



## Minutes of the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Burghfield Sailing Club held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017

The meeting opened at 19.30  
The Commodore, Wynn Kenrick, 49 full members and 11 additional members/visitors attended the meeting.

The Commodore in the Chair

The Chair welcomed the members and visitors to the meeting and introduced Nigel Rolfe as the current treasurer.

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Adrian Elsey, Andrew Salisbury, Charles Gilchrist, Kevin Druce, Colin Price, Malcolm Perry, Peter Withrington, Chris Webb, Jean Dennis, Richard Goss, Ellie Sharps

**2. Minutes of the 43<sup>rd</sup> AGM held on 24th November 2016** - had been circulated prior to the meeting and were approved as a true record.

**3. Matters arising: Covered in the upcoming reports.**

### **4. Commodore's report**

With thanks to the Sailing Committee, led by Andrew Leigh and Ian Bullock, we had another fantastic year of sailing. It was energetic, imaginative and successful – what we are all about. The water remained remarkably weed free with any issues dealt with quickly.

Sunday racing has been very busy with attendance regularly above 50 boats in the morning with fewer in the afternoon. Wednesday Evenings continue to introduce new people to racing with another successful year.

The trial 2:1 and 1:2 series were deemed a success and we will conduct further trials this coming year with the aim of improving afternoon attendance.

As many Laser sailors have moved on to the RS Aero and other boats, we now have three fleet starts. The Slow, Fast and Asymmetric fleets remain healthy.

With that in mind:

The Optimists, led by Paul Checksfield, have enjoyed another hugely successful season. Sailor numbers are increasing with great retention of sailors from the previous season. This year's new intake found their way very quickly and are developing into confident sailors. We had just over 100 sailors registered over 6 Oppie groups and our 'New for this season' Junior squad.

Many of the group's young sailors are now racing competitively, travelling to various open meetings this season, with a strong contingent of Burghfield sailors attending the Oppie Nationals in Weymouth. This has been recognised with commendations at the Nationals for their individual performances and development. Five Burghfield sailors have been offered places in the regional zone squads – a great achievement!

Our new Junior squad, training on a Sunday morning, led by a keen group, has had a good start. We now need to build on this to enable our younger sailors to develop into the new generation of club racers. For many, this was their first time sailing larger single and double handed boats, so the learning curve has been steep. We now have a much clearer idea what is needed and plan to strengthen their desire to sail regularly.

For the 2018 season, Junior Sailing challenges remain high. We aim to reduce a long waiting list for Optimist sailing, continue to grow the skills of our developing sailors and also provide a clear pathway for those sailors looking to progress and take on new classes. Thankfully, the parent coaches all remain as dedicated as ever and are raring to get going into the new season.

The Club has been busy with Open Meetings, class training and National Championship events in May and August, all running in conjunction with club racing. This includes the very successful University Team Racing weekend. Our Club's reputation with others is excellent, which encourages future membership and raises income.

Other sailing events included the MNDA charity event Nervous Wrecks, ably led by the Colvins, which raised £7,942 for MNDA and £3,046 for Sailability. Barts Bash 2017 was a great day with all-day sailing and prizes for many, impressing the witness Tim Anderton of ASF.

Our travelling racers have won countless events including World Championships, Nationals and Open Events. We cannot list all or we will be here all night! Winners will be listed on our Honours board.

Casual sailing at the club remains well attended, with a number of fun events. With a revised calendar we hope to increase numbers this coming year. Thanks again go to Kevin Druce for his tireless support. We are seeking more help in this area so if you have a free Saturday and would like to help please do let us know.

Our Race and Safety Teams have worked really well throughout the year. The role of the SRO has sometimes been particularly challenging, with people outside the race team offering advice. Going forward we would like to request that fellow racers show ample courtesy to those who are trying their best for all of us.

In addition, Race Officer courses are being planned for the New Year with advice on course setting and day to day planning. There are 2 moveable marks available to assist in setting the optimal course. We will be strongly recommending their use.

Next year's calendar is filling up with a wide range of events, which will further improve our Club's reputation. Your Sailing Committee is committed to providing the best sailing activities for all members on a sustainable basis.

Again this year the planning, preparation and execution of the Open Day was a success, enjoyed by all. There was a buzz about the place. We landed more than ten new members while raising the Club's profile in the local community.

Malcolm Perry has cast a careful eye over our Health & Safety procedures and documentation, with recommendations to tighten up regulatory compliance while maintaining sound common-sense application to the Club sailing activities.

