

HAYLING ISLAND SAILING CLUB
Minutes of the Spring General Meeting
Held on Sunday 27th April 2025 at 1500

1. Those Present

The Commodore, Graham Williamson (GW), welcomed those in attendance to the SGM, declared the meeting quorate, and asked everyone to record their presence on the register sheet.

2. Apologies for absence – To Receive and Record

Simon Lytton, Jackie Lytton, Rob Wilder, Carlyne Curteis, Mike Durrant, Alan Clarke, Nick Willis, Jane Willis, Michael Dawe, Alastair Christmas, Peter Piper, Alison Stainsbury, Jonathan Pyke, Matt Stein, Simon Benson, Colin Smith, Caroline Alster, Monica Rose, Trevor Rose, David Sayce, Fiona Sayce, Tessa Lancaster, Nick Lancaster, Tricia Tappin, Peter Tappin, Leonie Austin, Jonathan Hall, Cynthia Gray, Claire Durrant, Richard Pratt, Ian Porter, Jenny Philo, Neil Upton-Brown, Charlie Tavner, Emma Tavner

3. Resolution 1 – Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 20th October 2024 – to Approve

3.1 Proposer – Tim Hancock

3.2 Seconder – Nick Peters

3.3 Motion carried after a vote of hands with no objections.

4. Matters arising from the minutes of the Spring General Meeting

Unincorporated Status Review

4.1 GW updated the meeting on the Unincorporated Status Review. This included a review of the history of the Club's legal status, highlighting the upsides and downsides of HISC's status as an unincorporated entity. The review had been started following strong recommendations from the RYA and Sport England that clubs nationwide should incorporate. Many clubs have now done so, and HISC is now the only club in Chichester Harbour without limited liability — particularly notable given HISC's size and financial turnover.

4.2 The last review was completed in 2014, at which time the decision was made to continue as an unincorporated organisation. Since then, the general operational risks of the Club's activities have not changed much, however, the regulatory environment in which we exist has shifted. Dealing with banks and accessing insurance has become increasingly difficult, and the safeguarding environment has significantly changed. The perception of the General Committee (GC) is that the rate of regulatory change is accelerating, and there are concerns that at some point the Club could encounter obstacles that could jeopardise its ongoing operation. The consensus of the GC is that considering incorporation is now the right step to protect the future of the Club.

4.3 The GC is advising members that this work is underway and that a recommendation may be made in the foreseeable future. Any change to the Club's status must adhere to key principles: the Club culture must be maintained, Rule and Bye-Law changes should be kept to a minimum, and there must be no change to the fees that the Club and members currently pay.

4.4 Critical considerations in this process include ensuring that any recommendations are fully transparent, that members are consulted, and that members have access to good information along with opportunities to raise questions. The earliest the Club would want to make a change would be

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1st January 2027. If the transition is to proceed, two separate member votes would be required: the first to approve an enabling Rule change allowing assets to transfer from the unincorporated organisation to the new limited company, and the second to approve the Club's incorporation.

- 4.5 Next steps are to seek legal and financial advice, develop the project plan, and continue communicating with members. While there is no doubt that being an incorporated company would better protect the Club's future, if any significant issues arise during the process, members will be informed.
- 4.6 Paul Cook asked if the GC was happy that 2027 was quick enough. GW responded that this timeline gave the Club enough time to properly consult with everyone, but that if it became necessary, we could accelerate the process.
- 4.7 Adrian Simpson asked that when consultation sessions are organised that they could be available on Zoom. GW responded that they would be.
- 4.8 Lynn Smith asked if the change would affect the Clubs VAT status. GW responded that the review was looking into this but that he did not anticipate any change.

Proposed Rule Change – Creation of Estates Committee as per General Committee Proposal

- 4.9 GW raised that a member query on the proposal had been raised to make the new Committee lead a Flag Officer rather than a Committee Chair. However, the decision had been made not to make this change as there is a desire for the Estates committee lead to be in post for longer intervals than a Flag Officer.
- 4.10 Proposer – General Committee
- 4.11 Paul Cook – Seconder
- 4.12 The Resolution was adopted after a show of hands with 4 abstentions and no votes against.

