

# MINUTES OF A GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD BY THE ROYAL SOLENT YACHT CLUB AT 17:00 ON FRIDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025

## Present:

In the Chair: Martyn Collinson, Commodore  
Graham Fell, Vice Commodore  
John Poyner, Rear Commodore House  
Nick Bradley, Rear Commodore Sailing  
Robert Quain, Hon Treasurer  
Susie Breare  
Peter Crowhurst  
Katie Davies

Mark Lacey  
Caryl Terlezki-Thomas  
Sarah Turvill  
Leslie Tregear  
**Apologies:**  
Catherine Holmes  
Richard Pierrepont  
Mark Hall, Guardian

## In Attendance:

Hamish Fletcher, Guardian  
Tony Walton, Guardian  
Claire Hallett, Secretary

## 21/25 Apologies

As listed above.

## 23/25 Matters Arising

Club name on north side. Carry forward until the Secretary can discuss this with the Head Boatman when there is more time to do so. Post meeting: in the meantime, the Club's large banner which reads "The Royal Solent Yacht Club Welcomes Visiting Yachtmen" is now on display below the first floor walkway outside the Members' Dining Room and should be visible to yachts heading to the harbour.

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Wine Bin Ends. The Club Steward contacted our supplier about obtaining a limited selection of good wines at a special offer price outside of the usual Wine List, these have limited availability but are going down well. Chapel Down English sparkling wine is now on trial following a request from the House Committee.

## 24/25 Commodore's Update

YOD Class Proposal. The team (Commodore, RCS, RCH, Hon. Treasurer and Anne Kyle) reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Club and the YOD Class had addressed the concerns raised by the GC and negotiated the terms as best as possible. The proposal and revised MOU (see end of minutes) had been recommended for approval to the GC via email on 25<sup>th</sup> March. The Commodore advised that the MOU cannot be changed at this stage due to time constraints, but he'd be happy to answer any questions.

Q. Katie Davies asked if a final cost for the work to refurbish the south sheds had been received?

A. RCH advised that a firm quotation of £50k had been received from Ben Denyer, subject to variables – for example, due to leaks and the roof timbers being in a poor condition, the corner shed had to be re-roofed, which was not within budget. The rest of the roof on the south sheds seems to be ok, but there is a contingency in the budget. It is anticipated that the cost of each bay will be reduced as there should be materials leftover from the previous bay. The old workshop may be an added complication as it doesn't have a concrete floor.

Q. Katie enquired whether the old workshop should be retained for storage?

A. RCH and the Secretary confirmed this was no longer needed as the corner store and the new chair cupboard on the first floor provided sufficient storage for the Club.

Q. Katie asked whether the Y Class would still get first refusal on winter use of the sheds after 10 years?

A. The Commodore advised that the MOA would be reviewed in 10 years and could be broken if there was a reasonable reason to do so.

Q. Katie asked what would happen to the rent rate after 10 years?

A. RCH confirmed that if the market rate was more in 10 years time the rent would be reviewed. If only 6 of the 9 bays are taken up by the Y Class in the winter, the other 3 will be offered to members with other boats at the full market rate. It has been estimated that current market value is £500 for 6 months.

It was noted that the Club's bye-laws relating to the boat sheds would need to be updated and all the Club's bye-laws would need to be updated to cover non-members working on site.

The Club proposed to start and fund the refurbishment work after the Taittinger RSYC Regatta this year. The Commodore proposed the proposal and MOU, RCH seconded and all present were in favour. (Graham Fell and Susie Breare abstained due to their association with the YOD Class). The Commodore's main aims during his term in office were to sort out the boat sheds and increase membership, both of which are on track. He thanked everyone as it had been a hard slog to get the sheds plan in place, especially RCH for all his work on the corner shed refurbishment and Graham Fell for his management of the workshop project, plus Susie Breare for her fundraising efforts and Lesley Tregear for helping to boost membership recruitment.

## 25/25 Financial Report by Hon. Treasurer

February Results. There was a large cost repair on Marksman of £11.8k in February, without which we would have been on budget for the month. This spend was in the budget, but spread across the whole year rather than one month. The Bar GPM was low at 54%, which may have been partly due to delaying the increase in bar prices, partly due to more transactions being with the members' discount at this time of year and partly due to the timing of the stocktake. There was an increase in resignations this year, a common reason is low usage but the underlying factor is financial. It was felt members may also be put off at having to pay a lump sum in advance. It was noted that resigning members are always advised that they can pay their subscription monthly or quarterly in case that changes their mind. RCH asked whether there may be an argument for reducing the members' discount from 17.5% to 15%? The Hon. Treasurer responded that it was best to wait until the budget is reviewed at the end of the first quarter, which the Flag Officers intend to do on 23<sup>rd</sup> May with a view to presenting any changes to the GC on 30<sup>th</sup> May.

