



# ROYAL SOLENT YACHT CLUB

*Established 1878  
Yarmouth, Isle of Wight*

OFFICIAL BROCHURE



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# Welcome

The Royal Solent Yacht Club is so much more than just a yacht club. Naturally we provide a variety of popular on-the-water activities such as local racing, cruising, events for younger sailors and renowned class regattas. But onshore we also cater to our members' many tastes and interests through a range of diverse events and activities, from the formal to the more relaxed; you are bound to find a number of these to your liking.

The Royal Solent benefits from one of the best views on the Solent and taking it in while enjoying a drink at the bar, or watching the fabulous sunsets from the balconies or lawn, is hard to beat! Our team is renowned for great food and a very warm welcome - why not enjoy the excellent catering facilities on offer at the Club? Relax at informal Friday and Saturday night suppers and Sunday roast lunches, or enjoy formal black tie events, such as the dinner dance and summer ball. Arrangements can also be made for personal or corporate functions.

With some yacht clubs struggling to maintain numbers, it is gratifying to note that the Royal Solent has increased its membership, with over 250 new members joining in the past 20 months. This is the result of our dynamic events programme, a fine clubhouse, a relaxed friendly atmosphere and welcoming members, supported by a first rate staff. Come and see for yourself! (Becoming a Member - see page 16).





## *A Brief History*

Formed in 1878, the Solent Yacht Club did not initially have a clubhouse, the George Hotel being used. The current building was constructed in 1897 and occupied the following year; it was symmetrical in shape and included a library, dining and billiards rooms. Ladies were admitted to membership in 1912. In 1932 the freehold was purchased and by 1936 a complete room reorganisation had taken place with accommodation found for the Secretary, as the membership wanted him “in residence”.

In 1946 the Solent Yacht Club merged with the West Wight Yacht Club and in the following year the Royal prefix was granted, the Club becoming the Royal Solent Yacht Club. This fusion between the two clubs raised the membership numbers to more than twice the capacity originally envisaged.

As membership numbers continued to increase it became necessary to expand the building



further and four separate schemes, spread over four decades, altered all of the clubhouse elevations. While these adhoc solutions temporarily improved the problem caused by growing numbers, they were neither aesthetically pleasing, nor did they add to its operational efficiency.

In the last forty years a number of additional schemes have been proposed. Most envisaged the installation of a lift to cater for older members, but all were piecemeal and none progressed further than the drawing board due to cost.

In 2011, member James Hudleston produced an imaginative plan for the large scale enlargement of the Club, coupled with generous financial backing. This paved the way for the current clubhouse, cleverly combining up-to-date facilities while ensuring that the original appearance of the clubhouse is still recognisable.

More recently, in Spring 2019, the main bar on the first floor of the clubhouse was rebuilt to provide a light, contemporary space from which to enjoy panoramic views of the Solent.





## *Club Racing*

Sailing is at the heart of any yacht club and the Royal Solent is no exception. The first regatta at the Solent Yacht Club was held in 1881 and the Solent Seabirds were formed in 1900 as the Club's first one design class. The Yarmouth One Design (YOD) Class was formed in 1913. A separate organisation, The West Wight Sailing Club, was formed in 1924 with both clubs merging in 1946 to become the Royal Solent Yacht Club the following year. In 1948 the Yarmouth Division of the XOD Class was formed, subsequently going from strength to strength. Since then, the YOD Class disbanded in 1970, but happily reformed twenty five years later, with other popular classes being the Folkboats and Lasers. These four classes, in addition to other Class I and II boats, comprise the majority of those who race regularly off Yarmouth during the summer and autumn. Club racing takes place on Wednesday evening and at Weekends, from late April until the end of September, with autumn and winter racing taking over on Sundays from October until Christmas. However, there is far more to the Royal Solent's racing programme than traditional club racing since we run regattas as well as taking the lead to encourage young sailors - our life blood of the future - and we also host a number of other open events.