Further to long standing plans for improved co-operation with the Sailing School, David Irwin introduced the Andrew Simpson Foundation (their public name) who are now taking over from

Berkshire Sail Training Centre, retaining BSTC charitable Objects. BSTC Trustees have provided forty-one years of dedicated work as a recognised RYA training centre and we wish them all the best for the future.

We expect ASF to greatly increase their activity over the next few years, raising the profile of the site with a commitment to a long term co-operative relationship and membership feed for the Club. Co-operation between our organisations will bring challenges and we ask all to support this new venture.

We have signed a Licence at Will to match our current Tenancy at Will. Documents will remain in place until a full lease and associated licence are executed. The Licence at Will includes a document which is taken from the old BSTC license and all of the Heads of Terms agreed by the Committee. Our lawyer and the RYA have reviewed and contributed. This also sets out how the two organisations will work with and support each other.

Turning to the Head Lease: With help from Jenefer Bugge and our solicitor Bill Montague, we submitted new Heads of Terms to the Prudential in August, due to the delays in planning. In April the Club and ASF met the Prudential in London with ASF present. Prudential expressed willingness to consider a 30/35 year lease, but with a break clause to allow a sailing friendly developer to take over. Inevitably they are now waiting to see how the Developer progresses with their appeal, due to be lodged by the end of December.

While looking through old documents it became apparent that market rent assessment could play a part in setting the rent. We engaged Crossthwaites to give us an independent view on what it should be for a sailing club. It happens that sailing club market rents have not increased in sympathy with commercial rents and so we have a negotiating point. We are now working with solicitors to draft a discussion document for submission, though the Landlord's view is that pensioners are relying on our rent level!

In March the government increased business rates where it could. In our case the increase is unsustainable at 488%, albeit ameliorated by regulated transitional relief. We have therefore engaged Powis Hughes Ltd to help us with the appeal and negotiation of a sensible level. Meanwhile West Berks Council have considered our application and awarded us a 50% discretionary relief for the year.

Our social events are like the curate's egg (good in parts). This year saw "Nervouswrecks" with the club supporting the Peter Colvin and Family charity event. The club saw around 400 people support the weekend raising 12,000 pounds for MNDA and Sailability. We wish them all the best and look forward to supporting them in 2018.

October saw more than 60 adults and children embrace the fancy dress theme and enjoy a fabulous evening of fun and games at the Halloween Party which was arranged by the youth sailors.

Although various sections and groups within the sailing club are enjoying success with social activities, there is a sense of reluctance for club-wide activities and despite an attempt to promote better involvement, we are not having great success, perhaps due in part to the wide geographical area of our membership.

It may well also be that we have failed to ignite members interests with events that appeal to the wider audience.

With this in mind, we intend to take a whole new approach for the coming year. We would like to see a social committee formed, that includes representation from every group of the Club. The role of social secretary will be to co-ordinate the activities of the social committee, developing ideas and a calendar that appeals to a wider audience and encourages a higher level of participation.

This year Clubhouse, led by Peter Colvin, continues to work within a limited 3-year plan in anticipation of planning approval and proposed redevelopment of the site. Until we know otherwise, investment is limited to items that can be lifted and shifted to any new building or need upgrading. The work that we've undertaken has therefore been limited to minor upgrades and improving the look and feel of the Club, celebrating the success of individuals and promoting sailing.

Working with Sportography, a number of sailing images have been placed around the Club and the Honours boards will be updated in the same acrylic style. We are compiling the list at the moment, for completion early 2018. If you know of a member's achievement over the last 5 years please put it forward for consideration.

Last year, the Clubhouse, saw the heating replaced and upgraded. Completing the upgrade we now have heating in the changing rooms. These will be set at a low level to keep the chill off only. Please do not turn them up or cover them to dry items.

The shower area has issues with condensation and investigation identified that the extractor fans need to be upgraded. Once this is completed the area will be redecorated.

Changing Benches need to be refurbished. Replacement for these and the mats will be costed over the coming weeks. We will look to replace as budgets allow.

Lighting throughout the whole building is old and replacement with LED units is being undertaken. The corridors and landing are the first to be done and as soon as suitable alternatives are identified, the clubroom is next.

Additionally, whilst attending Sailability events, it became apparent that wheelchair users were unable to venture onto the balcony through the existing 3 panel doors. These also required some attention and made the room dark. A replacement with a low threshold and larger opening, was agreed. Though an error on the order meant that the wrong threshold was supplied and negotiations have allowed a second unit to be fitted.

We also saw the Training Centre building take a lightning strike, damaging the fire alarm. This has now been replaced and commissioned.

Last year General Purposes experienced an issue with the supply of fuel. Peter Colvin worked with suppliers and a new larger tank installed by Wynn, Andy and David Martin – Special Projects team. This has cured the problem and fuel deliveries have been re-established.

