



St Helier Boat Owners Association

Minutes of the 28th Annual General Meeting held at St Helier Yacht Club on 21st November 2017 at 1930 hours.

Present	The Officers, Committee members and approximately 70 members.
In Attendance	Representing Ports of Jersey: Myra Shacklady, Key Accounts & Marketing Director, (MSh) & Mike Tait, Leisure Manager, (MT).
Introduction	The Chairman, Will Simpson (WS), opened the meeting by welcoming members and MSh & MT who would answer questions directed through the chair during the open forum. He said that the Harbourmaster Bill Sadler had sent apologies as he was meeting with the lifeboat crew. He thanked the Yacht Club for their generosity in allowing the use the Club for the AGM & committee meetings throughout the year.
1. Apologies	Apologies had been received from Richard & Kathleen Ireson, Vic Walker, Peter Rose, Christine Gill & Colin Griffiths.
2. Minutes	WS said the minutes of the last AGM held on 29 th November 2016 had been available on the website, he proposed they be taken as read and they were approved on a proposition by J Rogers, seconded by G Winchester.
3. Matters Arising	There were no matters arising.
4. Chairman's Report	The Chairman read his report covering the main issues and activities dealt with during the year. His report is attached to & forms a part of these minutes. The Chairman's Report was accepted on a proposition by G Winchester, seconded by J Rogers.
5. Hon Treasurer/ Membership Secretary's Report	In the absence of the Treasurer, WS summarised the accounts for year to 30 Sept 2017, copies of which had been placed on the chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income slightly down at £2005 vs £2113 • Small deficit for year of £362 (broke even last year), due to higher postage resulting from subscription chasing and timing of purchase of stamps for the AGM mailshot, plus retirement presentation to Mike Stevens at last years AGM. • Cash in the bank was £6,658 - last year £7035 • Membership is shown in accounts at 449 as compared with 467 last year. The current number is 395 members after allowing for non-renewals next year. • He expressed thanks to Tim Scott Warren for his hard work as Independent Examiner. <p>The accounts were approved on a proposition by M Stevens, seconded by P Mourant.</p>
6. Election of Officers	N Wood took the chair & thanked WS for his first year as Chairman, during which he had arranged regular meetings with Ports' officers & participated in Marine Development Group meetings. His being the only nomination he declared WS re-elected as Chairman to applause.

	<p>WS then read the further nominations received as follows:</p> <p>Vice Chairman – N Wood Hon. Secretary – P Donne Davis Hon. Treasurer – Mark Peters.</p> <p>Committee Members:</p> <p>P Carter M Clarke K Hennelly P Rose V Walker</p> <p>There being no further nominations, WS declared that the above-mentioned were duly elected.</p> <p>PDD said there remained a committee vacancy & they would endeavour to co-opt a volunteer.</p>
7. Election of Independent Examiner.	WS said Tim Scot Warren had been proposed by P Donne Davis & seconded by M Clarke & declared him re-elected.
8. Subscriptions	WS said the Committee's recommendation was that subscriptions for the year commencing 1/12/18 remain unchanged & this was agreed on a proposition by A Manning, seconded by P Mourant.
9. Donations	WS said that the Committee recommended donations of £500 each to CI Air Search & the St Helier lifeboat, with discretion granted to the Committee regarding the latter, as to if/when/to whom a payment is made. A Manning proposed that the Committee's recommendation be accepted. This was seconded by P Hatter and carried unanimously.
10. Changes to Constitution and Rules	PDD said that in order to update the signatories for the bank accounts a number of resolutions needed to be passed. P Mourant asked if the constitution required approval at an AGM & upon being advised that it did not, proposed that the matter be deferred to the first meeting of the new Committee & this was agreed.
11. Open Meeting	<p>WS invited MSh & MT to come forward. He asked for questions from the floor & the following matters were raised (their responses shown in italics):</p> <p>Can we have an update on the delays in opening of the gates in St Helier marina? <i>MT said he sympathised with users for the inconvenience caused. The harbourmaster intended to call a meeting of interested parties to consider safety of the gates & traffic lights with a view to restoring them to a satisfactory status & he hoped this would be before Christmas.</i></p> <p>What is happening in the boat park? The area is either dusty or wet & ground is damaged by speeding vehicles. <i>MT said re-grading & drainage work is currently under way in the area of the gates & then it would be extended to the East. He expected the work would reduce the puddles, better quality gravel was being used however full tarmacking & drainage was too expensive. He felt that the installation of the security gates had reduced vehicle damage.</i></p> <p>How successful had the Passeport Escale scheme been? <i>MT said he had anticipated 50-60 sales in the first year, so was pleased to have sold 140.</i></p> <p>Could traders be barred from parking in the Elizabeth marina drop-off spaces? <i>MSh said unfortunately not, as they had only 10 spaces at Castle Quay & at high cost.</i></p>

