed by recently discovered mechanical faults which are being addressed.

In addition to these there are the following 8 boats for sale;

Runaway Bay

Second Sandpiper

Luna

Pasca

Thalassa

Trigger

Bon Accord

Jezebel

A question remains as to whether Sybil and Slipaway are for sale or having work done.

Applejack will be launched on Friday 14th June

An interim report was circulated to the committee for discussion at this meeting.

I feel that it is a potential problem for next year. I'd like us to address it early in order to be able to warn the membership if any firm decisions are made.

Boats for sale

Considerations for the MC.

At present there are 8 or 10 boats for sale at the club which are occupying positions on the causeway. The boat owners have been given permission to stay out of the water for this summer and the next winter during the regular layup period. The club rule states that after May next year all these boats should be launched.

There are several questions to be considered if sales are not completed before the layup period:

1. If the owner has a new boat on their mooring and, following club rules, the unsold boat has to be launched, where do they stand?

Where does the club stand if it insists that the boat is launched and taken away to a broker's yard?

Is there a way whereby the club can help to promote sales?

How long can the club keep unsold boats on the causeway?

Next season there may be more. This problem is unlikely to go away.

There may be more questions I have not foreseen.

In the meeting the Committee discussed the above questions.

RC suggested that we should be charging £50/month for boats on the causeway without permission.

It was agreed that PH would send an email (run draft past Commodore) to members whose boats are for sale on the Hard, emphasising the window of opportunity to sell their boats, which must be removed by the end of the lay-up period, and that they can advertise Boats For Sale on the OYC website

The committee voted and agreed that RC should send out invoices for summer lay-up for the 10 boats in total that are laid up for sale or work.

Blue Shoal.

You may recall that the carrier hit the bow of Blue Shoal last year. A final bill for £162 from Harry Kings Boatyard has been received along with Jeff Peter's email.

"Further to my previous email Kings have had a go at re-bending the front of the pulpit to try to get it back in line and I'm pleased to say they have done a pretty good job. It is not perfect but it is certainly a huge improvement and the best that could be achieved without making a new one and I am happy with the result. The invoice for this work is below (this seems very reasonable to me) and perhaps you can advise if the club would like to settle this directly with Kings or via me."

The Commodore has agreed that we settle the bill.

Jayne Smith has supplied a User Manual for her trailer. Following further inspection we are happy for Jayne to use the trailer.

5.4 Social Secretary

Update on Barbecue

A new barbecue has been purchased at cost of £309.99. This is more than the anticipated purchase reported at a previous MC as suitable mild steel versions were not in stock.

However, the new barbecue is stainless steel and should therefore last a long time. It has a removable mild steel ash pan which is easy to empty out and wash after use.

Barbecue implements and a hand-held digital thermometer have also been purchased so the OYC has its own equipment as we have used our own in the past.

This expenditure for a replacement barbecue is identified in the current year's budget and all spend is within the stated figure.

Barbecue on Saturday 8th June for Fun Day

Fortunately, despite some menacing grey clouds and the odd spot of rain, the weather was good.

Phoenix Jazz, cost £300, performed and a good time was seemingly had by all.

Spend on food and charcoal for the event equates to

Meat:

Many members and guests as in previous events commented on the quality of the sausages so it is recommended that they continue to be sourced from East End Butchers rather than an inferior quality.

£171.25 for 100 x hot dog sausages and 60 x 4oz burgers. (14 burgers and 19 sausages are in the freezer for the next event worth £35.87) so meat consumed cost **£135.38**

Bread, salad, veggie, sauces

£60.62

Donations received

£113.25 which is the highest ever for these events.

Charcoal

£16

Participation for the event included 8 Juniors who had a great time (Sailing Sec report will provide more detail).

Around 30 members and guests attended the event and as an observation, this is significantly less than previous events which is clear by the amount of food that was not required. Surplus bread was given away at the end and the burgers which are cooked from frozen remain in the freezer and the sausages which were freshly made on the Wednesday before have been frozen.

Next Fun Days with Barbecue

John Owen has volunteered to run the barbecues and has undertaken Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety for Catering training and his certificate is in the 'Safer Food' file in the clubhouse. A big 'thank you' to John for this.

All equipment and consumables required for the next two planned barbecues are in the cabin at the end of the causeway, requiring only the food to be sourced for the forthcoming events.

A detailed spreadsheet with suggested quantities and hints for the management of the barbecue at events is in place and has been shared as Phil and I are away.