## *Junior Sailing*

Over recent years the Club has provided many opportunities for young sailors, either at Royal Solent events, or training sessions and regattas in conjunction with Yarmouth Sailing Club at Easter and during the May half term.

Dinghy Week in August is always popular with a combination of competitive racing for four days combined with great fun ashore; the Delphie Lakeman Trust, Ocean Youth Trust and Harwoods, the local Yarmouth chandlery, all provide sterling support for this event.

In addition to events specifically organised for younger sailors, many join in the Laser races, Sunset Series and Wednesday evening racing, particularly during August.





## *Cruising*

There are some members who prefer cruising to racing and their needs are covered by the Cruising Group, which encompasses both sailing and motor vessels. Our Cruising Division is thriving, with an annual programme of visits to locations throughout the Solent. Most of these “Out to Lunch” events are hugely popular with visits to pubs, yacht clubs and restaurants. The majority of these are day trips but there have also been a couple of overnight trips to Bembridge. Those without a boat are invited to crew and join in the fun.

The Club has also organised several foreign cruises, including to Croatia, the Canal du Midi, Nivernais Canal and Turkey. While there are many prizes for racing, it may be of interest to know that there are also trophies for cruising. For example, the Morva Cup is awarded for the best account of a cruise in a sailing or motor yacht while the John Leonard Trophy is awarded to the motor yacht which submits the log that shows the boat travelled the furthest from its home port in any one cruise.





## *Race Management Opportunities*

Racing cannot take place without race officers! Happily, the Royal Solent has a fine reputation for race management with members encouraged to become involved. The Principal Race Officer sets the courses, so even for those who have never raced it is easy to learn the procedures and enjoy, from the vantage point of the committee boat, the race as it unfolds around you.

During the winter months we run training courses for absolute beginners up to the standard of RYA Club Race Officer. Many of our race officers have gone on to take further qualifications and involve themselves in racing for other clubs in the Solent and all over the world. A good race officer qualification is an international passport!



## *The Taittinger RSYC Regatta*

The Taittinger RSYC Regatta is the Club's flagship event with 174 entries in 2015. The event begins with a Champagne Reception on Friday evening, with over eight hundred people attending. Racing dominates Saturday and Sunday, with 14 classes racing from two start lines. The fleets are very varied, including four IRC divisions, classics, gaffers, keelboat and open boat classes, including the local Yarmouth One Design (YOD). Boats range in size from 20 to 80 feet. Participants on Saturday evening are entertained at the Towers Party, where the Club's next door neighbour, John Caulcutt, kindly throws open his grounds on the water's edge to the annual YOD fund-raising party, with proceeds going to charity.

Post racing on Sunday, the weekend concludes with a hog roast and prize giving, where in addition to the usual silverware, the winner of each class is rewarded with a Magnum of Taittinger, plus a Jeroboam for the overall winner. The success of the event is in large measure due to the generous support from Taittinger and that of co-sponsor Rouse Limited.





Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners are also generous with their discounted mooring rate for competitors.

The Regatta is primarily a fun event helped by the relaxed attitude of both organisers and competitors as well as the low-key nature of the sponsors' involvement. Many competitors have been moved to comment and two such citations are recorded below:

*"The regatta ... seems to be completely designed for us, the competitors, and not geared around the sponsors and the Race Committee, unlike the majority of South Coast regattas".*

**Richard Oswald, 1902 Gaff Schooner Coral of Cowes**

*"We had a lot of fun. We have not had this much fun in all the boats we have ever owned and this was a proper regatta. It was how you expect a regatta to be."*

**Bob Fisher, celebrated Racing Skipper & Yachting Journalist**



## *Other Regattas*

Our race officer teams are very experienced in hosting rallies and regattas for a wide range of yachts and the club has run championship series for associations and classes over many years. The Royal Solent is ideally situated in the Western Solent for access to several key sailing areas, providing windward/leeward racing, team and match racing. Indeed, Christchurch Bay, just on the edge of the Western Solent, is regarded as one of the country's finest racing areas. Yarmouth Harbour offers fine facilities and nearby boatyards provide all the usual services.

