

ORWELL YACHT CLUB MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY 11th August 2025 at 7.30 PM
OYC CLUBHOUSE

Members present: John Hazelton (JHn): Samantha Mills (SM): Julia Norman (JN): Fred Codling (RC): Peter Parker (PP): Paul Belton (PB): Mike Fry (MF): Peter Hibberd (PH): John Owen (JO), Via "Teams" Andrew Witherley (AW): Peter Small (PS): Phil Naylor (PNr): Jenny Naylor (JNr):

Trustees Present: Robert Jones (RJ): Mark Wilson (MW), Via "Teams" Steve Gilson (SG)

1. Apologies for absence

None recorded.

2. Approval of minutes Emergency Management Committee (MC) meeting on Monday 28th July 2025

Agreed and signed off.

3. Matters arising

1. OYC Limited Company

JN reported nothing more to update since last meeting. Still investigating because very busy of late.

2. Barrier Update

JHn reported that a letter had been received from Suffolk County Council (SCC): stating that the damage to the barrier was not their fault but they will pay the bill (ca. £2.8K) as a goodwill gesture but without prejudice. JHn said he had informed SCC they would not be allowed back on the OYC premises because he felt that on the basis of this payment we would be held liable for any future damage. SM asked if there was any CCTV record of the event. JHn said not – he believed because it had not been downloaded [*by now the recording would be overwritten*]. RC commented that SCC may have decided to pay us because they wish to retain access. JHn commented that the matter had been ongoing since April and it was the legal department that was causing delay. JN commented that the driver had admitted the barrier damage was his fault and that if this happened again we should go through our insurance company because their legal team would be better able to battle the SCC Legal dept. PP said that the damage was caused by the arm of the Hiab crane on the lorry catching the barrier. It was agreed that JHn should meet with SCC at the club to find a way forward. RJ asked whether the club should hold a spare barrier arm but after some discussion this was rejected.

3. Skiffs

PH reported he had sent out his report to the MC ahead of the meeting (see

Appendix A). and asked whether anyone objected to any of the 17 points in his report. None were raised.

PH clarified that he wanted to have “complete commitment” from the MC and “an example needs to be set by the committee” or it was unlikely that there would be support from the wider membership.

PH clarified that the first item of his report “may have been a little bit over-positive” in stating that there were now sufficient trained coxes to begin planning a formal rowing programme.

On reflection, PH feels there is more work to do and we need to bring back Felixstowe Ferry Rowing Club (FFRC) to get some more training of coxes. SM asked whether we need to let our insurance company know about use of the skiffs. JN said that the insurance company knew the club had the skiffs. SM asked whether we had insurance cover for the events we would be holding with the skiffs. PH said this was a matter he wanted to discuss with the Sailing Secretary (PB) to find out what they do. JN said that she didn’t think it made any difference [whether dinghies or skiffs] because these were all club boats with the club’s 3rd party cover and that the general public participating in a club event would be covered so long as a club member was in the boat - on the same basis that the Royal Harwich YC has been allowed to use one of our rescue boats so long as at least one of the crew or the skipper was an OYC member.

PH asked PB about how his events managed the general public. PB stated that participants of his events were either club members or invited guests of club members. SM asked whether if we invite members of the public to use our boats, we should ask them to sign a disclaimer. JN agreed this might be a good idea. PH said he would follow up with other clubs to see how they handled this. SM said we should find out if other clubs give an induction before people go in the boats. PH said they probably do and that FFRC have open days for the public. PB asked “how many fully trained coxes do we have”. PH said none were “fully” trained but those trained were competent. PH outlined the research undertaken into starting a rowing section of the club and how we came to buy the skiffs but acknowledged some aspects are not yet covered but stated it was intended to do so the near future. He observed that there had been other rowing clubs created *within* sailing clubs and they had all received similar/the same objections as in the OYC but they had overcome these and thrived. PB commented that at present the club doesn’t have any fully trained coxes. PH responded that, unlike for sailing, the RYA does not have any formal qualifications for rowing coxes and competence is something that would need to be assessed within the club. PB said that the club would have duty of care to users of the boats. PH said this “would all be covered” and that we have support of FFRC and the Stour RC to draw on and the club would be working with them. (*PH’s report appended*).

