

Commodores Report to the AGM 2024

Having served on the Board of Directors since 2006 I gave notice at the last AGM that I would be standing down at the 2024 AGM and have been appealing since the last AGM for somebody to join the board and gain the experience needed to succeed me. Sadly, nobody volunteered, and the club could find itself in limbo for a while unless somebody stepped up. Given the need for some positive leadership during the club refurbishment, I am prepared to serve for one more year but after that, somebody will need to volunteer to lead the club into the next few years.

The past year has probably been the most difficult year that I have experienced. We began 2023 having had to close the Seaford Clubhouse because of an adverse report from the structural engineer commissioned to examine the building. After some protracted meetings, the engineer agreed that he would monitor the building every month to enable us to come up with some plans for the future of the building and to keep it open until the end of the summer sailing season at the end of October.

The Board of Directors looked at several alternatives including;

1. Resurrecting the 2017 plan to build a completely new clubhouse in the boat park,
2. Refurbishing the existing building,
3. Demolishing the existing building,
4. Converting the Bosuns shed into changing accommodation
5. Getting Portacabins or similar temporary accommodation until funding could be raised for any of the above.
6. Buy the Buckle House – not a serious option.

Having costed all of the options, option 1 would cost around £2m, Option 2 would cost around £500,000, Option 3,4 and 5 would cost around £250,000 each and if we did option 4 or 5 we would still need to deal with the building either refurbishing or demolishing and because of the asbestos in the building, it could not simply be mothballed until funds were available.

We were fortunate to have Dawn Sowerby join the board in May and she was a driving force in comparing all of the options. In the opinion of the board, the only viable options were to create temporary accommodation and to have the asbestos removed from the building before mothballing it.

We then had a couple of our members, Greg and Justin who asked if they could cost up a refurbishment using club member's labour and exploring cheaper options to those that the board had been suggesting and they came in with a considerably cheaper scheme. The board agreed to give them the go-ahead and to arrange to have the asbestos removed as the first stage.

That takes the story up to the end of 2023. The board wanted the membership to take such a momentous decision so we called an EGM in November to get the membership's agreement that the best option was to get the asbestos removed and refurbish the building.

A second EGM was held in February 2024 to update the members and to make them aware of the financial implications of proceeding with the plans.

Despite a couple of hiccups along the way, at the time of writing this report (March 2024) we are back on track with the refurbishment, and we have recruited a team of members looking at various ways to raise funds for the refurbishment so that we do not exhaust all of the club's reserves.

At Piddinghoe we have been planning a reconfiguration and rebuilding of the sheds that have for a long time been serving as changing rooms, storage and a clubroom. Nick Blackburn and others have come up with an exciting design which will enable us to have changing facilities for the disabled users, to expand the size of the changing rooms, particularly the female side which is tiny and to put in cubicles to support allow safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Because of the urgent need to sort out Seaford this has had to be put on hold for the time being.

Aside from the Seaford Clubhouse and the Piddinghoe sheds, the Board of Directors has negotiated a contract with Brighton Water Sports to take over the running of sailing and windsurfing RYA courses at Piddinghoe. BWS pay us an agreed lump sum for the year and a per student fee and we take care of providing the training boats and facilities. This has taken a lot of pressure off of the ageing team of NSSC instructors and BWS are able to offer courses throughout the year and have already held some successful school holiday water sports weeks for youngsters. They are also looking to expand their operation to enable students from local schools to learn to sail at Piddinghoe. The NSSC Instructors are hoping to be able to offer more advanced sailing courses and support from the beach at Seaford to introduce people to the joys of sailing on the sea and if our instructors can get suitably qualified, we can offer courses sailing catamarans. We continue to run the powerboat courses using club volunteer instructors.

During 2023 we had a good sailing season with record numbers racing on the sea. Sailing week was a success and we managed to race on all but one of the days. Similarly, the Cadet Mondays were well supported as was the annual Cadet Week. Thanks go to Andy Hamilton for his work co-ordinating the cadet programme. Every Tuesday afternoon during the sailing season we have Sailability sessions for those with a wide range of disabilities. We have a sizeable team of volunteers who turn up every week to help and we thank Chris Turner and Jazz Turner together with the other dedicated volunteers for their hard work with this section of the club.

Water quality at Piddinghoe remains an issue and we have been working with the Environment Agency and Piddinghoe Parish Council to identify where the pollutants are coming from and hopefully stop or limit them flowing into the lake. Duncan Barrows and other volunteers has done a fantastic job monitoring the water quality and taking steps to rectify the imbalances.