Regular monthly work parties have done very good work in trying to keep our large estate under control in this year of prolific growth. Also many members have stepped in to help on top of their regular duties - in particular Mike Proven (heavy mowing) and Tony Chandler (chain sawing). The Club is most grateful to all. Appreciation is also due to Alan Glanville, who has answered the call to arms and has joined the weekly routine maintenance group. The effect on our immediate surroundings can be seen already.

Island clearance: two work parties and a few of the usual stalwarts have cut the willows and banks on all four islands and completed One Tree Island. It is now up to the Fleets please to trim the tops of the other islands, rake and burn over winter. This is in the direct interests of sailing and needs work from fleet members in addition to their other duties. The Blazymetric team are leading the competition at present. The Slow Fleet and Oppie Groups with ASF need to catch up on Pylon Island! By cutting the islands regularly, the work will become progressively easier, as can be seen

by wild flowers (not brambles) on part of Pylon Island.

Alan Money and his team have worked well on weed and buoyage. This is the fourth year of using dye. The application of dye each month for five months over the summer is proving more successful than weed cutting and Alan refines the process over time. There will always be some weed as it is governed by water depth, temperature and uv levels. Dead weed is collected when reasonably practicable.

Bosun Peter Langdon is grateful for the help of David Martin, Alan Money and other volunteers with the maintenance and repair work carried out on the power boats this year. After the Committee Boat's catastrophic engine failure, a new 4 stroke engine was sourced and fitted in quick time by the Special Projects team and a new engine has been supplied to the Oppie Group.

All power boat drivers now benefit from the improved performance and the reliability of the 4 stroke engines. Oppie Group's ageing 2 stroke engines are planned for renewal subject to funds being made available.

Weekly boat and engine checks have proved to be beneficial in reducing the down time of the rescue and support boats, as has carrying out basic engine servicing using in-house club members, resulting in a 40% saving in cost.

No-one goes on for ever and we do need applications for the important and rewarding post of Bosun, initially to understudy and help Peter Langdon.

Small work parties will be required over winter to help with the recovery cleaning and relaunching of our power boats. Your help in taking part will be greatly appreciated.

Sailability had another successful year under the leadership of David Martin, with an increase in new members. Only one meeting had to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. The evenings all seemed to go well with the aid of their loyal and capable volunteers. Prior's Court's new Wheelyboat was popular, not only with Prior's Court residents but also the clients who went on the boat when it was available.

New Achievement Books have been introduced and prove to be extremely popular with the clients wishing to participate and this encouraged them to try new sailing boats and achieve new skills. A stamp went in their books for every level of achievement. Trophies will be awarded to each client who completes each level of the book.

There is a full and active committee and the season has run very smoothly. All Sailability boats have been repaired and stored for the Winter.

With a generous donation from The Nervous Wrecks Team and other's donations, Sailability's bank balance is looking healthy and some of the money will be spent shortly on things on the Sailability Wish List

In conclusion the fall in our membership numbers since 2008 continues but at a slower rate to level around 410. More than 2000 volunteer days are shared amongst the members so it can be seen that some are doing much more than the minimum to keep the Club alive and well. We are all very grateful and pass on our thanks to them.

Costs are in excess of income and we dip into reserves to cover one-off professional and other costs, such as the larger petrol tank, and cover the medium term drop in income from the sailing school.

I am very grateful for the support of the committee members and the managers over the last two years. A lot has been achieved, much of it behind the scenes. We have an active club, excellent in many areas and stabilising numbers. Working with ASF we expect improvement in the near future.

### ***Wynn Kenrick, Commodore 2017***

The Commodore invited questions from the floor. No questions.

## **5. Treasurer's report**

I am pleased to present the annual financial accounts for the year ended 30 September 2017 to the AGM. The accounts comprise an income and expenditure account, balance sheet and notes. These are draft version as they have not been signed off by the auditor yet.

Overall, income at £190,483 (2016 – £185,846) is slightly up on last year (2.5%).

This was helped by increase in fee income was up 2.7% and Sailing events which in 2017 was up by 241% on last year generating £13,676 of extra revenue to the club (compared to £5,659 in 2016). It should be noted that £5243 of this was due to "Nervous Wrecks" giving a net increase on a like for like basis of £2.7k on 2016. Sailability income fell by 65% but, after costs was still in credit at the year end.

The decline in membership numbers has continued.