4. Accessible Toilets

No progress since the last meeting.

5. Lockers (South side)

JHn reported that Bruce Procter (club member), knows someone who can supply prefabricated units, each of four lockers and to use these we would need only to remove the existing lockers, crane in the new units and bolt these down onto the existing concrete plinths. JHn is waiting to find out the price. He said these lockers are wooden, similar to the existing units and that using these units in fours would increase the lockers to 16 from the current 15. MF commented that

prefabricated lockers sounded an attractive solution, given the difficulty in finding sufficient volunteers to build lockers from scratch.

6. Electrical Works

Per JHn/JN all-members update email of last week, JHn reported the causeway and workshop work is finished with a new distribution unit in the workshop and the old equipment, including connection-point boxes on the causeway have been removed and the associated water stand-pipes being repositioned and that the next phase of the works would be in front of the clubhouse, including the tuning fork pontoon, followed by the south side of the club. SM commented that recent all-members update email was “very good”.

JHn said that the price for the next stage of works was awaited and that he and MW were in discussions with Mark Wood (the electrician) about this. MW commented that if it “seemed a lot”, another quote would be obtained. However, JHn warned against using a second electrician because they may take a different view on what needs doing and we would necessarily end up paying for two surveys. PP agreed.

JHn said, here on, the electrical infrastructure would need annual checks due to the proximity of water and commented that rules and regulations keep changing and therefore each time there is an inspection we have to upgrade. There was discussion about how to manage this, leading to agreement that a club bosun (maintenance manager) as a central point of contact would be beneficial and that the new “Sailing Club Manager” (SCM) tool, when implemented, should also help.

7. Complaint re. Members

Background:-

The Management Committee (MC) has received the following complaints:

- Complaints Regarding Terry Mills
 - Julia Norman (Treasurer) – dated 5 May 2025
 - Phil Naylor – dated 12 May 2025
 - Jim Howard (Vice Commodore at the time) – dated 17 May 2025

Note: Phil Naylor’s and Jim Howard’s complaints relate to the same event—the MC meeting of 12 May 2025, which was commenced but subsequently abandoned.

- Complaint Regarding John Ling
 - Samantha Mills – dated 5 May 2025

All original complaints and associated documents were circulated to MC members on 8 August 2025 in preparation for this discussion. An additional document from Terry Mills was received by some MC members on the day of the meeting and was displayed during the meeting to aid discussion.

Meeting Discussion

Potential Conflict of Interest; Samantha Mills (SM) was asked to leave the meeting during the discussion of member complaints due to:

- A conflict of loyalty regarding complaints against her husband, Terry Mills
- SM agreed and left the meeting.

Initial Review of Complaints

In accordance with Club Constitution Rule 12: Conduct of Members, the MC undertook an initial review of the complaints. The following factors were considered:

- Nature and seriousness of each allegation
- Mitigating circumstances, if any

- Supporting evidence and witness accounts
- Whether the behaviour reflected a pattern or a one-off incident
- Connections or overlap between individual complaints

Decision to Investigate

The MC resolved to conduct a formal investigation into each complaint between this meeting and the next scheduled MC meeting.

- Each member subject to a complaint will be given the opportunity to respond in person during the investigation process.
- The MC reaffirmed its commitment to treating all members fairly and impartially.

Consideration of Immediate Action

The MC discussed whether any interim measures should be taken prior to the conclusion of the investigations. In making this determination, the committee considered:

- The criteria listed above
- The track record of the members concerned
- The likelihood of further breaches of Rule 12 before the investigation concludes

Outcomes:

- John Ling: No immediate action taken
- Terry Mills: Suspended until the next MC meeting, during which the investigation findings will be reviewed

4. Reports

4.1 Treasurer

Treasurer's report was circulated to MC in advance. JN explained that because of the way the accounting has changed during the year to recognise long-term assets, another step has now been taken to match up income to the period it relates to. Our subscription year being 1st January to 31st December but our [Financial] year-end is 30th September so there are three months after the year-end for which we have taken income in advance and for which we are now correctly accounting in line with FRS [FRS are standards of the Financial Reporting Council]. Therefore some reported drops in some figures are largely due to this reporting change and not actual changes and next year, being the first full year within the new reporting regime, the reported figures will not have these discrepancies.