Some regattas are held on a rotational basis, some less frequently but mention must be made of two: The Royal Artillery Regatta and Folkboat Week. First, the Royal Artillery Regatta. This year saw their sixty-sixth regatta at the Royal Solent, which is usually scheduled for the second weekend in September. Almost as long standing, Folkboat Week has been held at the Royal Solent since 1966. This year was their fiftieth anniversary and it was great to see fifty seven entries. In addition to the racing, the week also has an extensive week of socialising.





## *Open Sailing Events*

The Club holds a number of open events throughout the year. The Prince Consort Charity Race is a weekend regatta with a long race east up to the Prince Consort buoy just off Cowes. The racing is followed by a charity dinner, with proceeds this year going towards Combat Stress & the Ellen MacArthur Trust. The Fandango Charity Race in August is open to any craft that floats and involves dressing up, dressing overall and race officer bribery! Boats set off on a simple course and at a given signal retrace their tracks. This fun event on the water is followed by music, limbo dancing and good food – in short, a great party. The Centenary Chase is a pursuit race for keel and day boats. In addition to our local club yachts the Old Gaffers' Association always joins in so there is the splendid sight of many gaff-rigged craft in the fleet. Each boat has its own start time, carefully calculated so all will finish at the same time, however, this has yet to happen! The Turkey Cup Race is held in early October and is hotly contested with the major prize for the winner and a fine silver claret jug trophy for the first in the IRC class. However, tactics often come into play as the second overall wins a fine turkey for Christmas!



## *Royal Solent Racing Marks*

Sponsoring a Royal Solent Racing Mark is beneficial to both sponsor and Club. From the sponsor's viewpoint your company's name will be seen every time a yacht rounds the mark as well as being seen by other boaters on their Solent trips.

Race officers regularly read out the course over the radio to competitors over the radio; yet more publicity. The Royal Solent lays a number of yellow racing marks along the island shore off the club from April to the end of the year.

Interested? Contact the Secretary on 01983 760256.





## *Onshore Social Programme*

As well as extensive sailing & cruising programmes, there is a wide variety of popular onshore activities, as well as informal and formal social functions, organised for RSYC members throughout the year.

- Film Nights
- Talks
- Gentlemen's Lunches
- Ladies' Nights
- Bridge
- Wine Society
- Backgammon
- Scrabble
- Clay Pigeon Shooting
- Golf
- Scottish Country Dancing
- Quizzes
- Jazz Nights
- Junior Events
- Painting Classes
- IT Workshops
- New Year's Eve Party
- Fitting Out Dinner
- Laying Up Supper
- Summer BBQ
- Summer Ball or Dinner Dance
- Themed Parties



## *Becoming a Member*

We welcome all membership applications! If you don't know any existing members to support your application, we will arrange for you to meet with our Vice Commodore for an informal chat at the Club. You don't have to be a sailor or own a boat to join - our extensive social programme offers activities and events, both on and off the water, throughout the year.

During the summer there is an active programme of events afloat, such as Wednesday evening and weekend sailing, in addition to regattas and other traditional races. While Wednesday racing finishes at the end of September, racing continues on Sundays through to Boxing Day. There is also a popular Cruising Group that organises day outings in the summer; there is always space for members who don't own a boat or don't sail or simply wish to experience a pleasant day out on the water. Members may also sign up to volunteer as crew, take an RYA Powerboat Course or become involved as a race officer.

Onshore activities are particularly prevalent in autumn & winter months; why not stimulate your grey matter at scrabble, backgammon or bridge? There is also a wine society, Scottish country





dancing, film nights, talks, gentlemen's lunches and Commodore's Suppers. While, outside the club, clay pigeon shoots and golf days are a great way to meet new and old friends.