For 2017, Full Membership numbers reduced from 426 to 409 members - a reduction of -4% (2016 -5.1%). We are optimistic the new relationship with ASSF as a more proactive training centre on the site and the move to monthly memberships will help with attracting new members and in retaining existing members. More on this later. On expenditure, the committee have been very conscious about costs but, remained committed to key initiatives to keep the club functioning at an expected level. These include weed control and engine replacement. Cleaning increased significantly due to min wage, increased hours etc.. (£6k) and the other major cost was the replacement of the fuel tank. This cost was down to the changes to the fuel distributors minimum fuel delivery amount. This incurred a one-off cost of around£10k. Our costs for the year were at £198,186 (2016-£190,070), £8k higher than last year.

The committee continued to take a careful view on signing off new items of expenditure and we maintain a project list to prioritise expenditure. Several essential repair and maintenance projects were undertaken during the year, for example, changing lighting to LED units and the purchase of some engines as part of the rolling programme.

The Club exclusive of Sailability reports cash deficit of £12,681 which is marginally worse than last year (2016 - deficit £11,851) before the deduction of depreciation for the financial year. It is likely to get worse with the increases in business rates and reduction in income from Sail Training until ASSF can create a sustainable business on the site. Clearly the focus for 2017 will be on the retention of existing members, attraction of Members, maximising ancillary income and care over nonessential spend. However, we are going to need to increase membership fees to keep pace with the rising costs the club is facing.

After deducting depreciation of £11,326 the club reports a deficit for the year of £19,029 (2016 - £35,697 – note depreciation in 2016 was £31,473). The net deficit relating to the general activity of the Club itself is £23,396 whilst Sailability reports a net surplus of £4,367.

The balance sheet sets out the club's financial position. The key point to note is that despite cash deficit for the year and ebbing fixed asset book values, the Club continues to operate within its financial means. The Club net asset position remains positive with retained cash at bank balance of £164,014 at the year end.

The club has reserves of £214,283 (down £19k) which gives us a cushion to manage a period of adjustment as we deal with reduced income and increasing costs. 2017 was a busy year but as we go into 2018 we are facing increasing costs and we still have a declining membership. Our income from sail training in 2018 whilst ASSF are developing will be less than we have previously enjoyed and our business rates are increasing.

We have a few variable costs but, most of those we must maintain to keep the club sustainable e.g. weed control (£10k).

We need to increase membership fees and be more efficient in collecting it (incl chasing payments). We need to make it easier for members to make changes and for new people to join at any point during the year. We need to make it easier for members to pay by spreading the costs.

So, for 2018 we are making several changes to how membership fees are calculated and collected. We are moving all fees to monthly payable by direct debit. From now only monthly fees are quoted. We are also;

1. Removing annual data collection – now the responsibility of members to advise of changes.
2. Increasing fees in January by £1.50 per month (Combined Full + Boat Park).
3. Move the annual increase date to June when most members are seeing and enjoying the benefits of their membership - starting from 1st June 2018.

The committee also considered whether there should be a reduction in the Young Persons Membership. It was felt the current rate is competitive when compared to other clubs. Therefore, no change.

The committee also considered increasing the age for Senior Sailors in line with changes to retirement age. This was agreed. Starting in 2017/18 the age for a Senior Sailor is now 66.

The committee reviewed the criteria for the joining fee. It will apply if someone cancels and re-joins within a 12-month period. This is to prevent members suspending payments part year and then restarting them.

### ***Nigel Rolfe, Treasurer 2017***

The Treasurer invited questions from the floor and confirmed the following:

Changing to monthly payments would have some impact on cash flow initially but should provide long term benefits. The fee increases in January (5%) would not be sufficient to see the club breakeven in 2018, but fees increase and caution with spending should bring deficit down. Fees will be reviewed in June. The mid-year review will become standard (no further increase in Dec 2018).

ASSF will pay 10k licence fee. But if, they are as successful as expected then the business model provides for increased fees payable to the club.

The committee continues to look at using the space for alternative activities, and this has been done in a limited capacity in 2017 (film crew etc). However, due to restrictions within the lease, need to operate within parameters.

With a decreasing membership, it is important to look at effective marketing to increase the profile of the club. This is being addressed through social media and the Open Day.

With regards to the increase in age for Senior membership the floor was asked to consider whether the gap between Full and Senior Full should be reduced. Would senior members be prepared to pay slightly more than ½ the full fees. The suggestion was met with broad approval subject to further discussion.

The Committee was asked if it had considered altering it's financial status to a Charity/CASC/CIO etc. WK explained that all options had been considered extensively in recent years. But, that there were onerous responsibilities for Charity Trustees, significant difficulties in satisfying all the requirements for a CASC - prove 50% members have used club 12 times per year, and the rules and regulations for a CIO won't allow club to run as is.