HonT,  
FOs

Audit Report. The audit meeting took place on 18<sup>th</sup> March with Harrison Black and the Annual Accounts will be circulated to the GC shortly. There was an overall deficit at year end of £59k and it was hoped that the auditors would allow reserve money to be moved to P&L for projects, which they did. However, there was additional work on the east external staircase at a cost of £5k and irrecoverable vat of £5k, which is not calculated until the end of the year when the overall vat is worked out, and this year we paid more. The registration fee charged to new members goes in part as a credit on their payment card account and in part to the Club's refurbishment fund. The auditors advised that it now has to be for a specific project which the donor has to agree to, so in future the registration fee will be taken as income. To summarise, we gained £20k, then lost £17k. The overall deficit went from £59k to £56k and there was an operational loss of just over £16k at year end. The main reason for this was the essential maintenance on the clubhouse which would have cost more in the long run if it had been postponed, so this situation can be comfortably explained at the AGM. March's results are looking good and we are currently ahead of budget.

## 26/25 Vice Commodore's Report

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

	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>	<b>Comments/Interests</b>
1	1. Mr Matthew d'Angibau	Kevin Shaw	Chris Taylor	Matthew is a head of camera dept at a Film & TV visual effects company (One of Us: weacceptyou.com) and resides in Yarmouth. Interested in racing, cruising, crewing, dinghy week, laser training and onshore activities. Has been meaning to join for last 2 years. Seconder mentions parents were previous members but not on ex-member list so maybe a while back. Matthew is member of Yarmouth Society.
2	2. Mr Stephen Cross 3. Ms Debra Pepper	Chris Waddington	David Barwell	Steve is a former vehicle inspector for Ministry of Transport and Deb is a former GP Office Manager. They reside in Freshwater. They have a sailboat (Sadler 29) moored in Yarmouth and RYA members. Their interests are cruising. Seconder says, 'They are very experienced cruising sailors, and I am sure they would both be an asset to the Club'.
3	4. Mr Nicholas Gaynor	Susannah Seely	Michael Rummel	Nick is a business coach based in SW13, 2 <sup>nd</sup> home Brook, IOW. He is a member of Royal Yacht Squadron and interested in racing, cruising, crewing, onshore activities, and race management. Sterling supporting letters resonating his expert sailing skills and

				keenness in crewing for races/race officering.
4	5. Mr Philip Hitchens 6. Ms Brenda Jacobs	Anne Vernon	Judith Reid	Phil is a former tennis coach and Brenda is a former director of product support (office automation company), and they reside in Yarmouth. They are interested in onshore activities. Seconder says, 'They enjoy visiting the RSYC as guests and would now like to become members.'

The GC approved all the membership applications.

Maintenance Projects. Two more areas have been identified by Duncan Waite as requiring attention – the leaking roof joint between the main bar and Members' Dining Room at £2.8k, which the GC have approved and the stonework around the Members' Balcony at £4.5k which are on hold until the autumn. Duncan had generously offered to postpone invoicing for the stonework until 2026, but the Flag Officers agreed that it was better not to commit to the £4.5k until the end of the year as it's not vital so can be delayed. Everyone present agreed.

Cruising Yacht Club of Australia. Our request for reciprocity with the CYCA (based in Sydney) will be reviewed by their committee on 1<sup>st</sup> April. **Hopefully, they will accept and the Commodore will be able to exchange burgees when he visits in April.**

Dogs Bye-law. The bye-law was updated to include a reference to damage to Club property and anti-social behaviour, which was approved by the GC via email in mid-March.

Open Day. The first Open Day will take place on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May (bank holiday weekend) from 11am to 2pm. Lesley thanked those who had responded to her request for volunteers and advised that 2-3 more are needed.

**The VC urged all GC members to attend if possible.**

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All

## 27/25 Update from Rear Commodore House

### Past Events.

- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> Feb – John Doerr talk
- Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March – Commodore's Supper & Fastnet Race talk, 64 attendees
- Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March – First Wednesday Talk, 49
- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March – Folkboat Dinner, 43
- Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March – Start of Season Cruising Lunch, 59
- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March – Wine Society, 45

### Future Events.

- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March – Opera Night, well subscribed, a lot of work by Dick Dawson who will sadly miss it due to a funeral.
- 29<sup>th</sup> March - Clay Shoot & Lunch
- 30<sup>th</sup> March - Mothering Sunday Lunch
- 4<sup>th</sup> April - John Doerr Protest Talk
- 12<sup>th</sup> April – Fitting Out Dinner
- 18<sup>th</sup> April - Good Friday Moules Night
- 19<sup>th</sup> April - Boat Jumble – please book a table if you haven't yet

Happy Hour & a half. It has been decided not to extend happy hour to 7:30pm in order to conserve margins as happy hour is already well attended. As Friday suppers are poorly attended, a takeaway option of scampi & chips or cod goujons & chips is going to be trialled, which was suggested by the House Manager.

