

From: The Commodore
Commodore P Wykeham-Martin Royal Navy

Hornet Services Sailing Club

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Patron: HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO

1 December 2018

Dear Members,

Welcome to my usual seasonal update. I hope that you have all had a good sailing season. Wild Blue is now safely laid up ashore after a varied season – great cruising in North Brittany and a wet and wild Cowes Week! The Club rally to Bembridge held at the end of September, coinciding with the food festival, was well supported and enjoyed by all; I would like to thank Steve Holliman for organising the event on our behalf.

You will have noticed that we are well ahead on the Winter lift programme with over half the boats already lifted. As expected, demand is more than we can accommodate but rest assured that Stewart and the team will do their best to meet your requirements, subject to capacity. As more members choose to dispose of their own cradles we have again increased our stock of Roodberg compatible cradles. As previously reported, our plans to dredge the marina are progressing and all going well this will take place between mid February and mid March 2018. At the same time, we aim to replace those pontoons that are approaching their end of life and arrange for some 'I' beams and pontoon riders to be replaced. This will be a significant effort for the staff who will carry out the detailed planning and preparation but the timing is right to have the work done. Also in the marina, we have replaced the handrails down to the pontoons on the steps at the end of the concrete pier to improve your safety.

The 'Wise' hoist is the marina work horse and year on year we are increasing the number of lifts using this ageing piece of equipment. Over the last two years we have had some significant stress fractures appear that have required urgent repair; needless to say we are looking out for opportunities to upgrade the equipment to improve our resilience in this key area.

Since taking up the role of Club Commodore I have been very keen to improve the marina office and facilities for staff. In January, we will be undertaking some work to improve their surroundings and to build an additional timber framed room within the old mast shed for the staff to use as a locker/drying room. This will be a significant enhancement to what they have at present and is long over due.

Across in Fort Blockhouse 3 I am pleased to report that Building 98 is now handed back to MOD and the asset is no longer a Club liability on the lease; this will save the Club £10k per year on our rent to MOD as well as removing our risk associated with the building. Progress with the Gosport Sea Cadet relocation from Clarence Yard onto site has been slow, but will happen, and the Club aims to sub-let an area of land that will allow them to build facilities on site, subject to MOD approval. More recently we have been working with Heritage Lottery in progressing our Heritage Enterprise bid for the historic gatehouses; our progress has slowed as we aim to meet the strict criteria required for the bid, but we will be undertaking no more expenditure on this project without Lottery support.

In the Clubhouse day to day footfall has reduced due to the temporary suspension of JSASTC sail training. The decision was taken to suspend training on the water due to significant manpower gaps; following some rigorous advertising and recruiting JSASTC hope to resume training in March/April 2018. Our bookings in the run to Christmas are good and this will help to improve the Clubhouse figures.

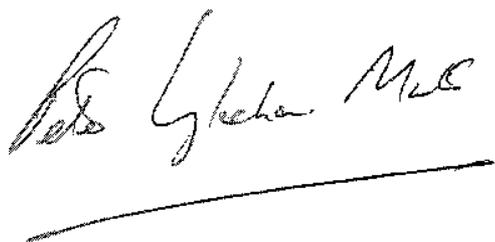
I hope you can see we are making significant strides forward but all this comes at a price. We will endeavour to keep the spend down to a minimum but a drawdown on reserves through 2018 will be required. However, our budgeting has taken all these items into account and I can reassure you that we will manage all our projects within the planned budget, and that we will continue to keep any increase in charges to no more than inflation for as long as possible. You can be assured that your Full Committee will be fully appraised of progress, and are properly involved in financial discussions. I would like to thank all of our committee members for their commitment and for their time they put in on your behalf.

At the same time I would like to say a big thank you to the staff. Their teamwork and reliability is outstanding and I hope I speak for you all in commending them for the support they provide to us throughout the year. As a token of our appreciation I have asked the Club Secretary to highlight the object of the 'staff fund' and I would encourage members to consider a voluntary donation to this fund through the year.

Finally, you will shortly be receiving a separate letter from me about all of us helping to safeguard the environment which we enjoy so much – the sea. We all have a vested interest in keeping our oceans clean!

Both Deborah and I would like to wish you all a happy Christmas and I hope that many of you will be able to come along and join us for the annual staff drinks on Friday 15th December.

Yours aye,



Peter Ghebo MBE