5. 5 Year Forward Plan

- 5.1 GW updated the attendees on the 5 year forward plan. GW summarised the Objects of the Club and the process for creating the 5 Year Forward Plan.
- 5.2 Sophie Costard (SC) welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending before reporting on House successes in 2024. House income for 2024 had increased by £58,000 compared to 2023, delivering the best financial performance since 2015. There had also been a substantial increase in sailors eating after sailing, and Sunday lunches had grown in popularity. Feedback had improved overall, but any feedback submitted was still being reviewed to seek continual improvement. The ABBA event in August proved to be the most profitable House event the Club ran in 2024. House had successfully piloted the Estates Working Group, and SC thanked Peter Bannister for his hard work running this group. The Dunes and Gardening Team also continued to do outstanding work. The Club Archives Team had organised a commemorative COPP dinner, alongside their constant weekly work to document the Club's history. Efforts to build external revenue were continuing, and the Club had seen an increase in wedding bookings for 2025 because of these efforts. House Committee would continue to encourage more external events whilst ensuring the right balance between external events and making Clubhouse facilities available for members. House had completed a review of members' use of the Club Accommodation services. The Dunes block had undergone a refit by the staff, which was still underway. SC thanked her House Committee and all the House Staff, led by House Manager Nick Griffiths.

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- 5.3** SM updated the meeting on the Sailing Committee's achievements by focusing on specific highlights. SM highlighted the extraordinary extra volunteering carried out by Club members. Some people undertake over 20 Club duties, and there are whole projects run by volunteers. Linda Stokes had been running WOW for many years, Thursday Club was run by Michael and Catherine Massey's team of volunteers, Rosie Berry had been volunteering architectural services to the project to build new Windsurfing Lockers, Chris Turner continued to run the Club's Use it or Lose it Policy, Clive Everest had designed a new starting sequence, and Conrad Cockburn and the Tender Working Group, along with the SEALS volunteers, were also recognised. SM highlighted that the Club's dinghy racing turnout was the highest since 2014. This primarily had been driven by the Club's Use it or Lose it Policy implemented by Chris Turner. This is an enormous project which has resulted in more boats in the boat park that are sailed more often. The Club had been able to accommodate everyone on the Waiting List for multiple years now. SM also highlighted the return of the Soak Tide Ride event, which had been resurrected after first being run in the early 2000s. The aim for this event was to be a fun, spectator-friendly occasion that could be watched from the Clubhouse.
- 5.4** SM also highlighted the technological advances that had been made. A WhatsApp Community had been established, allowing for greater Member engagement and easier communication about events and activities. Theo Galyer in the Office had also made improvements to the administration of Racing Services, digitising the process, which improved the quality of Racing Results and saved significant Office time. Theo Galyer had also made significant improvements to how members and visitors enter Club Open Events online. SM updated the meeting on the upcoming Championships, which were planned. A similar number of events were planned compared to 2024. In 2026, HISC had been selected to host the RYA Youth Nationals, a prestigious event. The 505 Worlds would also be coming to the Club.
- 5.5** Forward plans included the continuing work to get new Windsurf Lockers built. Work was also underway to better support the Board Sports community as this continued to grow in popularity. A project was being launched to introduce an 'Assisted Sailing' programme to help some of the Club's less mobile sailors get onto the water. Volunteers would be filming upcoming Assisted Sailing sessions to better explain to members what the sessions were about and to increase engagement. SM thanked all Sailing Committee Members, the Class Captains, the Office, and the Marine Team. SM also thanked Peter Hickson for the beautiful photos he had taken of sailing and Club activities over many years. SM thanked Simon Benson for the huge amount of work he does organising Club Championships, and Chris Turner for implementing the Use it or Lose it Policy.
- 5.6** GW updated the meeting on the Club's environmental achievements. Club members were continuing to produce Borrow Bags, which are used by the local community to reduce plastic bag use. At the last Club litter pick, nine full bags of litter were cleared from the beach. Emma Toman had driven efforts to trace water leaks and reduce water wastage. The General Committee had been looking to install PV solar panels on the Clubhouse roof for many years, to complement the array already on the marine shed. However, the necessary capital for this has never been available to make this project happen. The Club had met a community cooperative called Energise South Downs, with whom the Club was working to get PV solar panels installed on the Clubhouse roof with no capital outlay from the Club. The General Committee had decided to proceed with this project, which would be a big step forward in the Club's environmental credentials. Heads of Terms had been agreed with Energise South Downs for review by an external solicitor prior to moving to contract during the next few weeks. Full details will be made available to members after this review process.

