

MINUTES OF A GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD BY THE ROYAL SOLENT
YACHT CLUB AT 17:00 ON FRIDAY 25TH APRIL 2025

Present:

In the Chair: John Poyner, Commodore
Rudi Fortson, Vice Commodore
Susie Breare, Rear Commodore House
Nick Bradley, Rear Commodore Sailing
Robert Quain, Hon Treasurer
Peter Crowhurst
Katie Davies
Catherine Holmes

Richard Pierrepont
Caryl Terlezki-Thomas
Sarah Turvill
Leslie Tregear
Apologies:
Mark Lacey
Tony Walton, Guardian

In Attendance:

Hamish Fletcher, Guardian
Mark Hall, Guardian
Anne Kyle, Guardian
Claire Hallett, Secretary

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Commodore asked GC members to stand to observe a minute's silence for former member Mary Lord, who had sadly passed away since the last GC meeting.

32/25 Apologies As listed above.

33/25 Approval of Minutes from 28th March Meeting The minutes were approved as a true record.

34/25 Matters Arising All covered by the agenda points.

35/25 Commodore's Update

Draft Minutes of 2025 AGM. The draft minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting had been circulated for review in advance of this meeting by the Secretary. They were felt to be a true record by all present and were signed by the Commodore accordingly, ready for the membership to vote on at next year's AGM.

South Sheds Refurbishment. The work on the remaining south sheds is due to start as soon as possible after the Taittinger RSYC Regatta and they have been cleared in preparation. The contractors are ready, although the invoicing process for building materials is still to be confirmed. The Commodore advised that the refurbishment of the old workshop may present issues as it has no concrete floor, although its roof is felt to be in fairly good condition.

Given his new role as Commodore, John can no longer be as involved in the sheds project and **requested volunteers to form a working group, which so far includes Richard Pierrepont and the Hon. Treasurer.**

New Website. The build of the new website by Peripatus is still underway with the design element having been completed. The new website can't be launched until all the regatta booking forms are closed in late August, which gives plenty of time for detailed testing.

New Focus. The new Commodore will be focusing on recruiting younger members to the Club. Two men in their early twenties, a new member and his guest from Lymington, attended the recent Gentlemen's Lunch and are keen to start sailing here.

The Commodore underlined the fact that he is here to serve and support and will do his best in both capacities.

36/25 Financial Report by Hon. Treasurer

Quarterly Budget Review. There will be a budget review at the end of the first quarter with any recommendations for change made to the GC at the next GC meeting.

March Results. The overall deficit in March was greater than budget, which was mostly caused by irrecoverable VAT, which is a very complex area. The Hon. Treasurer will ask the auditors to provide a snapshot on why the Club can't reclaim VAT on certain things, such as boat maintenance. There was a net loss of £17.3k for the month, which has a direct impact on the year to date deficit. The invoice for Marksman of £11.5k came in earlier than anticipated and the VAT is irrecoverable – without these factors the finances would be on budget. Last year the Club lost money and it can't continue to do so, the aim must therefore be to break even at the end of this year. On a positive note, the March turnover for the Bar and Catering are both ahead of budget and almost identical to last March. The Bar and Catering GPMs have recovered significantly and are where we'd expect them to be at 62% & 65% respectively for the year to date. The Sailing deficit is higher than budget as the Marksman invoice came in earlier than budgeted. The overall picture is not too far off the current budget, which may be due to loading higher targets later in the season – time will tell.

Build Maintenance Fund. This fund is generated by a portion of the Registration Fee from new and re-instated members. Following discussions with Harrison Black, this will continue to be the case rather than the Registration Fee being taken as income. This fund will be set aside to be spent on building maintenance projects.

Cash. The cash position is down compared to last year due to known expenditure at the back end of last year. The position so far is balanced, with good elements and not so good elements.

Boat Fund. Richard Pierrepont asked whether the Boat Fund could be offset against the sailing deficit? The Hon. Treasurer responded that it has to be used for future capital enhancements. The depreciation equivalent is being taken into the Boat Fund so it will increase again this year to £25k.