When asked if additional funding could be provided through grants WK explained that many grants/funding opportunities require a lease and currently that would prohibit application. The importance of the club acquiring a lease both for funding and long term security of tenure was reiterated.

## **6. Proposal from A Powell**

The following proposal was received by the committee prior to the AGM:

*Burghfield Sailing Club AGM 2017*

*I the undersigned, would like to propose the following motion for discussion at the above meeting.*

*That Sunday Club Racing must take priority over any other event and that the Race Officer will have the whole of the lake at his/her disposal when setting a course.*

*Alan Powell 8/11/17*

AP elaborated that the proposal was submitted due to frustrations that on occasion he had arrived on a Sunday as a competitor or SRO only to find outside event arranged. ASSF replacing BSTC and will want to use water on Sunday so need to ensure racing is not compromised. The most recent event prompting discussion was the RUSC Team Racing event which took place over a Saturday and Sunday.

The discussion was opened to comments and questions from the floor.

Whilst the committee and other members appreciated that members should have the right to sail when they wanted and to enjoy regular, organised racing, there was also a need to encourage youth sailors to come through the club and to generate good publicity through well attended and successful events. The floor generally agreed that they would not want racing affected every week, or on a regular basis, but a compromise for a very occasional event should be reached. The event organisers/ASSF and club members should continue to work together when planning events that may overlap. Additional guidance could be provided for Race Officers, use of

moveable marks would help course setting, The proposal was felt to be too prescriptive. The majority felt the club had a good balance offering regular Sunday racing with only one or two 2-day events likely to effect the calendar each year, whilst attracting new members and income to the club through large/high profile events.

AP was thanked for his comments but following a show of hands the proposal was not carried

## 7. Appointment of Tellers and election of Committee, Fleet Captains and Auditors

Tellers: Sharon Bullock & Virginia Leigh.

There was only one nomination for each of the following posts. WK explained that prior to appointing the new committee there were currently 4 ex-Commodores in active roles on the committee. New members were needed to get involved and RC Clubhouse was still a vacant post. WK thanked NR for his time as treasurer.

### Committee

Commodore	Andrew Leigh
Rear Commodore Sailing	Mike Proven
Rear Commodore Clubhouse	Vacant
Rear Commodore General Purposes	Tim Higgs
Treasurer	Robert Garlick
Principal Race Officer	Ian Bullock
Health & Safety Officer	Malcolm Perry
Bosun	Peter Langdon
Social Secretary	Melanie Curtis
Marketing & Publicity Officer	Nigel Rolfe
Special Projects (co-opted)	Wynn Kenrick
Special Projects (co-opted)	Peter Colvin
General (co-opted)	David Irwin
Sailability Representative	David Martin

### Fleet Captains

Fast Handicap	Mike Bell & Andy Maw
Slow Handicap	Paul Bristow
Asymmetric	Pete Haddrell
Optimist	Paul Checksfield
Junior Sailing	Douglas Calder
Recreational Sailing	Kevin Druce
Sailboard	Vacant

### Auditor

Proposed: Andy Maw, Seconded: Jay Dear

***The nominees were declared appointed and passed nem con***

In welcoming the new committee WK suggested that KD required additional help with recreational sailing, the club hosts 2+ sailboard events a year so a Fleet Captain would be appreciated, and that whilst the club now has a full, skilled GP team, they don't replace volunteer work parties.

As the new Commodore, AL thanked WK for his hard work over the previous two years, noting the huge amount of time that had been spent on various projects.

## **8. Election of Honorary Life Members**

None this year

## **9. Amendments to the Constitution**

None

## **10. Any other business**

The Commodore opened the meeting to the floor for any other questions/discussions.

The Commodore confirmed that the club was in a good position. It continued with a good reputation and was a nice place to sail, however it would benefit from having more people on board and increasing membership. Looking forward to the next 12 months the committee was looking at improving the profile of the club – advertising through members travelling to other events and by hosting successful events for visiting sailors; encouraging visitors attending an Open to race on a Sunday particularly through the winter when numbers are lower - visitors can be signed in as guests or participate in racing by paying the day rate; advertising in local magazines to raise awareness of club location and activities.

However, the one thing that was quite clear was that many sailors come through sail training. NR explained that as BSTC activity decreased, membership numbers also fell. With ASSF on site the club would be looking to them to encourage new members. ASSF have very high profile and hopefully will have a very positive impact on the club.

RS had used the club as a demo site previously, this had been under discussion recently between RS, Club and ASSF.

The Commodore thanked those present for their ideas and comments, but reiterated that those on the committee were working flat out so any offers of help to see some ideas through would be very much appreciated.

No other items.

The meeting closed at: 20:56