Whilst thanking Duncan for the work he has done on the lake we must also thank him for finally putting to bed the claim by an individual member of the Ramblers Association who was trying to make the track from the car park to the river a Bye Way, which would have prevented us from having a lockable gate to the car park leaving the track open to wheeled vehicles and the car park to fly tippers and travellers. In 2023 we have seen the completion

of the Egrets Way cycle track along that path, and this will hopefully be a positive thing for the club as more people become aware of what the club can offer to new members.

The long-term future of the club I am sure will be secure and future generations will enjoy the facilities that are planned. In the immediate term there is still a lot of hard work to be done and it does depend on new people coming forward and sitting on the management team to plan and implement proposals.

I finish by thanking my fellow directors for sticking with it through a tough year and for their contributions in all the different roles they perform; Ian Lambert for excellent financial controls as Treasurer; Sheena Hindocha as Company Secretary and coming up with a new Strategy plan for the clubs development; Judd Brammah as Vice Commodore, supporting me as a sounding board and making himself a presence at club events; Nick Blackburn as Rear Commodore at Piddinghoe and the work that is involved in keeping the grass cut, the lake stable and repairing the ageing shed, Nick has made a great contribution to both Seaford and Piddinghoe projects planning and costing; Dawn Sowerby as Rear Commodore Seaford, working with the franchisees to ensure that the service to the club was maintained, liaising with the structural engineer, contractors and volunteer labour to move the project forward; Pete Burch as Sailing Secretary for planning and implementing the racing programme at Seaford and Piddinghoe; Neil Arnott for looking after the club dinghies and organising the hire boat scheme, Phil Clare as a director with a building background advising and helping with the major projects. Charlie Turnbull for his support and his work on financial projections.

We also have a lot of people who work quietly behind the scenes to keep the club running: the berth masters, Duncan Barrows and Mike Godwin; the Bosuns, Paddy Turner and Simon Suter; the race recorder, Rupert Smith; The duties co-ordinator, Michelle Smith; The Webmaster, Richard Beal; the Tuesday work team, too many to name, who maintain our sites. Thanks also to the social team, led by Penny Springall, for putting on events off the water and all those who make it possible for racing and recreational sailing to happen. If I have missed anyone here I apologise but I thank all who have a role in the club whether a big cog or a little wheel.

Terry Jones Commodore 2023

Membership report for 2024 AGM

Mem type	Units 2021	Individual 2021	Units 2022	Individual. 2022	Units 2023	Individual2 023
FSWD	146	513	151	549	133	354
FSND	51	180	38	145	43	61
ISWD	73	73	78	78	85	85
ISND	21	21	16	16	21	21
FsocWD	18	49	8	8	8	24
FsocND	16	46	19	48	15	15
IsocWD	15	15	20	20	18	18
IsocND	8	8	10	10	15	15

Jun cadet	3	3	6	6	2	2
Sen Cadet	5	5	4	4	4	4
Student	3	3	4	4	3	3
Life mem	22	22	23	23	23	23
Associate	2	2	3	3	7	7
An Boat Hire	17	17	20	20	15	15
Berths	218	218	231	231	227	227
Total members	381	938	377	911		

During 2022 we had 41 membership units not renewed and gained 37 membership units. We would normally have quite a few more signing up following the Autumn Dinghy Course, the conversion from courses to membership is usually quite high, but because of the water quality issues we had to cancel the course and so lost that membership stream. Overall, we have seen an increase in sailing memberships and the losses are mainly social memberships, there has been a trend away from family social memberships – it is difficult to know why, most social members join to claim the 20% discount at the Galley, they certainly do not attend the social events which are largely supported by the same group of members. The income from social memberships is less significant than that gained from sailing memberships, and it is difficult to find duties that social members are happy to contribute to.

Vice Commodore AGM Report 2023-2024

It has been a privilege to serve as an appointed board member for Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club over the last year. In early 2023 I joined several of my sailing club colleagues to undertake the Dinghy Instructor (DI) course. Under the tuition of Andy Hamilton, I learnt to address my sailing techniques (including deficiencies) and learn the tuition techniques for being a dinghy instructor. I would like to recognise Andy for his commitment and methodology and encourage anybody thinking about exploring what it means to get this certificate to 'be brave and do it !'. Teaching RYA level 1&2 courses to children in the early summer was a wonderful experience and this is also a good time to congratulate all the children for showing up and participating to the end.

The club had multiple activities throughout the year and the Easter-Egg hunt was a tough one! The weather was dreadful, but we still had enthusiastic attendees.

Cadet week is one of the highlights of the calendar and with my DI certificate, I along with many others were there all week soaking up the sunshine. To all members, please get involved in this week if you can. It has a fantastic vibe both on and off the water.