37/25 Vice Commodore’s Report

Membership Applications. There are two applications for five prospective members this month, all are recommended to the GC by the VCC:

| | Applicant | Proposer | Seconder | Comments/Interests |
|---|---|---------------|--------------|---|
| 1 | 1. Martin Musgrove | Barrie Poeton | Rudi Fortson | Owns a Bavaria 38. Member of the Royal Torbay YC. RYA Instructor/examiner. Operates “Southwest Yachting”. Interests: cruising. He has visited the RSYC from time to time. Former member of the ISC. |
| 2 | 2. James Merson 3. Anne Merson 4. Sam Merson 5. Charles Merson | Simon Merson | Penny Merson | (JM) Research scientist. Pharmaceuticals. Working & living in USA since 2010. (AM) Accountant. Family have been RSYC members for 3 generations. Interest: crewing & onshore activities. |

The GC approved all the membership applications.

Open Day. The Spring Open Day on Saturday 3rd May is on track and Lesley is liaising with the new Membership Secretary, Katie. The Secretary had cycled around the West Wight putting up posters and has permission from Andrew Greening to erect the Club’s gazebo on the Bank House land. George and Max Newman will be attending to encourage any young sailors.

Registration Fee Review. Should the registration fee of £150 be increased as it has been the same for many years? Or should more of it be allocated to the build maintenance fund? The VCC are giving this some thought. The initial instinct based on other clubs’ fees is that it shouldn’t be increased, however further research into other club is required to form a fuller picture.

Bye-laws Review. The Memorandum of Understanding with the Y Class in relation to the south sheds proposed that those renting the sheds should be permitted to carry out maintenance on their boats in the sheds, with the assistance of non-members. The response from Gallagher insurance on this matter is as follows:

“Regarding any work taking place on boats at the club premises it would be preferable that it is only members of the club that are doing this. Any non-member who is working on boats whilst employed on a paid basis as a ‘subcontractor’ should be asked to confirm to the club that they carry their own suitable Public Liability cover – minimum £5 million Limit of indemnity. If a non-member assists a member on a voluntary basis (i.e. as a favour and strictly not as an employed contractor) that the member remains present at all times and is responsible for securing the premises at the conclusion of the day and the club maintain a close control of who is being permitted as a non-member (whether paid or voluntary) to work on Club premises - a suggestion would be the member signing in the guest at the Club so that the committee are aware of who is on the site and what they are doing.”

The VCC will consider this matter and formulate some draft bye-laws for review.

For Women Scotland Case regarding Trans Issues. The Club is probably compliant with the Equality Act in that it provides unisex facilities with the two disabled loos. Revised guidance will be published by the Government in June. The VC stressed the importance of Members and Staff using appropriate language and acting appropriately to ensure that trans people are treated with respect as it’s easy for confusion to arise if a person looks like a man and dresses like a man but uses the ladies’ facilities. Proportionality is the new reasonableness. A cautionary note will be issued to the Staff ahead of the June guidance.

37/25 Update from Rear Commodore House

Past Events.

- 20th March – Wine Society, popular with 46 attendees

- 28th March – Opera Night, 57
- 29th March - Clay Shoot & Lunch, 33
- 30th March - Mothering Sunday Lunch, 70
- 4th April - John Doerr Protest Talk, 20 for talk
- 12th April – Fitting Out Dinner, 74 – good feedback issue with size of starter addressed. 7pm for 7:30pm in future.
- 18th April - Good Friday Moules Night, fully booked at 55
- 19th April - Boat Jumble, 6 tables, 23 lifejackets serviced.
- 23rd April – Gents' Lunch with speaker, 40
- 26th April – Hallberg-Rassy Dinner, 65

Future Events.

- 2nd May – Wedding, £3k hire fee – Hudleston Bar open for members during Happy Hour
- 8th May – donations wanted for cake sale in aid of Royal British Legion
- 17th July – Summer Wine Society – new to programme following suggestion by Events Manager. Also 25th anniversary
- 2nd August – Summer Party with fundraising raffle for Hampshire IOW Air Ambulance – prizes required
- 13th August – Sausage Sizzler with air ambulance simulator in evening (no clash with Carnival Week)

Bar & Catering Points.

- Seafood Platter & Champagne Offer to be trialled in summer following suggestion by the Secretary
- New T Bar on Hudleston Bar to create more space and visibility that the two old pumps – organised by the Club Steward with the supplier who provided it free of charge
- Champagne by the glass continues to be well received and the bins ends are popular.