East End Butchers have been given orders for the next events (to ensure their availability):

Collect meat on

Saturday 6th July: *40 burgers and 60 East End hot dog sausages (cost approx. £108)*

Saturday 3rd Aug: *50 burgers and 80 East End hot dog sausages (cost approx. £140)*

So, if there is any change it is vital that at least one week's notice is given for any changes.

Live music has been booked for the next 2 Fun Days.

Saturday 6th July: 'The Hypochondriacs' £300

Sunday 4th August: 'The Silburys' no charge in return for the use of the Clubhouse for their rehearsals.

I understand that 7 yachts participated in the Ostend trip and it is quite likely that a number of those who sailed to Ostend and their friends might have come to the fun day.

Furthermore, I understand that the next fun day coincides with an OYC cruise in company to the Deben.

I accept that reference should have been made to the diary events, but it does seem strange to me that competing events have been scheduled for the same dates.

There is an awful lot of work and expense that goes into these days by a number of people and it does seem somewhat unusual that members have to make a choice as to which OYC event they will go to; it also means that we are not deriving full value from the all of the effort and expense involved.

5.5 House Secretary

Nothing exceptional to report to Committee.

5.6 Mooring Master

Nothing exceptional to report to Committee.

5.7 Sailing Secretary

This month club volunteers have continued to deliver the programme of events. Adverse weather forced the cancellation of one training session and a couple of others had to be adapted to be run ashore but apart from those all events went smoothly and were well supported, including cruise-in-companies to Ramsgate and Lowestoft.

The Fun Day held on Saturday went well, thanks to Chris Codling for organising the day. Thanks also to Paul Banjo and John Norman for co-ordinating activities and providing safety cover afloat. Numbers were down on previous events but Chris reports that everyone who did attend was wet and worn out by the end of the afternoon.

The Ostend Rally organised by Colne Yacht Club was very well supported by our club members who made up the majority of boats (7 of 13) as even more OYC boats took part this year. Conditions for the outbound passage were mixed with light winds from astern allowing most boats to use their spinnakers which made quite a sight as we left Harwich Harbour at 6am. The wind freshened throughout the day which meant we only had to motor for 15 minutes of the 15 hour crossing. Others in larger or faster boats made the crossing in shorter times, as did those who opted to motor the whole way across. Saturday was spent enjoying the town of Ostend and Sunday morning saw several boats make a very early start and returned to the UK whilst others continued their continental cruises. At the prizegiving on Saturday night the OYC were well-represented with Allan Jones of Magic Motion winning a silver plate for 'Most eventful crossing' – he and his crew were commended for their seamanship and perseverance which enabled them to complete the trip, albeit several hours after everyone else. Matt Belton won the prize for youngest crew. They also awarded certificates to everyone for whom this was their first North Sea crossing. As all 3 of my crew on Tara were first-timers we won the 'Best Newcomer' trophy. There was great camaraderie amongst the crews from all clubs and we were all made to feel very welcome. The Sailing Committee will definitely be looking to continue the OYC's support of this event next year.

5.8 Maintenance

Nothing exceptional to report to Committee.

5.9 Correspondence

Nothing specific to report to Committee.

6. Membership

New members and applicants

Steve Cowley, Richard Hardesty and Alan Thomas have all been interviewed by JHn/JGH/JHd, to go before MC. JHn didn't have any objections to any. The Committee voted and unanimously agreed to accept the three as new members.

Richard Talbot, who has a 25 hp engine for his boat, was interviewed and JHn told him it might be too big, but would still accept him as a member. However, he has subsequently withdrawn his application.

7. AOB

PN updated the Committee on a recent complaint incident – his report is attached below

Complaint Incident

No names are referenced in the following; however, anonymous identifiers are needed for coherence.

Following the receipt of a complaint alleging discrimination and behaviour described as unfair and belittling in front of children, the matter was investigated and for the integrity of the OYC, the matter has to be discussed and recorded in the minutes.

This investigation took many days of work with the aim of impartiality and to be free of bias, however inevitably there are some conclusions that can be drawn.

This is therefore only a brief overview with identification of opportunities for improvement.

Concern has been expressed that the complaint letter directed at a member of the committee was read out at the May MC, however in the absence of a defined process and as discrimination was alleged it was appropriate that the complaint was brought to the attention of the MC.

Investigation into the matter revealed that the majority of the specific allegations were without sound basis and the accusation of discrimination appeared to be unjustified. The other member cited by the claimant as receiving more favourable treatment remembers a meeting taking place where training and funding by the Club was discussed but recalls nothing specific was offered.