A new activity for my daughter Beatrice and I in 2023 was sailing a Dart 15 catamaran from Seaford. I appreciate Terry Jones letting my wife Karen buy it for me. Numerous Dart owners have given me hints and tips (which I mostly think were designed to improve our performance). Beatrice really took to coming out on the sea and being the trapeze specialist.

It has also been pointed out to me that the Dart 15 went faster when Jazz Turner was at the helm with Beatrice hanging off the side. Beatrice has also doubled up with James Dandridge on multiple occasions on his Dart 18, 'Starsky & Hutch' and came hammering past me with the other Dart 18s on more than one occasion. It's exhilarating to be fast-paced on a Sunday morning with dozens of others, so for anyone thinking of getting involved, come and join us.

There was a real buzz at Seaford in 2023 with increasing numbers using the site and this is a reason to give 'a big shout out' for Gary Bruggenwirth with his excellent drone footage for all on the water. Gary, thank you for all the great footage of our activities at all locations.

A new event for cadet sailors which started in October 2023 and ran right through the winter to the end of March was learning to sail Cadet 2-handed boats on Saturdays. Roger and Lily (Pevensey Bay Sailing Club) put enormous efforts into bringing multiple boats over to Piddinghoe and right through the winter months we had a group of sailing cadets turn up. This even included Saturdays when there was thick ice. We also had club representation at an event in Chichester in February 2024. Ed Holme has enabled continuity in 2024 and I believe we have multiple takers for this to continue at Piddinghoe. Thank you, Ed!

The calendar year always wraps up with the awards dinner, which in 2023 we held again at the View, Seaford Head golf course. This is a chance to wine, dine and celebrate, so I would encourage all members of all ages to come along. I will take this moment to congratulate our daughter Beatrice on winning the Tony Barr Cup in 2023. I had to ask several colleagues who Tony Barr was, and I am glad that I did. He was a remarkable person who gave so much to NSSC. The spin-off of Beatrice winning this award in 2023 was that Jazz Turner was invited to Beatrice's school to give a presentation which was well received raised the profile of sailing and that young girls of all ages and abilities can achieve their ambitions if they seek them.

And so, we round off a twelve-month period with the spring 2024 activities underway. At the dinghy show we personally bumped into numerous people looking to pat the shiny boats and decide what to buy themselves from the numerous companies. The last few weeks has seen increasing activity at Seaford. James Dandridge et al organised a large group photo so we can start fundraising for the clubhouse building. Paddy, Geraldine and others held land-based 4S refreshers to re-orientate those that will be on the safety boats this season and numerous masts are starting to reappear on boats.

At the time of writing, we are two Sundays into the Seaford racing calendar. Things are a little different at the moment whilst activity is happening around the clubhouse, but lots of people have been working on solutions to 'carry on as normal'. I sign-off by thanking the very many people (some named here and many not acknowledged with my apologies) for all the hard work and enthusiasm that makes this such a vibrant club. Here is hoping for a good 2024.

Judd Brammah, Vice Commodore

Report on Piddinghoe Lake

In September 2023 the Planning Inspectorate were finally able to decide in our favour that the NSSC track at Piddinghoe was not a historic public right of way. This followed a site visit during the previous month. This had been an ongoing issue since February 2017 when the Ramblers' Association applied to have the track designated as a Restricted Byway.

There were several reasons why NSSC fought, the main one being that had the Restricted Byway been confirmed, we would not have been legally able to lock the gate to our car park. Separately, the resurfacing works were completed on the track and carpark during early 2023 by the Southdowns National Park Authority, this followed NSSC's decision the previous year, to lease the track as part of the Egrets Way walking and cycle route.

By the end of 2023, we had almost reached our maximum berthing capacity at Piddinghoe. Unfortunately, in January 2023 a few individuals were able to break into the Piddinghoe compound and amused themselves by pushing in several boats that were stored on the water's edge. A small number of boats that were recovered from the lake have still not been claimed and will be being disposed of shortly. If you think one of these may be yours, please contact the berth master. If you have a boat at Piddinghoe and haven't checked it or cleared the berth recently, please do so.

In an effort to reduce the risk of an algae bloom reoccurring during 2023, we put netted barley straw around most of the lake circumference and the island. This is a traditional, accepted method of suppressing algae. The straw was double netted and stretched 1.2km in length! Many thanks to everyone who helped with this and its subsequent removal later in the year! We also experimented with dyeing the lake blue to reduce the ability of the algae to photosynthesis. Ultimately, we did suffer an algae bloom late in the summer season so were all our efforts in vain? In short we don't know, there are so many variables and without two identical lakes it is difficult to be certain. Certainly the algae bloom occurred later than it did the previous year. The barley straw is only effective against algae for a few months, so to maximise the effect would have required that the straw was removed and replaced during the early summer, a huge undertaking!