	<p>Why are some people getting parking tickets in the La Colette area able to have them cancelled? <i>MSh: Parking falls under 3 jurisdictions, some Ports, some St Helier Parish & some on the Waterfront, the Jersey Development Company. Those ticketed in Parish spaces can appeal at the Parish Hall.</i></p> <p>Can MSh give any information on the master plan progress? <i>MSh: The process commenced a year ago & consultation on the airport plans would start next week. That for the ports had been delayed by the need to appoint new consultants & consultation was expected to start in March when open meetings would be held.</i></p> <p>When will the States tug be back from Scotland? <i>MSh: She is on her way back now.</i></p> <p>Commercial ribs were mooring end to end on the La Colette holding pontoon making using it by larger motor boats impossible. Could they be asked to raft, or moor elsewhere? <i>MT: Holding space is a big issue, second only to parking! Space has been allocated at the North end of 4/5 & he has an idea for a new location next year for times when they cannot access to their marina berths.</i></p> <p>When will we have an all weather lifeboat again? Emily Newbald said that the crew were holding an open meeting at the Town Hall next Tuesday & Phil Rondel added that further meetings were planned at St Peter & St John Parish Halls. <i>MSh said that backup plans were in place to provide coverage until a resolution could be agreed.</i></p> <p>There being no further questions, WS thanked MSh & MT for attending.</p> <p>He then sought views from the floor on the future of the annual newsletter, given the proposed use of email as a speedier way of communicating with members. C Fairbairn proposed that it be discontinued, but P Mourant said it could be sent by email to cut costs & distributed at the Boat Show to raise the Association's profile. G Winchester suggested a 1 year transition to allow time for more members to sign up for email communication.</p> <p>WS suggested the matter be left to the Committee to consider the various views & this was agreed.</p>
Draw	<p>WS said 4 prizes had been donated to a draw for those who had updated their standing orders for the new subscriptions before the AGM & invited MSh to draw the winning tickets. The Winners were: Margaret de Petrovsky, Carol Bannister, Mrs F Bisson & Paul Le Roux.</p>
Termination	<p>WS thanked everyone for attending & invited them to partake of the buffet.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 2035.</p>

Addendum:

Chairman's Report 2017

This is the 28th AGM of the Association, the first having been held in 1990. It is also the first one since I was elected Chairman a little under a year ago, so this is an opportunity for me to share with you some reflections on your Association, what is has achieved so far, and what we hope to achieve going forward.

The Association was formed with four clear objectives, namely: -

1) To represent the interests of owners who keep or launch their boats in St. Helier Harbours or Marinas

- 2) To seek continued improvements to and maintenance to a high standard of those harbour facilities available to St. Helier boat owners
- 3) To ensure a fair and open system of berth and mooring allocation
- 4) To maintain close liaison with the Harbour Authorities and with other Harbour Users

and it is probably fair to say that over the years we have not done a bad job in fulfilling these roles when it has mattered. Of course, there does need to be some sort of significant problem or issue requiring resolution for the Association to really come into its own, and I think it is fair to say that our finest moments have tended to be when there was something happening that really engaged the hearts and minds of the membership. Some obvious examples include the proposals to flood the Old Harbour; the argument about whether or not to impose taxes on marine fuel; and the plans to develop luxury flats at Port Galots. On these occasions your Association was well placed to listen to the views of its members and then to argue appropriately with the relevant authorities.