Our clubhouse offers excellent facilities with stunning sea views, two bars and dining rooms, plus a dinghy park and mooring facilities. Additional membership perks include 10% off food and 15% off drinks, discounted ferry travel, plus reciprocal membership with over 50 clubs in the UK and abroad. We are keen to encourage families to the Club and our family subscription offers membership to any number of children under 18 for just £1 when parents join as a couple.

Our Open Day (usually in late Spring) is a great opportunity for potential members to find out more about all that the Club has to offer. Representatives from all the groups and activities are on hand to answer questions, plus visitors are welcome to stay for lunch afterwards.

To find out more, please drop into the office, give us a call or send us a line. You can pick up an application pack from either the office or bar, or download an application form from our website. We look forward to hearing from you!



## *Private Functions*

The Royal Solent is a popular and versatile venue for private functions for members, non-members, clubs, associations and organisations - anyone may enquire about booking a room at the Club for nominal room hire charge.

Whatever the reason; be it an anniversary lunch, a christening buffet or a club dinner, the unique coastal setting of the Club will make your event a stand-out occasion. Our professional, friendly and attentive staff at the Royal Solent will ensure that your special “do” is memorable and stress-free.

We have the perfect combination of private rooms, beautifully prepared food, fine wines and a well-stocked bar. You are also free to use our outside space with its wonderful views overlooking the Solent. We can source a marquee, DJ or band for you and will help you select the room that best suits the requirements of your event (please see page 24 for Room Layout/Capacity).





Our delicious menus are freshly prepared and cooked on the premises. We offer a variety of appetising two and three course lunch and dinner menus from which to choose. Alternatively, you may prefer to select our enticing barbecue, buffet and hog roast options or a traditional afternoon tea.

The Royal Solent is also experienced at hosting wakes and private lunches to celebrate the memory of a loved one. We understand that this occasion requires great sensitivity and the dedicated team at the Club will provide a personal, efficient and caring service throughout. Free car parking is available for close family members on arrangement and we offer disabled access and facilities.

*"May I send my sincere thanks to all concerned with our extremely successful annual Dinner & Dance. Everyone thought the food was of the highest quality and the service was both friendly and attentive from all the staff."*

**Steve Orchard, Captain of Freshwater Bay Golf Club**



## *Meetings & Conferencing*

Whether you are wining and dining clients, holding a business meeting or running a team building event, the Royal Solent with its outstanding seafront location and professional service, offers the ideal venue for any corporate function.

The Club layout provides the flexibility to accommodate a range of delegate numbers from small board meetings to large conferences or seminars. Our rooms can accommodate theatre-style, boardroom-style and classroom-style seating (see page 24), plus we can provide equipment such as laptop, projector, PA system and white board - we will aim to fulfil the specific requirements of your event.

We can also meet all your catering needs from coffee, tea and biscuits through to breakfasts, buffet lunches, barbecues and three course meals to suit any event and budget. Our efficient team can work to any timescales to provide a lunch that fits in with your schedule.





You may be Island-based, arriving via ferry or spending a day on the water with your clients or team, in all cases the Royal Solent is an ideal place to stop for a waterside lunch. We are perfectly situated a short walk from the picturesque Yarmouth Harbour and the Wightlink ferry terminal.

The island offers a wide variety of activities perfect for team building exercises, such as archery, kayaking, coasteering, paint balling, go-karting, mountain boarding, RIB trips, sea fishing and sailing to name but a few! Our Event Manager will be happy to advise you on the best places to go, how to get there and where to stay to ensure your event is beneficial and rewarding.

Our facilities include:

- Fixed screen and projector
- Laptop
- Whiteboard, flip chart and markers
- Complimentary Wi-Fi
- PA system
- Television & DVD player
- Air-conditioning
- Lift and disabled facilities
- Showers & hair dryers



## *Weddings*

In its idyllic seaside location a short walk from St James' Church, with stunning views of the Solent and glorious sunsets, the Royal Solent Yacht Club provides a unique and romantic setting for this most important day in any couple's life.