New Bar Mats. John Veal and Miles Peckham have kindly agreed to sponsor the Club's new branded bar mats, which will be arriving soon.

Katie enquired whether the Club has a Coravin, which could be used to keep opened wine fresher for longer? The Secretary advised that the Club doesn't currently own one.

## 28/25 Update from Rear Commodore Sailing

Sailing Update. The Spring Series is 3 races in and the weather has been favourable. Nine boats from Class 1&2 have been taking part, which is a good turnout so early in the season. The WER Series starts on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The balcony start has been trialled and the feedback is that most sailors are happy with it and it works

well for Class 1&2 racing and may encourage more members to watch racing from the clubhouse. The new YOD Class captain is Steve Carson. Bembridge in conjunction with RSYA will be running a feeder race on the Friday of the Taittinger RSYC Regatta, which the RSYC race officers will finish. The Wightlink Ferry Captains race on 22<sup>nd</sup> May will involve 8 XODs with the captains helming and 2 XOD representatives crewing.

Cruising Update. David Porter is doing a great job of finding venues for the cruising group. The start of season lunch, with a very good talk by the Sailing Secretary, was well attended by 53 members.

Club Boats. Lots of work has been done on the Club boats over the winter. The work on Marksman's engine had to go ahead in order to allow her to continue to be used this year. Solent RIB is back in the water and the other boats will be launched in the next 2 weeks. The boatmen have removed years of antifoul from Countdown and repainted her with stripes down the side, so she is looking very good.

MarkSetBots. In an exciting development for the Club, we have an opportunity to trial the use of autonomous racing marks ("bots") this season. These are autonomous GPS marks, as used in the America's Cup, which may be feasible for the Club to use. A demonstration was given at the Club last Friday and attended by the Race Management team. The Race Management team are keen to try them. Hall Hunter has generously offered to sponsor two bots for this season which we are keen to take up.. It is thought that they are most suitable as an ODM and a windward mark. Negotiation with the Cowes company that leases the bots is currently underway and they will give us support and training. The RYS is using them and we are enquiring if the Royal Lymington are interested to come in with us, or we could hire the bots to them as a one off. The bots are controlled by the race officers from an app, which Nick Measor is keen to do. It is recognized there may be teething issues in this initial experimental phase, not least the challenge of using them in the conditions we have in the Western Solent, so the plan is to start with one bot, possibly for a WER race, then take it from there.

## 29/25 Secretary's Point

Membership Statistics. The Membership Secretary emailed out the membership statistic for the month earlier today. The total transactions and average transaction value for March will be emailed out on 1<sup>st</sup> April as it will be busy this weekend.

Staff Update. Alberto started back as Second Chef on 25<sup>th</sup> March. Jane's last day as Membership Secretary is today. Over forty applications have been received for the role to date and five interviews have been arranged. Eight of the staff will be taking an RYA First Aid course on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

## 30/25 AOB

RCH gave a vote of thanks to Martyn and Graham for all their hard work over the last three years whilst in the respective roles of Commodore and Vice Commodore, there was a round of applause in support of this. The Commodore thanked everyone and commented that he would no longer be a Flag Officer after six years and that he would like to buy everyone a drink at the bar now.

## 31/25 Next Meeting Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 1700 hours

## **Boat Sheds Proposal to the Flag Officers and General Committee**

Three years ago, the Club embarked on a long-term project to replace the boat sheds which had been donated in 1920 by Sir Charles Seely as they had become unsafe and were in poor condition.

After considerable research and consultation, the decision was taken by the GC to re-furbish the existing structures due to cost, planning restrictions, building regulations and a desire to maintain the historic character of the Club.

The first phase involved fundraising and furbishing the east sheds and moving the workshop into the renovated structure. This was completed early in 2024.

The second and third phases, passed by the General Committee at their meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024, focused on the sheds to the south of the car park and started at the east end with providing a covered store room for the many “outside” items that the Club needs to enable the sailing and social events that are part of the everyday life of the Club.

This second phase is now nearing completion and should be finished in the next two months.

The third phase, approved at that meeting, was to continue the renovation moving bay by bay to the west (as illustrated in the attached diagram) starting as soon as funds permitted.

At the outset of the project the Club hoped that a sponsor might fund a significant part of the project, but this has not materialised. Further fund-raising efforts are not likely to raise this sum of money, and it is unlikely that Club funds will be able to meet the cost any time soon.

The current state of these sheds is that they are unusable and out of bounds for normal use. Leaving them in their current state would pose a health & safety risk.

The YOD Class would like to continue the provenance of the sheds so that the Club can continue to rent them out to YOD Class boats during the winter months and for other uses, e.g., cars and events outside of the winter period.

