

# Minutes of BWBC AGM 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024

## Attendees

John Varley, Julie Varley, Mike Waldron, Lindsey Waldron, Barry Jopson, Ann Jopson, Sharon Collins, Angela Goldsmith, John Walsh, Patsy Slight, Peter Crutchfield, Bridget Crutchfield, Neal Newnham, Keith Gerrish.

## Apologies for absence

Duncan Roberts, Phil Greenwood, Gaynor Edwards, Laura Montgomery, Graham Montgomery.

## Treasurer's Report

Clubs total now £6,385.51 (+ £262.51).

Income £3,797.99

Membership subs received £1,620.00 (-8.7%)

Expenditure £3,370.21

Club made charitable donations of £200 from club funds

Now able to take card payments (but fees are payable on this method)

Costs of printing for new handbooks £985 this was covered by Corporate advertising (£1,075).

Club now holds a stock of handbooks for new members.

Income/Expenditure for Laying Up Supper falls in FY24/25.

Assets are no longer shown in the accounts, but have been moved to a new asset register and value depreciated in line with HMRC guidelines.

## Membership Report

At the end of 2023 we had a membership of 110. In January 2024, 26 members did not renew their membership, bringing our total membership at the beginning of 2024 to 81. This is not unusual, as the pattern for previous years was the same (i.e. 21 leavers in 2023).

### Reasons for leaving

Sold boat	6
Not attended for 5 years	2
No longer interested	1
Moved away	2
Death	2
Too busy	3
No reason given	7
<u>Non payment of subs.</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	29

During 2024 we have recruited another 21 members which has brought our current total membership up to 102. A loss of 20+ members per year is far too high. However, although we can expect to lose some members each year we must endeavour to keep all members engaged in the club's activities. This means that we must arrange more activities for non boat owners.

Due to the success of previous open days in the recruitment of new members, we should ensure that these continue into 2025 and take every opportunity to promote BWBC at future events.

## **Commodores Report 2024**

It has been a privilege to have held the position of commodore for the past year. I would like to thank all the members of the committee for their support and encouragement and for all of their individual contributions to helping run the club and organising and attending this year's programme of events. I believe that everyone has played their part and contributed their free time towards helping to keep the club viable, interesting and informative.

After listening to member feedback and noting the attendance at various events during 2023, we decided to start the year with a reduced programme of events. However we felt that the programme still had a sufficient number and quality of activities to cater both for boaters and non-boaters alike.

In 2023 for one reason or another we had virtually no boating or cruising events during the year and given that we are first and foremost a Boat Club with Social Members, as Commodore I was particularly keen to see that we could offer a varied programme of cruising events for 2024. Key to this would be the appointment on the committee of Duncan Roberts as Cruise Master. Those of you who know Duncan, will I'm sure appreciate not just his boating knowledge, but perhaps more important his general enthusiasm for boating and wanting to see as many members as possible getting out on the water. As a consequence and despite a very wet start to the season resulting in record flood levels in the Trent in April, we have been able to fulfil a highly varied boating programme with short simple cruises along the Fosdyke & Witham coupled with four longer more challenging cruises to Farndon Marina near Newark, York Marina, The whole of the Humber Estuary and The South Yorkshire Navigation. All of these longer trips were a particular success by packing in a vast amount of boating hours and challenges, largely without incident. I encourage all Boaters to join in as many of next year's Cruising events as possible. You will certainly get a lot out of them.

At the end of 2023 we started the process of revising our club handbook. The handbook was first produced over 7 years ago, so a refresh was well overdue. This is a pocket size guide largely aimed at boating members as it carries a lot of easily accessible mostly boating related information. I am pleased to say that we concluded this process by the end of Spring and a copy of the new handbook was distributed to all members and advertisers. We now have a stock of the new handbook available for all members and further copies are available upon request.

In early February, we took a stand at the Lincolnshire Boat Jumble held annually at Lincoln Showground, which was a highly successful morning. Later in the month a small group of us attended BoatLife at the NEC and in September four of us attended the Southampton International Boat Show.

