



Halifax Sailing Club

Commodore's Newsletter

May 2020

Welcome

IN THIS ISSUE

1. Welcome
2. Boat Storage
3. Progress Report
4. More Grant Success
5. Young People's Sailing

On behalf of the Committee I'd like to say that we hope all our members, their friends and families are staying safe and well in these difficult times.

When we look back at the original schedule, this was meant to be the time of year when we'd all be returning to the Club getting our feet wet once again. Unfortunately events have overtaken us and we'll have to wait a while longer. In the meantime we have put together this newsletter to try and keep the membership up to speed with developments within the club.

As you are aware, our focus at the beginning of the year was on how we would keep the Club running during the ongoing improvement works and how we would restart our sailing activities once this was finished. Obviously this issue now pales into insignificance given the current national crisis but we still have to look ahead to when this will be over.

Despite significant challenges the Committee are still engaging with each other (remotely) and a great deal of work is being done in the background. We will obviously be lead by Government advice before we take any decisions about how and when to reopen the Club. When we do be assured that we will take every precaution necessary to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

Hopefully it will not be too long before we are sailing again. Remember stay well, stay safe.

Best Regards
Graham

Boat Storage

Early last year we arranged to 'lease' a storage facility where members could keep their boats during the closure. Located at the Ringway Business Park in Huddersfield, the unit provided ample storage at no cost to the Club or members.

During March we were asked to vacate the original unit but luckily we were able to occupy a smaller one nearby. This meant that a small group spent a sweaty Saturday morning wheeling dinghies along roads and paths to the new (smaller) unit.





Progress Report

Anyone visiting Warley Moor at the moment will notice that there is still a distinct lack of the 'wet stuff'. According to the original schedule the reservoir should have been more or less full by now but a combination of wet weather, ecological bureaucracy and the pandemic have caused delays at almost every stage.

We have been in close contact with the Yorkshire Water contractors MMB throughout the ongoing works but apart from monitoring their progress there is very little we can do as a Club to improve matters. It isn't much consolation that even if the pond was full, we're still not allowed to use it !



When YW informed us that the reservoir would be drained we started talking to the contractors (MMB) to try to ensure that the impact on the Club would be as small as possible. We agreed to lease the Clubhouse to MMB for the duration of the work and in return they agreed to undertake a schedule of works on our behalf including:



- Reinforcement of the reservoir banking along the approach road to prevent further erosion
- Resurfacing and maintenance of the approach road along its full length
- Carry out a full remedial check of the electrical systems in the clubhouse

A recent change in legislation meant that we also needed to upgrade the Club's sewage treatment system. MMB helped to source a suitable tank and also installed it for us.

On the good news front, the installation of the 'syphon' which allows the water to be drained quickly in the event of a failure is now complete. MMB were therefore preparing to 'put the plug in' and begin the refill but another issue has come to light that will delay it further.

This involves replacing concrete blocks at the bottom of the shaft which operates the existing outlet valve. If the work isn't done now while the water is low it will have to be planned in over the next few years at which time it would need to be fully drained again. As the concrete blocks are underneath the valve and shaft the remaining bit of water will have to be pumped out for access. Now MMB have the go ahead they will plan it in more detail and let us know what the knock on effect is but it will likely now be the middle to the end of June before the plug can go back in.

So work continues at Warley but there is still a way to go before we can take up residence again. In the meantime Committee members and others are planning what we will need to do when MMB hand the site back to us.

More Grant Success

As we reported at the AGM, the Club has again been successful in obtaining a £10,000 grant from the Ovenden Windfarm Community Benefit Fund. The fund is administered by the Community Foundation for Calderdale (CFFC) on behalf of Yorkshire Wind Power Ltd.

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The new funding came on the back of our two previous applications that allowed us to install a new jetty in 2018 and to purchase new windsurfing equipment in 2019. This year the Training Section made a strong case to upgrade the Club's training dinghies and the Committee agreed that this would be a benefit to the Club going forward.

By Sue Lamb:

We'd known for a long time that we needed better boats for training beginners and to allow us to start teaching more advanced techniques like using a trapeze and how to sail with an asymmetric spinnaker.

We started to look at the options available and whilst talking to Joane Goodchild from the Keighley Sea Cadets she mentioned the RS Quest. It seemed like the RS Quest had replaced the Bosun as the must have boat for Sea Cadet units and she offered us a ride in one. So in early Spring 2019 we went over to Beaver for a morning's sail.

It wasn't windy but the boat sailed like a dream. Myself and Henry tried to get Steve wet by gently moving towards the leeward side so the water would come over the gunnel but it didn't. The gunnel just deflected the water and we came away knowing this was the kind of boat we needed. Later on in the year myself and Steve went over to Beaver again to try an RS Zest. This is a smaller dinghy that takes 1 or 2 people or maybe 3 youngsters and again we were very impressed.



To cut a long story we applied for a Grant from the Windfarm fund and were delighted to get £10,000. With a small top up from the Club we were able to buy three ex demo dinghies - a Quest and two Zests.

The boats were delivered to the storage facility in Huddersfield on the 4th Feb 2020. It was about 20.30 on a dark cold night when they arrived. A couple of weeks later Steve, Henry, John and I went over to the storage unit and rigged them.

Like everyone else we're now just waiting for the time when we can get back on the water and give them a good try. Hopefully it won't be too long.

Young People's Sailing



Last year as you know we moved the Young Peoples Sailing (On Board) to Denholme Sailing Club at Doe Park. We managed to sail at Halifax on the 4th and 11th May and then for the rest of the year we sailed at Denholme.

Denholme Sailing club were more than helpful to us and because we became group members we were able to use both their facilities and Bradford Council's Water Activity Centre boats.

Sailing at Doe Park was not easy as we are all used to a straight strong wind at Halifax whereas at Denholme the wind is all over the place all at once. It didn't take long for the young people to understand the wind and master it. Both Henry and myself think that sailing at Denholme has given them more confidence and their sailing skills have developed beyond anything we could have dreamed of.

In addition to teaching young people we managed to run a joint Level 1 course with Denholme's instructors and we also ran improver sessions on a Wednesday evenings. Some of our windsurfing members also tried to sail with us but without much success. The parents however enjoyed using the paddle boards that Steve Hill brought up.

We ran our usual 'Fun Day' and were able to have a go on the high ropes climbing frame, or at least some of us did - too high up for me! We managed to get a race in and finished off with the BBQ ably run by Simon Hustler followed by the Prize giving.

The Sailor of the Year for 2019 was Emily Hoyland. We would like to thank everyone who supported us last year. Thank you, Phil and Steve H especially.



So now in 2020 and we are reluctant to leave Denholme behind entirely. We have had meetings with them and proposed reciprocal membership for this year. In other words, Denholme sailors can come and sail with us and we can sail with Denholme. Of course, at the moment neither club can sail due to the virus.

Hopefully, we will get on the water this year but meanwhile we are starting on-line sailing sessions (via Zoom) for Saturday sailors for both children and adults.

Sue Lamb