Mooring costs this year included a lot of repairs/replacements for the trots (including all trot buoys), the fore & aft, the swinging moorings, including some Freston moorings.

JN acknowledged that PP can no longer perform this work and recommends to use Tam Grundy re. moorings because the Felixstowe Ferry yard that did some work just lift moorings as they use single weights on their moorings whereas ours use anchors and a straight lift then drags the anchors together. PP observed that Tam Grundy laid the trot mooring and the last three of the fore-and-aft moorings. JN reminded that we need to maintain our moorings to be covered by our insurance and therefore we should book Tam Grundy sooner rather than later – perhaps to get our work done when he is doing Foxes or Woolverstone. PP agreed because he knows Tam has picked up work with the port to change the channel buoys.

JN explained that she needs a forecast of costs for work so that she can place necessary funds in the current account to pay bills and that a month's notice is needed to move from the deposit accounts. PP commented that we shouldn't need to spend

much on moorings this winter, that there was remaining materials except for 19mm chain, which we would need to buy – maybe from EYE Marine.

PNr suggested in addition to Tam Grundy, Gus at Pin Mill [owner of Harry king's boatyard] may be able to give a budget figure. JN had also been informed that the skipper of Thalatta (name not known) was another possibility. PP agreed saying he used to work with Tam Grundy. JN reported Ollie Hammond (club member) knows Thalatta's skipper well. PP warned that there is some friction around moorings between Tam Grundy and the Thallata's skipper.

PNr said he would work with PP to put together a specification of the work required so that we can issue a request for quotation.

JN asked all club officers to consider what funds they will NEED next year, not including any wish-list items and explained that this information was the basis for planning the finances of the club including membership fee setting and ensuring we had funds available when needed – e.g. replacement of the RIB's engine and the carrier & tractor works.

JN gave an update on the progress of the new club administrative tool "Sailing Club Manager" (SCM). The SCM tool will have a link from the club's website and everyone will be sent login credentials. The intention is that members will be able to update their details and by default members will be able to see each other's contact details but members will have the option to hide their details. PH said that his experience of SCM (at the Woolverstone Project) was that members could contact a member with hidden details by dint of using a contact function that used (but did not reveal) the hidden details. RC reported that Richard Codling had been in touch with Malcolm Silburn and Malcolm was happy for the website management also to be transferred to SCM. Andrew Witherly has been and will continue supporting this.

4.2 Membership Secretary

Three temp members signed up since June meeting. RC met these people with Jill Howard and RC suggest they be made full members. Members are Paul Sharman, George Stanton (who has bought "Snow Goose" from Phil Standing) and Rob Halliwell (who has bought "Thalassa"). Believed that references were obtained but location not known at present. JN will look for references for the records. Committee voted to allow full membership for all three, RC proposing JN seconding.

RC will keep the existing members database running alongside the new SCM for a while as a backup, although this is additional work.

JN reported Brenda and Clive are working through the backlog of membership applications.

A brief disagreement about voting rights for co-opted members led to a check of the rules, which were found to state "The co-opted member may only speak when invited by the chairman but shall not have any voting rights."

4.3 Bank Master

Carrier painting – PH reported that after a poor initial response his subsequent emails to the membership had had a reasonable response, both for the preparation, which is now complete and for the painting, which is to take place on Thursday this week. The preparation had shown some superficial corrosion. MW will supply paint FOC from Symphony Coatings (thanks to Mark).

PH asked whether we could return to using Tuckwell's for the tractor maintenance (with whom we have had a billing dispute last year) because his maintenance contact had declined the work and recommended Tuckwell's. Discussion about John Dickerson revealed that he was no longer doing diesel maintenance work. JN reported that Ollie Hammond (club member) is qualified lorry mechanic and welder

and wishes to get more involved in the club and offered to provide PH with his contact details. PH accepted the offer and reported that the painting of the carrier should be completed by the end of the week. SM asked whether any certification of the carrier was needed to which PH said all certification work was completed and was performed twice each year.

