

Teign Scullers (RTRC Sculling Section)

Member's Meeting

19:30-21:30, Tuesday 13th November at Coombe Cellars

MINUTES

Attendees

Gordon Yeates, Mark Eastman, Marjorie Roome, Mike Cullen, Carole Atkinson, Sally Livett, Andy Livett, Brain Cort, Mark Kodolanyi, Lucy Barton, Sarah Luxton, Harriet Langworthy, Wendy Blackburn

Apologies for absence

Andy Darkin, Rachel Palmer, Zane Steers, Alan Gillespie, Amelia Heathcote, Alex Waterman, Mark Le Breton

Minutes of previous meetings

These were approved

Election of Section Officers and Committee

We last elected/re-elected our officers 26th June 2017.

The currently active officers and their offices/roles are:

- Gordon Yeates (our Chair and our representative on RTRC committee)
- Mark Eastman (our Coach, race crews selection)
- Sally Livett (our Captain, Juniors)
- Alan Gillespie (our representative at WEARA)
- Marjorie Roome (Secretary)
- Andy Darkin (our South West Coastal League representative).

There is no one in a Finance or Safeguarding role, though Safety is overseen by Simon Coe at RTRC.

Sally had asked if she can stand down as Captain, but continue to running Juniors with Wendy Blackburn. Mark Kodolanyi volunteered to take over as Captain.

Andy Darkin would be happy to pass on SWCL representation (after the next, 7 December meeting) and Mark Le Breton has volunteered to take this on.

Marjorie Roome volunteered to take on Safety responsibilities within the section – though she would still like Gill (or another CC local) to continue to maintain the safety phones. She will liaise with Simon Coe to ensure that the BR Safety Audit is completed as required by end November.

It was also agreed that we do need someone to keep an eye on Finance (such as

collecting dues for private boat storage at CC) and that it is imperative that we appoint a safeguarding officer who would be approachable and preferably known to any (mostly junior) members if they were to have issues.

Future Events

This year we intent to compete/run:

- ◆ 17th November: Dart Totnes mini-head (MarkK to sort out entries and arrangement). Rowers to ensure they have paid their entry fees via RTRC WebCollect by Friday 16th.
- ◆ 8th December: Exeter RC Head (Mark E to ask who would like to compete)
- ◆ 29th December: we plan to hold a Fun Race, Format, mix of boats (fine/coastal) to be decided. It was suggested we might invite visitors from other clubs.

Next Year:

Frostbite Challenge: main club has not to decide when races will be held. We might have to review the format for scullers, now we potentially have 3 boats, though we did have issues finding two full crew last year.

April/May 2019: we now have dates for next season's coastal scull races, the three spring races are:

- ◆ Exmouth's coastal scull race on 13th April is unfortunately the same date as Dartmouth-Totnes.
- ◆ Plymouth's coastal scull race on 27th April is the weekend before the Scillies Gig Races (3-5 May).
- ◆ Teignmouth's race is 11th May.

How can we get participation up now we have 3 boats to could race? We discussed the idea of having regular coastal outings and the conflict between regular crews (who can train together) and the ability of other rowers to get a row.

We intend to set up a small sub-committee to come up with ideas.

There is a meeting of the coastal club reps on 7 December. If anyone has comments or suggestions for improvements please share them with Andy Darkin who is our representative (andydarkin@icloud.com).

Club Outings

GordonY reported our fine boat attendance statistics:

- ◆ Total number of persons attending outings were similar to last year.
- ◆ There's roughly the same number of men as women.
- ◆ There are more than twice as many participants in the summer months (April to September) as in Winter, though that is partly driven by bad weather cancellations and our inability to organise evening outings in the winter.
- ◆ We get a significant proportion of participants who are trialists and juniors, trialists particularly in July and August. Juniors more evenly through the summer.

- ◆ About 40% of our participants are over 55 and, in the summer months, about 10% are juniors.