In order to meet our objectives, therefore, we need two key ingredients;-

- Good communications with the Port Authorities and other bodies
- Good communication with our members.

Funnily enough, by far the easier to achieve of these is the first. In particular, the Ports of Jersey in its various guises has not been a difficult entity to approach. For example I meet regularly with Mike Tait to exchange news & views and to keep him up to speed with what is currently irritating our members as well as what is impressing them!, and to learn what the view is like from his side of the fence. The Association has almost always been able, when the need has arisen, to access the Coastguards, the Harbourmaster, the Marina offices and even the upper reaches of senior management.

What has proved to be rather more challenging is communicating with you, the members, in a timely and efficient way. In fact if you think about the way the Association has typically operated, there have historically been only quite limited opportunities for establishing a two way dialogue between the members and the committee. There is of course this annual meeting, and the annual newsletter. But otherwise the communication has been somewhat 'ad hoc' in nature, through a mixture of mail shots and – when the need has arisen – specially arranged meetings. It seemed to the Committee that what the association has lacked is a framework for good, speedy, efficient & inexpensive correspondence with its membership. And you do not exactly have to be a rocket scientist to realise that the answer is email.

The use of email means that we, the committee, have a tool enabling us to communicate with all of you, or with sub groups among you such as mooring holders in the Old Harbour or Motor boat owners, when issues arise. And we can do it quickly and hear back from you equally quickly – and speed is often of the essence. Most significantly, it means that the committee then knows what you are thinking - And if we don't know what you are thinking then its pretty difficult for us to convincing hold ourselves out as validly representing your views!

This is not to say that we are about to start flooding you all with umpteen messages a week. In reality, it's not that often that burning issues arise, but the point is that when they do, there is no substitute for timely canvassing of your views and receiving your reactions. Even if you do not react, we learn something from this. We have used email a couple of times this year

1. When changes were proposed to the refuse facilities on South Pier
2. When CICRA sought our views on our relations with Ports of Jersey

In the first case the most significant result was that most of those emailed did not bother to respond ...which actually is helpful information in itself since it tells us that this is was not exactly a Grade A hot potato. Of those who did respond most had no objection to what was proposed (the scaling down of the facilities) and a small minority had exactly the opposite view.

The second case evoked a deafening silence all round which led us to conclude that CICRA had not embarked on their most enthralling initiative. We may have thought this before we sent out the email, but now we knew that you thought this too!

So why am I delivering this soliloquy on the virtues of email – which is, in today's world, a Statement of the Blindingly Obvious if ever there was one? Well the reason is that, even after several requests for the information, quite a few of you have still not shared your email addresses with us. Ultimately, of course, this is a matter for individuals and their views on privacy, but the other side of the coin is that if a member does not want to be on our email list then he is also going to be 'out of the loop' in the future email communications, as the Committee envisages more and more use of this medium. The fact is that the days of communication by conventional post are drawing to a rapid close, for reasons not only of cost but also cumbersome inconvenience. Not for nothing is it labelled 'Snail Mail'!

An issue which I will raise for discussion in the open forum is whether, if we are going in future to canvass you on topics as they arise, there is any ongoing role for the Association's annual Newsletter.

Anyway, enough of my lecture on technology. It is time I turned to the issues that have arisen recently

The biggest and extremely topical issue is of course the situation with the St Helier Lifeboat crew & the RNLI. For the purposes of this report, I do not intend to say a great deal about it other than to observe that your Association is not currently privy to the rights and wrongs underlying this sad state of affairs and so is not well placed to opine on them. The RNLI is of course an Institution traditionally held in the highest regard by the boating community. Meanwhile the folk who actually man the lifeboat, and who volunteer to risk their own safety to come and get us out of trouble when things go wrong, are in my view, some of the most admirable human beings on the face of the planet. So it is desperately sad to find these two deeply respected groups engaged in a controversy that has resulted in such a dreadful outcome – the closure of the St Helier Lifeboat station – surely the last thing that either party intended? As an Association representing the boat owners of St Helier, I think we have to say that whatever the reasons, we deeply regret this development and urge all concerned to apply themselves to the early and urgent resolution of the problem. I have no doubt that we shall return to this matter in the Open Forum, which will be a valuable opportunity for your Committee to gauge the reactions of you, the members.