Our experienced Events Manager will work closely with you to ensure that your wedding day is memorable and perfect in every way. Your special celebration can be tailored to suit your personal requirements from beginning to end – from arrival canapés & welcome drinks to the wedding breakfast & accompanying wines, along with your choice of buffet menus for the evening.

You can be sure of first class service in stylish and relaxed surroundings. Our elegant first floor rooms and balconies offer panoramic sea views, alternatively we can arrange for a marquee on the lawn overlooking the sea. The versatility of the Club's layout will allow your day to flow





*“Thank you all so much for helping ensure the smooth running of our wedding day. The day was absolutely perfect, so many people have written to thank us and mentioned the amazing service given by the team.”*

**Philippa & Lee Morrell**



seamlessly from one element to the next.

Newlyweds can arrive in the Club’s launch to be greeted by wedding guests sipping champagne on the lawn or on the first floor balconies overlooking the water. While the adjacent pebble beach and vintage Yarmouth Pier offer a stunning backdrop for photographs and an ideal opportunity for the wedding party to take a stroll in the sea air.

Venue hire can include:

- Arrival on Club’s launch
- Exclusive use of chosen area
- Access from 9am until 1am
- Bar & music licence until midnight
- Club’s tables (round or long), chairs, table linen (white or ivory)
- Up to 100 guests for a seated dinner inside (long tables)
- Up to 150 guests for a seated dinner in a marquee (plus cost for marquee hire)



## *Room Layout/Capacity*

The Royal Solent has a downstairs bar area - The Hudleston Bar - in addition to the main bar and dining room (The Solent Room) plus Mottistone and Eremue Rooms, on the first floor.

### *The Mottistone Room*

- First floor
- Size: 7.5m x 5m
- Seated meals for up to 10
- Conference seating for up to 15
- Theatre style seating for up to 20
- Classroom style seating for up to 8
- Balcony with sea views
- Gas fire
- Air conditioning

### *The Eremue Room (pictured above)*

- First floor
- Size: 7.5m x 5m
- Seated meals for up to 20
- Conference seating for up to 15
- Theatre style seating for up to 40
- Classroom style seating for up to 16
- Air conditioning
- Balcony with sea views





### *The Solent Room (pictured above)*

- First floor
- Size: 15.25m x 7.75m
- Seated meals for up to 100
- Conference seating for up to 20
- Theatre style seating for up to 50
- Classroom style seating for up to 16
- Balcony with panoramic sea views

### *The Hudleston Bar*

- Ground floor
- Size: 10.5m x 7.5m
- Seated meals for up to 40
- Conference seating for up to 20
- Theatre style seating for up to 50
- Classroom style seating for up to 16
- Private bar
- Opens onto lawn & colonnade
- Sea views
- Wood burning stove
- Air conditioning

All our rooms are available for hire and can be customised to suit your specific requirements in terms of furniture and layout. We can provide round or long tables, complete with ivory table linen, and matching chairs.

# Reciprocal Clubs

The Royal Solent Yacht Club is proud to share reciprocal membership with around fifty clubs, both in the UK and overseas.

## South Coast

Chichester Yacht Club  
Christchurch Sailing Club  
Lymington Town Sailing Club  
Parkstone Yacht Club (Poole)  
Poole Yacht Club  
RAF Yacht Club (Hamble)  
Royal Artillery Yacht Club  
Royal Cornwall Yacht Club (Falmouth)  
Royal Dart Yacht Club  
Royal Dorset Yacht Club (Weymouth)  
Royal Fowey Yacht Club  
Royal Lymington Yacht Club  
Royal Motor Yacht Club (Poole)  
Royal Naval Club & Royal Albert Yacht Club  
(Portsmouth)  
Royal Southampton Yacht Club  
Royal Southern Yacht Club (Hamble)  
Royal Western Yacht Club of England (Plymouth)