Report on the NSSC Training School for 2023

During the 2023 season the NSSC Training School put on the following courses

Date	Course	Venue	Participants
15-04-2023	RYA Powerboat Level 2. 2023 Course 1.	Newhaven Marina	4
22-04-2023	RYA Dinghy Spring Course 2023	Piddinghoe	7
13-05-2023	RYA Powerboat Level 2. 2023 Course 2	Newhaven Marina	2
13-05-2023	RYA Start Windsurfing Course 2023	Piddinghoe	2
13-05-2023	RYA Youth Sailing Scheme Stage 1	Piddinghoe	23

14-05-2023	Seamanship Revision	Piddinghoe	4
15-05-2023	Cadets Optimist Coached Regatta Fleet...	Piddinghoe	12
15-05-2023	Cadets Optimist Main Race Fleet 2023	Piddinghoe	12
15-05-2023	Cadets Optimist Regatta Race Fleet 2023	Piddinghoe	12
15-05-2023	Cadets Topper Main Race Fleet 2023	Piddinghoe	12
15-05-2023	Cadets Topper Regatta Race Fleet 2023	Piddinghoe	12
03-06-2023	RYA Powerboat Level 2. 2023 Course 3.	Newhaven Marina	6
22-06-2023	RYA Dinghy Summer Course 2023	Piddinghoe	13
02-08-2023	RYA Youth Sailing Scheme	Piddinghoe	14
14-08-2023	Cadet Week 2023 Registration	Piddinghoe	33
21-08-2023	RYA Youth Sailing Scheme Stage 1 and 2	Piddinghoe	4
02-09-2023	RYA Dinghy Autumn Course 2023	Piddinghoe	12
16-09-2023	RYA First Aid Course 2023	Piddinghoe	8
11-11-2023	Cadet Saturday Winter Course	Piddinghoe	12

We have a great team of instructors who have to maintain their qualifications by attending update courses, instructing on courses and volunteering their time to teach sailing, windsurfing, powerboating. We have instructors who can teach courses in all sorts of aspects of sailing and water sports. We are grateful for everything that they have done for the training school. In 2024 Brighton Water Sports have taken over organising the courses at Piddinghoe and will be using NSSC instructors where possible. NSSC are hoping to be able to offer courses on the sea and will be continuing to run the Power Boat courses.

Terry Jones Principal of Training School

Sailability 2023 Report

Last year we supported 46 disabled sailors running over 300 sessions with 19 volunteers, whom I would like to thank for their support. We were able to support a wide variety of disabilities and also took children with learning difficulties relating to Down's syndrome and autism.

Because of the location, we have been able to take out several severely disabled people from Chailey Heritage and Parchment Trust, some cannot communicate or control their movements. Participation fees raised over £1700.

Sue Topp as always, was busy all year making funding applications, and successfully raised over £27,000, for specific items. This includes the provision of training for our volunteers, a brand new Hansa 303 dinghy for our small fleet and funding for a

wheelchair-accessible pathway from the car park to the jetty which we hope will be in place by May.

Getting funding has been a big challenge, and I would like to thank Sue for her perseverance as many applications fail, and it is a time-consuming job.

This year we have recently received funding from the local Lyons club for a second hoist so that we not only have a backup but should be able to handle more people with physical disabilities. It's worth mentioning that many sailors get to know the volunteers and specifically ask to be taken out by them, non-more so than Jazz with her assistance dog Pheobe.

This year we have had enquiries from other organisations as our reputation spreads including East Sussex Learning Disability Services with some local organisations to increase awareness of the facilities we now have, and the diversity of disabilities we able to support.

So in essence we plan to expand the availability of sailing sessions on Tuesdays from late April till November, and raise further funds to invest in boats and electric outboard.

We started this year's sessions on the 6th of April and will run through until November weather permitting. So anyone interested in volunteering for Sailability on some Tuesday afternoons, please contact me.

Chris Turner
Sailability Lead

Para Sailing Events

Jazz has been sailing at a number of para events representing the club including:

RS Venture connect world championships November 2023- 2th silver medal, one point off 1st place

Getting opportunity to race Venture with the Sail GP team in Spain, and helm the Canadian GP boat.

Italy Hansa 303 event 2023 2nd

Italy RS Venture event 2023 1st

Cowes week 2023 Sonar- 4th overall

Skud nationals 2023- 2nd