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5.7 Greg Lamb asked if the PV installation would include battery storage. GW responded that battery storage was not included in this phase of the project; however, this could be considered later.

6. Rear Commodore Finance 2024 Financial Report and Accounts Overview

6.1 JM reported that the Club had achieved its best financial performance since 2015, producing a £97,000 surplus and generating £31,000 of cash. JM noted that Marine Income, including Boat Parking revenue and Cruising revenue, had increased substantially, whilst costs had risen only slightly. House had made a positive contribution to the Club accounts for the first time in many years. Bar and Catering income were up, and costs had been reduced. Membership income had increased; however, the revenue received from Membership Subscriptions was less than expected, driven by a decline in Family Memberships. Utility costs continued to increase through rising energy prices and insurance costs; however, ongoing efforts had been made to reduce Club costs, removing about £25,000 from the Club's cost base each year. The wage bill had increased by only 2% in 2024, compared with an average UK increase last year of 8%, and despite the cost of employing an 18-year-old rising by 50% over two years.

6.2 In summary, the Club had a good year, which funded the capital expenditure required in 2024. However, the Club's capital reserves remained very low. Looking ahead, based on capital expenditure plans, a £200,000 surplus per year would be needed to meet future needs and to build a financial reserve. For 2025, the Club budget projected a £45,000 surplus once the Employers' National Insurance increases were accounted for. In summary, JM reported that the Club had a good year, but challenges remained.

6.3 GW reported that as a matter of policy, the underlying objective was to generate enough cash to meet the Club's capital needs, carry out catch up and ongoing maintenance, and rebuild the Club's cash reserves, a process expected to take around 10 years. The key question constantly being considered is: "What do we want the Club to look like in 20 years' time?" Dinghy classes are fragmenting, and the average age of sailing participants is increasing. Clubs nationwide are diversifying to meet these challenges, and HISC needed to consider how to respond. House and Marine services had performed well; however, Membership numbers continued to decline, especially in the Family Membership category.

7. AOB

7.1 GW thanked David Nicholls for his time supporting the Club in many capacities over many years, most recently as a Trustee, and presented him with a gift of thanks.

7.2 Following the recent announcement that Henry Message would be leaving HISC for a new opportunity, GW thanked HM for all his work for HISC over the years he had been employed by the Club.

7.3 GW reported that Paul Cook had raised a question around the fire risk posed by the "New Land" owned by the Club south of the RNLI station, where there had been several fires recently. GW responded that the land was being retained to ensure resilience in the case of any catastrophic event.

7.4 John Locke asked if a Membership Category could be created for senior members and if there was a discounted rate for members booking Sailing Courses. GW said Membership Committee would review the request and, that there was a discounted rate for Sailing Courses.

7.5 Ivan Gardner raised that the Reception area was not clear enough for Visitors to the Club, and that the requirement for everyone to complete a Club Duty seemed to be driving some resignations. GW thanked Ivan for the observation and said these questions would be investigated.

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7.6 Simon Hooper raised that it appeared a number of members had not been complying with Bye-Laws. GW responded that the Staff did respond to these issues.	
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Meeting Closed at 16:08