38/25 Update from Rear Commodore Sailing

Sailing Update. The Spring Series is now over but was well attended by 8 boats and the new start line from the main balcony was trialled and seemed to work well. It won't be used again until the autumn when it will be promoted to encourage members to come to the Club to see the start of racing. Spence Willard WER started last Wednesday with 17 boats out, including 7 dinghies, which is very good for the start of season. The racing fleet will include 13 XODs, 6 YODs plus Class 1 & 2.

Taittinger RSYC Regatta. There are 78 entries so far, which is slightly down on the same point last year, but social bookings are higher – there are already 87 booked for Friday supper.

Contessa RSYC Regatta. There are 17 entries to date, which is not as high as we would like. The 26s are down again, although the 32s and 28s are ok. We are trying to put pressure on them to enter.

Folkboat Week. Online entry is also now live for Folkboat Week, on its 60th anniversary.

Cruising. David Porter continues to do a very good job as Captain of Cruising. There was a good trip to Gins Farm attended by 42 members and guests on 15th April, including lots of new faces. The next trip is to Royal Victoria YC on 13th May, which is also accessible by car.

Club Boats. The Club's boats are now all in the water and a Boat meeting was held on the morning of the 25th April 2025. Countdown has a new coat of paint and is looking very smart. Marksman's engine has been repaired and she is all set to go. It was agreed to do the minimum work required to Countdown this year, which included work to fix a leak that was a potential fire risk. The Boatmen are behind by a week with the dinghy marks, but they should be in the water for next week.

Autonomous Marks. It is hoped that these will arrive in the next 2 weeks. The artwork for the stickers has been signed off. The plan is to trial one as an ODM on a WER first. The representative is happy to come from Cowes and assist with training on the day. Logistics as to how to launch, store and maintain the marks are yet to be determined. Mark Hall added that they are used in Priory Bar by the RYS. The issue for us will be where to locate them as we can't stick them out in an east west tide. Richard Pierrepont has kindly offered to help with the logistics side. **Mark also stated that the Club will need to insure them as they are being rented.**

SeaSafe Systems. SeaSafe were at the recent boat jumble and tested 23 lifejackets, 19 of which failed as the canisters were out of date. They are also going to be located in the harbour during the Taittinger RSYC Regatta weekend.

39/25 Secretary's Points

Membership Statistics. The Membership Secretary emailed the GC the monthly membership statistics earlier today. The increased resignations at the end of 2024 have negatively impacted on the total membership, but we are still just up on last year and it's very positive that we have had 15 new members this year, which is line

with last year, despite the challenging economic climate. There are no more outstanding non-payers. Accordingly, there should be no further resignations as of end 2024 as the Secretary is advised that the remaining members have paid their subscriptions for this year (either monthly, quarterly or annually).

Transaction KPI. The final total transactions and average transaction value for April will be emailed out on 1st May but are looking positive to date. Post meeting - for the first time this year both the average value (£23.09) and number of transactions (2,309) are consistently up on previous Aprils. It was a very busy month with large functions such as the Fitting Out Dinner, Good Friday Moules Night, Easter Sunday Lunch, Halberg-Rassy Dinner & the Southwest Shingles YC Lunch. To give it more context, the following 1,484 covers were catered for in the Club last month.

Staff Update. The new Membership Secretary, Katie, is fitting in well and is proving to be good with social media. Bar tender, Hugo, assisted with an Instagram post for the Taittinger RSYC Regatta. Adam Grieve has resigned from the waiting team.

40/25 AOB

- Peter Crowhurst asked whether the Hudleston bar would be open on Wednesday evenings after sailing? The Secretary confirmed that it would from next week.
- Hamish Fletcher highlighted the recent Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. [The VC will look into this.](#)
- The Commodore explained that several RSYC Members are doing the Fastnet this year. The Commodore and 4 other members will be on a boat named *Grey Goose* flying the RSYC burgee. RCS will be racing on a boat named *Conspiracy*. As both the Commodore and RCS will be away for the June F&A and GC meetings these will be cancelled this year – a Flag Officers meeting may be held earlier in June if required.

VC

41/25 Next Meeting Friday 8th August 2025 at 1700 hours

John Crowhurst 30/5/25