The other significant 'Elephant' not yet actually in the room but lurking just outside is the forthcoming Master Plan for the Development of St Helier Harbour. Some of us have been able to attend some very initial and exploratory consultation meetings during this year at which some tentative proposals have been mooted in order to get some informal feedback, but this has been – reasonably enough – on a confidential basis. As I understand it we do not have very long to wait before some details made public & I am sure that Myra and will be able to say more later in this meeting. For my part, I think it is very likely that this will be a topic that will get the undivided attention of the membership, and your Association stands ready to step into the breach when the time comes.

A number of other less exciting yet not unimportant & often perennial topics have landed on our agenda during the year including (in no particular order – and this list is not exhaustive):

The timing of the lights and the sill at St Helier Marinas which for part of the season resulted in reduced access times during the high tide

Refuse collection all around the harbour

The presence of dogs on marina pontoons

Proposals to provide a cycle track around the English & French Harbours, including a boardwalk over the top end of the French Harbour slipway.

Parking for boat owners – which is always in short supply.

Waiting Berths – also always in short supply

Carbon Monoxide alarms – an issue which was highlighted locally by the tragic death during the year of a local boat owner in the harbour. We had invited Lee Battrick to make short presentation to the meeting on this topic but unfortunately he has had to withdraw as he has his hands full retrieving 62 foot of Pershing Motor Boat from the deep somewhere near Noirmont. We propose instead to circulate a summary of his advice by email to all members. The basic message being that we should all install a Carbon Monoxide alarm on our boats.

I now want to say something about subscriptions and membership numbers. You will recall that at last year's AGM you voted to increase the Association's annual subscriptions for the first time ever. This long overdue decision has had at least one unexpected consequence, in that it turns out that quite a few members had in fact given up boating either recently or some while ago but, due to inertia, they had not bothered to resign or stop their annual standing orders. My personal theory is that, as good Jersey Men & Women, they had realised that while £5 was going out of the window every year, they could continue to attend the AGM and consume at least £6 worth of wine & sausage rolls. That said, once we asked them to update their payments, and in particular the Treasurer turned the bright lights on them and demanded to know the name of their boats and where they were berthed, quite a few of them cracked and admitted that they no longer go boating and ought to leave the Association instead. A number of others, previously joint members, amended their standing orders to single membership.

The result, on the face of it not exactly good news, is a reduction in membership to just under 400 – but your Chairman is not slashing his wrists over this because this headline reduction disguises the fact that we have lost hardly any current boat owners at all, but mainly a constituency who have no ongoing interest in boat owning and as such do not exactly form the backbone of the membership. In short the membership has been rationalised in a way that was somewhat overdue.

While on the subject of subscriptions, if any of you have come this evening armed with cash or cheques to pay your subscriptions please seek out Mark Peters who will record your renewal. He is also able to sell you flags and stickers.

Before I conclude, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Committee of the Association for their dedication and hard work. Without their efforts the Association would struggle to meet its objectives. In particular I would like to single out Christine Gill who has been treasurer for the last four years and who has put a huge amount of effort into this role. She is now standing down. She is not here tonight because she is currently in Australia. We are also indebted to Mark Peters who has stepped forward to stand for election to the role of treasurer. Last but by no means least I want to publicly recognise the very significant contribution to the smooth running of the Association provided by the Secretary, Peter Donne Davis, whose attention to detail & meticulous recording of what we do and how we operate is absolutely invaluable.

So may I ask you to give a round of applause to your committee.

A very last thing - I want to thank Matthew of the St Helier yacht club & his team for once again providing the fine spread of food and drink that I trust you will do appropriate damage to once the meeting is finished.

Thank you very much

Will Simpson