## Other UK

Guernsey Yacht Club (St Peter Port)  
Royal Channel Islands Yacht Club (St Peter Port)  
Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club (Dover)  
Royal Cruising Club (London)  
Royal Norfolk & Suffolk Yacht Club (Lowestoft)  
Royal Northern & Clyde Yacht Club (Helensburgh)  
Royal Temple Yacht Club (Ramsgate)  
Sussex Motor Yacht Club (Brighton)

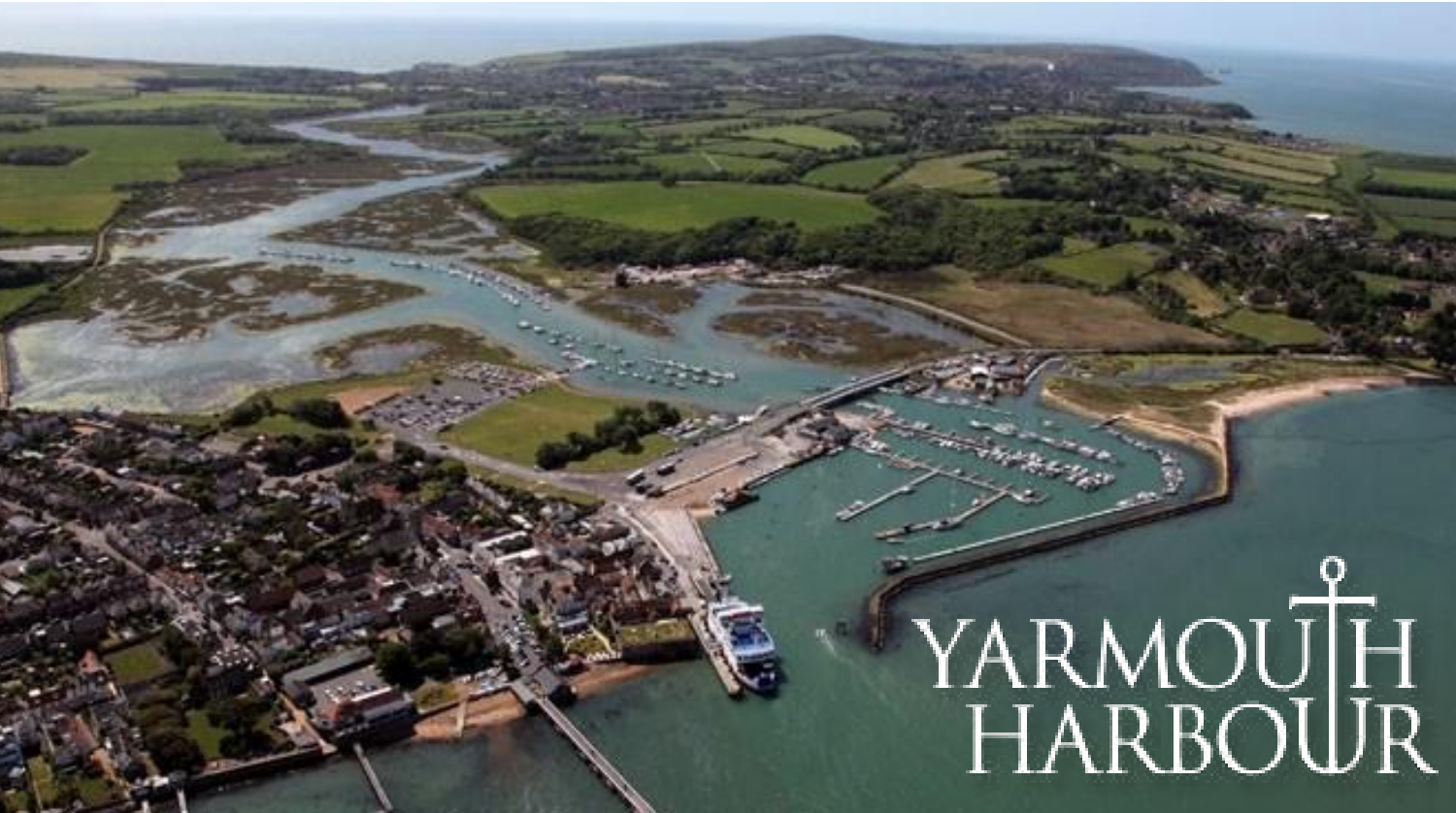
## Island (November to March only)