The YOD Class has approached the Club and said that it is keen to continue to support the Club as it has demonstrated many times in the past with contributions to many initiatives including, but not limited to:

- £10,000 donation to the building fund for the new Club bar.
- £1,000 to the RIB engine,
- Hosting the annual Towers Party that makes a significant contribution to the success of the Taittinger RSYC Regatta whilst obviating the need for the RSYC to put on and finance an event on the Saturday night of the regatta. This was originally held on the Bank Holiday but was moved in order to support the event.
- YOD Member James Hudleston generously donated £1.3m to the Club’s refurbishment and construction of the Hudleston Bar, Members’ Room and Members’ Balcony.

It is therefore proposed to accept the YOD offer as the best option available to the Club at this point in time. “A Memorandum of Understanding” sets out the terms that have been discussed and what the YOD Class would receive in return for their investment.

## **Amended Draft Memorandum of Understanding Between the YOD Class Fleet and the Royal Solent Yacht Club Regarding the Club's Boat Sheds**

1. The YOD Class previously offered to fund the reinstatement of the south sheds to around £35k and to donate those funds to the Club. It is understood that costs have increased. The YOD Class has considered this and would be prepared to increase its proposed contribution to the Club up to £50,000 to refurbish the sheds or the full costs of the shed refurbishment whichever is the lesser amount. The YOD Class wishes to continue the custom with regard to the sheds, originally installed by Sir Charles Seely, so that the Club can continue to rent them out to the YOD boats during the winter months, and for other uses, e.g. cars and events outside of the winter period.
2. The YOD Class shall have first refusal to continue to rent the sheds in the winter, as they have done since 1920, until the sheds became structurally unsound in 2023/24. During the summer months the Club will be able to rent the sheds for other uses, e.g., cars or host events in them. For the avoidance of doubt, they will be vacated by the YOD boats for the period between 1st May and 30th September, being the sailing season for YOD boats.
3. The Club's offer of first refusal for a winter shed space shall be open until 1 August (preceding the rental period), thereafter the Club will be free to make the space available to other users.
4. Each YOD in the YOD Class shall be granted a 3-year period of rent-free usage of the sheds.
5. If the shed bays come on-stream in phases, the 3-year rent-free period, referred to in this Memorandum of Understanding shall commence for each boat in the first winter that it takes up the Club's offer of a shed.
6. At the end of the 3-year rent-free period each YOD boat shall continue to have first refusal to rent the sheds during the winter (1st October to 30th April) and each boat owner(s) will be able rent one of the sheds from the Club to overwinter their YOD boat.
6. At the end of the 3-year rent-free period, the RSYC will be able to charge each boat owner(s) who takes up a boat shed £410 for the first winter period. Thereafter, for a further period of 7 years, the Club shall not then raise the rent by more than CPI per annum, i.e., in year two, the Club may charge £410 (year one charge) + CPI per YOD boat.
7. The total of shed bays made available will be able to accommodate all 9 YOD boats. The Club shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the structure of each bay includes protection and adequate lighting in order to protect the YOD boats during the winter and for painting and varnishing. The YOD Class agrees to ensure that any clutter resulting from works on the YOD boats is tidied and will make good should there be any paint spills while working on the YOD boats and owners shall avoid the use of dangerous, poisonous or noxious substances.
8. While all efforts will be made from day 1 it may take three years to raise the funds and the YOD Class is granted until end 2027 to do so. If, at the end of 2027 the YOD Class has been unable to contribute up to £50,000 or the full cost of the shed refurbishment whichever is the lesser amount, then the YOD Class will forfeit its first refusal option to use of the sheds.
9. The YOD Class will provide funds up to £50,000 or the full cost of refurbishing the sheds, whichever is the lesser amount, to the RSYC as funds become available, i.e., a phased contribution if necessary, so that the Club can progress the shed refurbishment project as quickly as is practicable.
10. This agreement allows the YOD boats ongoing first refusal rent of the sheds during winter unless they do not take up the first refusal option of any bay on or before 1 August preceding that winter.
11. This understanding shall be in place for a period of 10 years, and then will be subject to review. Continuation of this Understanding shall not be unreasonably refused.
12. A YOD owner's right of first refusal or otherwise to use a shed is conditional upon their adherence to this MOU and compliance with the Club's Rules and Bye-laws. It is the Owner's responsibility to ensure that any non-member working on their boat complies with this MOU and the Club's Rules and Bye-laws, and that any work is carried out in a safe, workmanlike and tidy manner.
13. In an emergency the Club may arrange to move a YOD should it be necessary and subject to advising the owner as soon as practicable.
14. No tenancy is to be, or, intended to be, created by this arrangement.

*John Evans 28/4/23*