On the non Boating front we have had four highly interesting speaker nights (two of which were presented by club Members Peter Allen and Neal Newnham, to whom I would like to once again extend my sincere gratitude. We also had what seems to have now become a couple of annual sporting events with our Ten Pin Bowling night and Target Pistol Shooting night (neither of which were at all competitive!!!! Sharon). In addition and thanks to Gaynor for the idea, we held a litter pick day on the Fosdyke, an event which I would particularly like to see us grow for next year and repeat at least annually. We also had our annual BBQ with many thanks to Laura & Graham Montgomery for hosting, a Pizza night at the Anglers in Saxilby and a Quiz night here at David Lloyd. In addition to all of that were club social nights at Woodcocks, The Pyewipe and Burton Estate Club (where we have maintained our group membership arrangement).

In April we held our Fitting Out Supper and in December we have our End of Year Dinner, both of which have been subsidised by the Club for our members behalf and I would like to thank Mike & Marie Baldry at Harbour Lights for accommodating us.

Lastly for 2024, I have to mention our Summer Event back in July held in conjunction with BW Marina and BW Residents Group. This was the first event of its type on Burton Waters and as a result I feel a lot was learned from the day which will allow us to consider how best this can be followed up in subsequent years. As far as we were concerned, the purpose of this event was twofold. Firstly to raise awareness of the Club with a specific aim to generate new members. We managed to secure 9 new members on the day. Secondly we wanted to raise funds for two worthy charities, being the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (Skegness branch) and Fund Britain's Waterways. Through a combination of raffle prizes and charity boat rides we managed to raise just shy of £400 and net of costs for the event we were able to donate £200 to the RNLI and FBW.

We will continue to listen to member feedback in relation to our events programme going forward, as we want to make sure that there is enough scope and variety of events for all members to take part in and enjoy, whether you are a Boater or a Social Member. I am particularly aware that we may have swung the pendulum a little too far away from our non boating members in 2024 and I would like to see us address this for 2025. With this in mind if there is a particular event or activity you think would be appropriate, please mention it to a member of the committee and we will see what we can do.

I would also like to remind you of the club website which is a highly useful resource for members containing a lot of information as well as being home to our online 'club shop' (accessed via the Club Area of the website). Currently we have a small range of branded items of clothing all available at reasonable prices, however if anyone has any ideas for other items that we could look to include then feel free to raise this with one of us and we will investigate.

I should also mention our genuine thanks to the team here at David Lloyd for their continued support in particular allowing us to use this room for our monthly meetings.

Finally, we have a couple of presentations to make. First is the Cruiser of the Year Award. To present this award I would like to hand over to Mike Waldron.

"Cruiser of the Year" nominated by Duncan Roberts, John & Julie Varley.

Next is the "Commodores Award". This is normally awarded to the person who the Commodore considers has made the greatest contribution to the club over the year. This year's award takes on a slightly different and extra special dimension for two reasons as

- 1) It is awarded not to one person but to two people.
- 2) It recognises their contribution to the club not just for this year but over many years

So, in recognition of:

- Many years of dedicated service to the club, without which quite frankly we would have no club

I have no hesitation in making this year's award to Barry & Ann Jopson as a sign of my gratitude for all their work & dedication over many years supporting the club.

### **Election of Officers and Committee Members for 2025**

Ordinarily the role of Commodore would be passed on to the Vice Commodore but as no one has put their name forward both John and Mike have agreed to stay on as Commodore and Rear Commodore respectively for another year. Also there are vacancies for Club Secretary and Membership Secretary. Temporarily Julie has agreed to take on the roll as Club Secretary. As we do not have a nomination for Membership Secretary Barry has agreed to help membership and renewal of memberships in January. Therefore there are 5 vacancies to be filled during 2025 – Vice Commodore, Membership Secretary, Club Secretary and 1 committee member.