As to the accusation of belittling in front of children and teaching them to bully, the investigation revealed that the member of the committee has no recollection of this, notwithstanding a senior instructor rigging the Hartley with the complainant recalling that a

'snap' remark was made but does not recall the children saying anything, although rigging the Hartley was 'outside the discussion'.

In a situation like this where it is difficult to understand the exact circumstances it is not possible to make a definitive comment, however it does seem possible that some remark was made that caused offence and which could be considered to be unfair, but not 'belittling' or a 'put down' tantamount to teaching children to bully.

There were numerous general comments levelling criticisms and accusations which lacked detail, and which therefore could not be investigated.

The timeline of events reveals the involvement of Welfare independently by both parties leading to a possible mediation meeting to discuss concerns from both parties to try and resolve matters – this would have been the best way forward.

Unfortunately, this meeting did not take place as the complainant contacted the Secretary stating Welfare had said that there was going to be a disciplinary meeting with the Welfare Team, Committee member and Rear Commodore. As Welfare are not elected officers, the Vice Commodore said, quite correctly, that they should not conduct a disciplinary or interview, unfortunately not knowing that the intention was for a mediation meeting nor having any knowledge of the background events.

Following this, the complaint against the committee member was raised on 8th May by email.

Not all the Flag Officers were aware of any of the background as there had been a request to keep matters confidential and not involve Commodore or Vice Commodore.

Sadly, a mediation meeting was probably the best way forward but a lack of awareness of what was going on contributed to the proposed meeting being shelved.

This has highlighted the need for the role of Welfare to be better defined and understood and is a further demonstration where a lack of process contributed to a breakdown in communications.

It should be noted that Welfare keeps excellent records of any safeguarding issues, which by their nature are sensitive, however there needs to be a mechanism where the Flags have an awareness of any issues raised via the Welfare route.

The timing of the complaint does appear significant as it appears to have only been raised as a response to the concerns raised by the member of the committee against the complainant.

Whilst any matter like this is not pleasant, the matter has to be brought to the attention of the Management Committee and the required process will define how this should be done to maintain confidentiality as much as possible should there be instances in the future.

Unfortunately, the member of the committee affected then raised a complaint against the OYC for the manner in which the complaint was handled – namely reading it out at the May MC.

The main basis for raising this complaint against the Club is premised on a total lack of any awareness by the committee member involved, such that an 'ambush' occurred.

It is difficult to reconcile this because it is a fact that Welfare were aware of the complaint –informing the committee member accordingly in the week before the MC, likewise other members of the MC were also aware that the committee member had knowledge before the meeting.

If this cannot be recognised by the committee member who has raised this complaint, it could be inferred that the explanations given in the main investigation which refuted the majority of the allegations against said committee member are biased reflecting an intransience to accept any form of criticism or suggestion not in total alignment with their own view.

Furthermore, the resignation of the Vice Commodore and Secretary cite this incident as a major but not sole determining factor in their most regrettable decision. They are a huge loss to the MC.

In conclusion, it is extremely disappointing that this whole situation escalated from what could be best described as a personality clash between a member and a member of the committee. Sadly, it seems an inflexibility to see each other's views resulted in a downward spiral of accusation and denial which should have been sorted out by any normal communication between members.

Opportunities for Improvement

1. A written process for dealing with grievances/complaints is required
2. Role of Welfare to be defined, better understood, and integrated.

Final thought

There has been and continues to be a complexity of thought and emotion over this whole affair and as such I would therefore like to mention Gertrude, Prince Hamlet's mother who in the play says something that has a certain resonance in what I have discovered:

"The lady doth protest too much, methinks"

Following some discussion within the Committee it was voted and agreed that PN would lead on drafting a formal grievance procedure for the club.

PBo made reference to the emails circulated in advance of the meeting and felt that there was clearly a need for Committee discussion of associated matters.

Following some discussion within the Committee it was voted and agreed that the Vice Commodore and Secretary email addresses should be temporarily forwarded to the Commodore email address, with an appropriate 'out of office' response to the sender. The Committee also voted and agreed that a committee member be requested to give thought as to whether they wished to reconsider their stance, which had impacted on some other committee members, and to come back within a reasonable timeframe.

The Committee thanked the Rear Commodore, SM, for covering the meeting very well as the sole Flag Officer present.

The meeting ended at 2149.

Appending – Matters arising still ongoing

Changing combi door into wheelchair friendly access
Redevelopment of ladies changing facilities (deferred)
Repairs to Club Wall (deferred)
Dredging
Dolphin (deferred)
RYA affiliated