Over the summer we experimented with regular coastal outings but these stopped before the autumn coastal racing season. We are also trying to organise coastal outing when the weather is too rough for fine boats, however it can be difficult to match the number of available people (crews and coastal cox) with boats.

Cox's/Outing Leaders

We are very dependant on a few members who are qualified as fine boat outing leaders or coastal cox (we do have a few more who can cox fine boats) What can we do to encourage more rowers to qualify to coxing or learn to coach? There is no official qualification for coastal coxing, however Lucy volunteered that the Gigs section *do* have a process for establishing coastal cox status, which we could adopt. She will provide a copy for us to look at.

Novice Nights

Gordon Yeates reported that Novice nights had worked well this year, though he has been very dependent on only a few volunteers who were willing to help. Novice nights have proved to useful introduction to both fine boat and coastal rowing with some participants moving on to trials and membership.

Juniors

Sally Livett reported on Juniors. We have had 14 juniors this year and have no problem in recruitment. Recruitment is largely by word of mouth. We could do with some items of equipment better suited to juniors: such as smaller life jackets and blades. It is arguable whether the current annual subscription for Junior is large enough: a higher subscription to be used to justify investment in equipment specifically for Juniors.

Club Kit

No one was particularly impressed with the materials used in the current kit and no one present was currently ordering more.

There *is* a demand from the men's crews for new onesies. Apparently these could be supplied (though they weren't in the brochure) and it would be useful to see a sample however it was doubted if we could meet the minimum order of 11 items demanded by Zeon, the current suppliers.

Getting new club kit can be an issue for new members, albeit RTRC apparently hold some stock of popular items.

Equipment

- It was reported that there were still significant cracking to the SIMS x4, preventing its safe use. This will be followed up. Not enough of our boats are suitable for smaller junior rowers.
- It's unclear exactly how many (paired) sculling oars we have. Shortages have been reported at times over the summer particulaly when a junior and fine boat outing coincided. There was also an issue on one occasion with coastal oars. An inventory will be done.

- There have been occasional shortages of emergency feature phones at CC.
- We still don't have a buyer for our old, large, fine boat trailer, despite a deposit having been put on it by Dart-Totnes. We need to determine if they still want it and if not we need to re-market it.

Accommodation

- Our current use of Coombe Cellars is still informal. Andy Darkin has volunteered to try and sort this out locally. The current boat-house hut is not in great shape and not a great advertisement for the club. The pub is proposing to extend their parking, however the planned extension is not thought likely to infringe on the area we currently use.
- At Bobbitts we now have a water supply, electricity is coming. Andy Darkin is planning to organise a maintenance session soon to maintain the boats and trailers and to tidy up the compound.
- There has been some discussion at Council level (and published in the press) of Future Plans for a Watersports Centre at the Point and the redevelopment of the whole Brunswick Street site. It's unclear where we could store boats if Brunswick Street site was cleared unless the new Watersport Centre was completed first, which is unlikely.

Website

We need to create Info about the section. We ought to be able to use WebCollect more, such as to record private boat storage fees payments. The meeting expressed a wish to thank YulieG for the work she has done for us over the years on the section website.

Publicity

Despite our amazing success in the Coastal League, and some successes at the fine boat regattas and at Indoor Rowing we never see anything about these in the local media. Mark Le Breton and Sandrine Harding have put together something on our Coastal League success, which is being pushed out. If we are to work on publicity RTRC say we will need to do in future through their new RTRC Publicity Officer, who is to be appointed at their AGM on 27th November. We will need to liaise on this.

A radical proposal

Mark Le Breton had submitted some ideas (circulated with the Agenda) suggesting we abandon fine rowing and the CC base and concentrate on coastal.

Most attendees gave a personal response to his ideas. All present were in favour of keeping fine boats running, but that we do need to do more to encourage section membership and use of both fine boats and coastals.

We will be setting up a small working party to consider ideas on how to do this and Andy Darkin's proposal that we should have a simple development plan should also be taken forward.

Marjorie Roome
Sculler Section Secretary