4.4 Social Secretary

Nothing to report beyond what Andrew Witherly has already put on the website.

4.5 House Secretary

JO gave thanks to JL for his long service and good handover and said would like to widen the range of drinks sold and “refresh the look” of the bar. An excess of glasses was reported and it was agreed these could be disposed of and any funds raised returned to the bar. More chiller capacity is required, for which there is space. JO confirmed that he is a heating, ventilation and refrigeration engineer. JHn asked if JO could mend the chiller that cools the bar cellar but JO said not as the refrigerant was no longer available. There was discussion about the inefficiency (and cost) of chilling the whole cellar (which is an uninsulated room) and that maybe it would be better to have individual refrigerated cabinets. JO said he would like to liaise with the Social Secretary about putting on an event such as an annual beer festival. JO said the chillers needed a service, that he was qualified to do this and asked for permission to do so. SM commented that a quote should be provided to comply with audit rules. JN said that it would depend on the amount. RJ commented that any works needed to be performed by a qualified professional person to maintain insurance cover.

There was discussion about the fridge-freezer in the storeroom being used by several people. JO is concerned that the club does not have adequate control over the food in this freezer – which is being served to members at events, that too many people are accessing the freezer to store their own food. It was suggested that the store room could be locked but JO concerned that too many people have keys and he has not been able to find out who holds keys (at least one person refused to co-operate). It was agreed to change the lock on the storeroom door and to provide a chest freezer for storage of food for club social events, which would be placed in the bar cellar. JHn said he offered to change the storeroom door lock. This was voted on and passed unanimously (SM proposed, MF seconded).

4.6 Mooring Master

PP has put pegs (labels) on every mooring. Further to the foreshore clearance working party being run by PB 14 August, PP suggested to hire a JCB and driver and have the foreshore cleared of all chains and old concrete blocks with some of the sand and together with the existing dumped material, levelled out along the wooden retaining wall, following which to enable boats to be laid up on the foreshore, two chains should be set across the foreshore between concrete-filled tyres, one further down to provide an attachment point for stern-lines and one up against the key. (However, it was agreed that Paul's shore clearance work party should go ahead and PP's proposal would be followed up at a later date and after the current water-leaks works had been completed).

4.7 Sailing Secretary

The Early Summer dinghy racing series in June was contested by 9 boats whose crews particularly enjoyed spending the evening cooling off on the river after the hottest June on record. Charlie Carrington came first, Matt Belton second and Lizzie Warren and myself came third. The Mid-Summer dinghy racing series in July again saw 9 boats take to the water and it was good to see Erin Watson taking part in her Laser Pico and putting the skills she'd learnt in Junior training to the test. The series winner was Charlie Carrington, second place went to Will Thorogood (a former OYC Junior) and Matt Belton finished in third place.

The Adult Dinghy training course for beginners was held on Friday evenings in June. When this was held in May last year all but one session was thwarted by bad weather, hence the move to June. Four brave individuals signed up, three had some sailing experience, one had never set foot in a boat before! We were able to get afloat every night, either in the club's Hartley 15 training dinghy or on a yacht. We focussed on the basics and I am pleased to report that one of trainees has regularly been seen exploring local rivers on his yacht and another has, on occasion, been leading the dinghy race fleet around the course on Wednesday nights.

The Junior training has now finished for the season and this year we welcomed a slightly smaller group of 12 children. We retained the same format as before with 12 sessions from May to July getting afloat at every opportunity but holding shore-based theory sessions when the weather was unkind. The smaller group size gave us greater flexibility in delivering sessions, for example I took to the water in my Laser and was able to sail alongside Juniors demonstrating sailing techniques and delivering one-to-one coaching, something I wouldn't have been able to do from the Safety Boat. We are indebted to the team of willing volunteers who turn up week in week out to support this training, both afloat and ashore. We use the presentation on the last night to acknowledge and thank parents and volunteers as well as celebrating the achievements of the Juniors, giving out certificates and prizes for those with 100% attendance as well as awarding the 'Most Improved Junior' trophy which this year went to Hazel Codling.

The Cruise-in-Companies have come thick and fast since we last met, with some members clocking up attendances at all five.