Therefore the club officers for 2025 were unanimously elected as follows;

Commodore	John Varley
Vice Commodore	Vacant
Rear Commodore	Mike Waldron
Hon. Treasurer	Phil Greenwood
Hon. Secretary	Vacant (Julie Varley temp.)
Liaison Officer	Sharon Collins
Membership Secretary	Vacant (John Varley/Barry Jopson temp.)
Cruise Master	Duncan Roberts
Committee Members	Gaynor Edwards (Kayak)
	Laura Montgomery
	Vacant

### **Constitutional changes to Registration & Membership fees.**

Currently the fee structure defines that boating members who join are double members (likely the skipper and crew member) at a registration fee of £30 and an annual fee of £30. An individual social member has a £15 registration and £15 annual fee. The change proposed is Boating members pay an individual fee of £15 registration and £15 annual fee total £30 and social members fee stays the same at £15 at renewal.. This change was put forward to members attending and all voted in favour and so was unanimously carried forward.

### **Commodore's Address**

#### **Objective 1: Survival**

Firstly and priority number one will be for us to make sure we do all we can to put the club in a position that sees it being able to continue to exist. Whilst this might sound alarming to some members, it needs to be made clear that the club will not survive if we continue to rely on the small number of the same people on the committee year in year out. Going into 2025 we will be carrying five vacant positions on the Committee, three of which are essential to the existence of the club. So we simply must see that all vacant positions on the committee are filled and I cannot stress enough the importance of us being able to do this. Quite frankly unless we can fill all vacancies on the committee during 2025, I fear that we are unlikely to be able to continue as a club beyond the end of next year. We need members to come forward and self nominate for the positions we have vacant

- Vice Commodore (a 3 year commitment)
- Membership Secretary
- Club Secretary
- General Committee member

Whilst all are essential, I also need to make it clear that I do not believe that any of the positions are especially onerous or over burdensome (even the role of Commodore), which in non boating terms is really the role of a Chairperson. The more people who are involved the easier the task becomes. So please go away and think whether you can get involved and if you decide that you are unable to get involved yourself, then think of people you know, who you think would be both willing and able to join the Committee (whether they are presently a club member or not).

## **Objective 2: Membership**

In addition to the above, we also need to secure the financial viability of the club. With the cost of everything increasing in recent times we need to grow our revenue streams. By far the easiest way to do this is simply to grow the membership base. We currently have circa 100 members and this needs to increase by a minimum of 20% in 2025 just to get numbers back to where we were pre-Covid.

We will only attract new members by;

Raising the overall awareness of the club & highlighting the benefits of membership

We can do this through targeted social media activity. We now have over 300 members of our Facebook Group Burton Waters Boaters plus over 100 followers on Instagram. One method we must not under estimate is word of mouth from our existing members. The easiest way is to simply tell your friends, relatives and neighbours about the club. Remember, you don't need to own a boat to be a member.

I would like to see us being able to provide all members with value for money member benefits. By actively taking part in club activities, I would like to think that the membership fee will pay for itself

## **Objective 3: Events & Activities**

Building on the successes of 2024 I would like to see a continued emphasis on Boating related events & activities in 2025. However, I also recognise the importance especially for non boating members that we offer the right amount and type of non-boating purely social activities. For this it is important that you make your voices heard as to what type of Social events you would like to see included and would take part in. The committee will very soon be starting to formulate our programme of events for 2025 so don't be shy in coming forward with your ideas. We will aim to have the 2025 programme ready to announce by the end of Jan early Feb latest.

## **Any Other Business**

*Q. Are we in competition with Burton Waters Cruising Club?*

A. John Varley informed the meeting that The Marina formed the Burton Waters Cruising Club in 2023 stating that they were not in competition with the Boat Club and it was started purely to facilitate the training of new boaters. It is not a club, it has no constitution, it requires no annual fee. To participate they must buy, moor or own a boat at Burton Waters. Unfortunately their Laying Up Supper was being held tonight as well so 10 of our members were unable to attend the AGM. We must find a way to co-exist.

The meeting was closed at 21.15hrs.