Bembridge Sailing Club  
Brading Haven Yacht Club  
Island Sailing Club, Cowes  
Royal Ocean Racing Club, Cowes  
Royal Victoria Yacht Club, Fishbourne  
Sea View Yacht Club

## Overseas

Cruising Yacht Club of South Australia  
Gordons Bay Yacht Club (South Africa)  
Penang Yacht Club (Malaysia)  
Republic of Singapore Yacht Club  
Royal Barbados Yacht Club  
Royal Bombay Yacht Club (India)  
Royal Cape Yacht Club (South Africa)  
Royal Cork Yacht Club (Eire)  
Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club (Western Australia)  
Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club  
Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron  
Royal Natal Yacht Club (Durban)  
Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron (Auckland)  
Royal Perth Yacht Club (Western Australia)  
Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club (NSW)  
Royal St George Yacht Club (Eire)  
Seattle Yacht Club (USA)  
West Indies Yacht Club (Jamaica)  
Yacht Club Austria





## *RSYC & Yarmouth Harbour*

Yarmouth Harbour is a popular destination for visiting yachts, motorboats and RIBs for both overnight and short stay moorings, with its excellent facilities and easy access for vessels of all sizes. The Royal Solent works closely with the harbour as the Club's sailing regattas and rallies such as the Taittinger RSYC Regatta and Folkboat Week, attract many visiting boats and, in turn, the harbour works with the Club to support events such as the RYA Active Marina programme.

In addition, the RSYC and harbour have also introduced mutually beneficial special offers, such as 10% off food at the Royal Solent for Winter berth holders and visiting yachtsmen during the winter months, and provide training facilities for Sailing School skippers and their crew members.

Visit [www.yarmouth-harbour.co.uk](http://www.yarmouth-harbour.co.uk) for more information.

# Testimonials

*"Your club just gets better every day. Lovely people, lovely food and marvellous vista!"*

**Phillip & Birgitta Hancock**

*"We never cease to be amazed by the willingness and good nature of all your staff. The parties and catering were all fantastic."*

**Sally & Dick Kalis, Folkboat Week 2015**

*"...a huge thank you to you all for your help and support with our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary lunch celebration. It was a very special event for us and wouldn't have been possible without all your hard work."*

**Mr & Mrs D Couzens**

*"The Royal Solent is a great favourite of ours and as always we had an excellent evening. The dinner menu and seating arrangements proved to be perfect for us and we enjoyed the atmosphere of your active and thriving club."*

**Gill Evatt, Shrimper Owners' Association**

*"I am writing on behalf of the unit to thank you for accommodating us on our Regimental Dinner. My liaison with you was very smooth...the dinner was exceptional and thoroughly enjoyed by all. The setting was just right and the view enjoyed, so everybody was happy."*

**Lt Col Andrea Goodman, Operational Headquarters Support Group**

*"...thank you for all the hard work that went into organising such a fabulous week during Cowes Week for our company and many of the marine insurance brokers in London. The setting, food and service were outstanding and many brokers decided this was by far the best year we have done!"*

**Chris Lowe, Shipowners Claims Bureau**





## *Visit Us or Get in Touch*

It is always a pleasure to welcome new or prospective members, visitors and guests to the Royal Solent. The Club is open to visiting sail and motor boaters, members of the RYA and members of reciprocal clubs (please see page 26 for a full list).

If you have any enquiries, or would like to request a Membership Pack, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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