In mid-June we had planned to have a barbecue on the Stone Point beach however a force six prompted a relocation to Titchmarsh where all six boats enjoyed a barbecue in their sheltered barbecue area as well as the luxuries of the marina facilities. Later in June at least four boats met up at Suffolk Yacht Harbour and after enjoying a cockpit party, made use of their barbecue area. The first weekend in July was billed as either Ramsgate (plan A) or Burnham (plan B) if the weather was unfavourable for the former. The passage planning meeting a week beforehand was useful to explain suitable routes and timings for crossing the Thames estuary to less experienced cruisers. Four boats set out on the Friday and enjoyed good sailing for most of the trip, those at the back of the fleet faced increasing headwinds as the wind backed, creating uncomfortable wind-over-tide off North Foreland so all were relieved to arrive safely in time for fish and chips. Saturday was a rest day and members enjoyed exploring the WW2 tunnels and walking along the shore to the hovercraft port where we discovered a Viking longboat. Our return to the OYC on Sunday was no less eventful, again the wind veered as we approached Harwich Harbour and boats experienced gusts of 36 knots and torrential rain, thankfully all made it home safely.

At the end of July six boats planned to visit the river Alde however only three set out and successfully negotiated the entrance an hour before high water so all had plenty of clearance below them and the current wasn't too strong. Members enjoyed exploring the castle, river walks and afternoon tea before rounding off the day with dinner at the pub. Whilst inside the heavens opened so we had to extend our stay until the rain had passed over. One dinghy had followed the local guidance and moored inside the sailing club's pontoon so boarding was easy. However the other dinghy was stranded up on the mud and its crew got incredibly muddy dragging it down to the receding tideline. Favourable winds provided good sailing there and back.

The first weekend of August was booked for Southwold, seven yachts set out at varying times however the last two encountered the 'washing machine' off Orford Ness and sadly decided to turn back. Those that persevered faced a rising and veering wind that came increasingly on the nose as we approached the harbour

entrance. All made it in safely around the bottom of the neap low water despite the violent sea state encountered offshore. Crews rested or explored Southwold in the afternoon before all heading to one of the Walberswick pubs for dinner. Again boats chose their own departure times on the Sunday with some opting to fight the adverse wind and tide by leaving early and others leaving later to catch the flood down the coast. The wind backed on to the nose and increased to force six which generated a short confused sea, one boat headed offshore to escape the Orford Ness tidal overfalls whilst others motor-sailed directly down the coastline and through the chop.

The Fun Day in mid-July saw clear skies and a gentle breeze, perfect for getting afloat or relaxing onshore, whichever took your fancy. 60-70 members and their guests turned up to enjoy a variety of activities afloat and the barbecue ashore. Thanks to the members who ran the games, manned the safety boat, to John and Natalia Owen who ran the barbecue as well as Patrick and John Ling for manning the bar. The Navigator's Challenge the following weekend as well as the Picnic Cruise yesterday both sadly had to be cancelled due to lack of interest.

Looking ahead we have:-

The Adult Dinghy training for intermediate sailors is in full swing on Friday evenings throughout August, led by John Burnell.

The Cruise-in-Company to the river Blackwater is scheduled for 21st/22nd – 25th August over the bank holiday weekend, Mike Fry is co-ordinating this.

The Late Summer series is being hotly contested with Charlie once more at the head of the results table but there's still all to play for.

With the failing light in the evenings the dinghy racing will switch to the weekends come September.

4.8 Maintenance

Electrical upgrade works have proceeded as described above. The lance is currently removed from the tuning fork pressure washer (and water supply switched off) because water was leaking badly from the handle.

4.9 Correspondence

One potential new member had made contact and is to be interviewed in September. Nothing else reported.

5. AOB

5.1 Updating Club's heaters

MF reported that he had found the like-for-like fan heaters selected following his presentation at the March 2025 MC meeting were no longer available and that the next most suitable heaters were considerably more expensive and that following consultation with JHn it had been agreed to bring this matter back to the MC. Discussion followed about continuous background heating versus fan heaters which would be on only during use of the club. It was noted that the club would benefit from improved insulation, especially if installing background heating, which would otherwise incur high operating costs. However, since insulation improvement would be a large and longer-term project and replacement of the existing fan heaters is much less work, now it was requested that MF update the MC with the new prices.

