

Chairman's Report on 2019

This has been a somewhat different year for the DYC, with no Commodore in post. As Vice Commodore and Chair of the General Committee I have done what I was able to do in the time available to me, but a huge vote of thanks is due to the officers of the club and members of the General Committee who have supported me in more ways than I can describe here.

In order to resolve some of the difficulties with recruiting volunteers and succession, a great deal of work has been done this year by a small sub-committee who have met at regular intervals throughout the year to explore potential solutions to these issues. This work culminated in a presentation to the General Committee. The recommendations if adopted will see changes to some of the roles within the club, in order to spread some of the load that is placed on some individuals and ensure that people are only attending meetings that are relevant to them.

Membership numbers have continued to remain strong following the trend of the last few years with over 1150 current members. Membership processing and renewals in particular has proved to be very labour intensive and time consuming, not to mention confusing, so with this in mind we propose to make it easier for all concerned, including the membership, to move to continuous Direct Debit wherever possible. Your help in agreeing to this change will make life considerably easier.

As always we continue to play our part in Regatta, be it the activities that the club organises independently or through the part that we play in the JRSC. There are many helpers and volunteers involved in all of these events and a very big thank you to everyone who contributed.

On the water

The club has continued to make great strides on the water. The dinghy programme for both adults and juniors started in March and went through until the end of October, making it the longest and busiest season ever and included the regular Tuesday evening club sail and a new Thursday supported dinghy sail with a senior instructor for those wanting to move on to the Tuesday night session. The mainstay of the junior training was again the very popular 8 week Splash programme. In addition four of our teenage sailors went on to complete the RYA 5 day dinghy instructors course, with a further two becoming Assistant Dinghy Instructors.

Also new this year was the introduction of the Harbord Cup, a new coaching and race series for Junior Sailors with a prize and trophy donated in memory of one of our past Commodores, Alister Harbord. Next year the Harbord series is planned to run throughout the season with regular monthly races counting towards the cup at the end of the season. Our new safety boat Clio has proved very effective in providing support for all of these activities.

There have been changes and additions to the dinghy fleet this year with a move away from the heavy and difficult to launch Wayfarer to a fleet of Visions and Picos as well as our Toppers. Improvements have also taken place to the storage in the park, so that we are now better able to accommodate the larger fleet.

Whilst overall numbers in the Junior Regatta this year were lower, our juniors did us and themselves proud by winning in all of the classes that they entered. Two of our juniors sailed one of the club Visions in the Senior Dinghy Regatta, finishing mid-fleet and winning the best under 18 Helm Cup. In the Yacht and Keelboat 4 day series one of our members took 3rd prize in the category for best Lady Helm.

We again passed our RYA inspection with just one minor point of action which has now been completed. Training has continued to grow this year with 12 PB2 courses completed and plans for even more next year. RYA Dinghy level 1 and 2 training courses have taken place as well as Dinghy Instructor training. We have also offered First Aid training and are looking into the possibility of running VHF courses in the near future. An additional string to our bow this year was gaining RYA OnBoard status which will benefit junior training by giving us access to teaching aids, support of the RYA's South West OnBoard Advisor and access to various supplier discounts.

Family Sailing Week was again a great success this year with 34 youngsters and 8 adults participating, making it possibly the largest group to date to take part. Despite the variable weather fun was had by all.

Paddling in all of its forms continues to grow year on year. The fleet has again been extended with 3 more new Sea Kayaks and further improvements and extensions have appeared in Coronation Park. Looking forward the plan is to improve facilities for SUPs (Stand up Paddleboards) with better accommodation for them in the garage and an increase in the number available.

Sarah and Doris our two motorboats continue to be very popular with members wanting to get out on the water, allowing them to take advantage of the beautiful area in which we live, all for a very reasonable donation.

For the larger boats a number of cruises took place this year, but unfortunately we were unable to make it to Guernsey for Last Night of the Proms this year due to unfavourable weather. As an alternative we headed west and spent enjoyable nights in the Yealm river and Salcome on the way back.

Thanks are due to all those who have made this the most successful year so far on the water.

In the Clubhouse

Whilst there has been a lot of activity out on the water, there has been a lot going on in the clubhouse too, with many successful events organised for members, including the formal dinners and an array of more casual events, for which we thank the social committee. We introduced a new Wednesday talk series this year and hope to continue with a line-up of interesting and entertaining speakers. There has been a new face in the kitchen this year and some changes to the menus, but please feedback to us what it is you would like to see us offering in the coming year.

Looking ahead we are not resting on our laurels and as you probably already know, we are just about to start a substantial refurbishment on the Gun Room in order to bring it up to date and make it more suitable for the many different events and activities that take place there. Whilst we are carrying out this work, we will also take the opportunity to install a CCTV system, something that we have been meaning to do for a while now. Please bear with us during all of this, as I am sure it will all be worth it.

Here's looking forward to another successful year at DYC.

Allan Smith

Vice Commodore