5.2 Accessible Facilities - changing combi door into wheelchair friendly access

On hold. No further action taken.

5.3 Repairs to Club Wall

On hold. No further action taken.

5.4 Dredging

On hold. No further action taken.

5.5 Dolphin

Some discussion ensued about ways to replace or strengthen the Dolphin's central post. JHn described a repair of a rotten dolphin post he had seen at Southampton in which a steel casing was bolted around the rotten post and epoxy resin poured/pumped in to stabilise and strengthen the internal rotten wood. No action is currently scheduled.

Time finished: 2145

Date of next meeting: Monday 8th Sept 2025 @ 1930

Appendix A

Skiff Report – August 2025 (from Peter Hibberd)

As stated in last month's report, we now have sufficient trained coxes to begin planning a formal rowing programme.

We are currently working towards a public launch of the Orwell Yacht Club's skiff rowing initiative over the weekend of 18th–19th October 2025. The band 'Painting the Silence' are here on the Saturday evening, and we could have a barbecue. Any members of the public who have expressed an interest could come along and get some insight into the OYC which might be extra encouragement for them to join.

In preparation for this event and the ongoing operation of the programme, several key items need to be addressed:

Preparation Checklist

1. **Website Presence:** Develop an accessible and visible page for rowing on the OYC website (via SCM). Some clubs use WhatsApp for bookings. This may help until SCM is fully available.
2. **Publicity Materials:** Produce and distribute printed and electronic flyers, and install a banner in the club car park. A recent attempt to take a photo with the Bridge as background was postponed owing to bad weather. This is now a priority.
3. **Distribution Sites & QR Code:** Compile a list of suitable sites for flyer distribution. Include a QR code linking directly to the new rowing web page. Again, this is dependent on the take up of SCM.
4. **Target Organisations for Taster Sessions:** Identify local organisations and sports clubs to invite to introductory rowing sessions, could each MC member suggest 2 external organisations who might be interested.
5. **Membership Payments:** Consider introducing a monthly membership payment system (via SCM). This will reduce the financial barrier to joining as most people now budget for things on a monthly basis.
6. **Session Costing:** Determine pricing: potentially offer two free taster sessions followed by a charge per session and mechanism for payment.
7. **Club Fun Days and beach BBQs** Ensure rowing is included in these.
8. **Use of Club Property:** Confirm full and inclusive use of Club property for rowing activities. No restrictions are anticipated. Need a member of MC or a club member to assume responsibility for the care of the skiffs and associated equipment.
9. **Media Coverage:** Submit an article for inclusion in the latest edition of the Ipswich Maritime Trust magazine (see Appendix).

10. Ipswich Maritime Festival Trust (IMT) is holding maritime activities over Heritage Open Days 13th–14th September: Although this is not a maritime festival, we plan to showcase a skiff or both skiffs in the Wet Dock. Volunteers are needed to crew the skiff.
11. Festival Leafleting: Recruit personnel to hand out flyers during the Maritime Festival.
12. Insurance for Taster Sessions: Investigate insurance cover for taster participants. Request guidance from the Sailing Committee.
13. SOPs and Risk Assessments: Source Standard Operating Procedures and Risk Assessments from other rowing clubs.
14. Health Declarations: Decide whether participants should sign a fitness declaration before rowing.
15. Pontoon Access: Allocate a dedicated space on the Waiting Pontoon to be kept clear for skiff use at all times. Please debate this, it's not a demand just on the wish list.
16. Minimum Age: Set the minimum age for participation at 18 years.
17. Member Communication: Prepare an email to members outlining the points above. Explain that the opportunity to acquire the skiffs came before these items were finalised and were too good an opportunity to turn down. Emphasise that the aim is to diversify the club's activities to help maintain a vibrant and engaged membership within the club and also, importantly to attract new members who are not necessarily interested in sailing although the rowing involvement might gain their interest in sailing. This approach is aligned with trends seen in other sailing and yacht clubs.

Finally, full support and enthusiasm from within the club and especially the MC would ensure that the club can thrive and grow with this additional activity.