

CSSA ANNUAL REPORT TO 31st DECEMBER 2023

The CSSA Annual Report includes the reports of member Clubs, an affiliated Club and other Clubs providing sailing for public servants. The CSSA accounts have been published in CS Sailing. Resolving of membership anomalies identified with CSSC during 2022 continued. More than 570 members were reinstated or recruited during 2023 bringing active membership of CSSC and CSSA to 2,569 at year end.

The CSSA remains in a strong financial and operational position but faces challenges.

As the name says, the Civil Service Sailing Association is an association of Clubs that exist as Divisions of the CSSA or are affiliated to the CSSA. The world has changed since the CSSA was established back in 1957, 67 years ago, and even more so since our parent body, the CSSC, was set up over 100 years ago – sufficient for recent CSSC appointees to query the need for the CSSA General Committee now that technology could provide CSSC communication directly with Divisions.

The CSSC continues with its implementation of its recently reformed business strategy. As you might expect, CSSC's priorities are to maximise income, minimise outgoings and minimise liabilities.

Changes seen as advantageous by CSSC can be detrimental to the CSSA and other CSSC affiliated bodies. A lot of CSSA volunteer time and effort can be needed to assess impact on, amongst other things, the liabilities of Clubs and volunteers and respond fully to CSSC proposals.

CSSA continues to work with the CSSC to maximise the benefits for sailors. Example CSSC reforms include proposals: to move from a combined 'per capita' and 'events' funding model for CSSA – the only such model remaining in the CSSC – to an 'events' only model; requirement that CSSC affiliated bodies sign up to the CSSC data protection policy as a prerequisite for access to CSSC records – most commonly arising for CSSA through CSSC's demand that CSSC's NuTickets system is used for events (not least for access to CSSC insurances for organisers and participants); establishing CSSC affiliated bodies as Companies Limited by Guarantee (CLG) or similar; review and revision of agreements between CSSC and CSSA.

CSSA's Trustees – 3 x former Commodores appointed in 2013 – resigned during 2023.

At the end of 2022, our retiring Commodore, Graham Dalton, made it clear that the tradition of CSSA capturing a Cabinet Secretary or other well-connected grandee is now firmly in the history books. The General Committee appointed Paul Brereton as your Commodore in January 2023 and left his previous Vice-Commodore post vacant pending a review of Flag Officer structure.

Some CSSC/CSSA reforms feature in the following Club reports.

Portsmouth Offshore Group (POG)

The new land lease for our Weevil Lane site was finally signed off by CSSC in June last year. This should simplify our leasing as it does not require the intermediate sublease with CSSA.

POG became incorporated as an active company limited by guarantee on 1 January last year. This is very significant change to our organisation

The survey and small scale dredging that took place last autumn exposed a need to undertake large scale dredging as we now have few areas that meet our minimum depth requirements. The costs are likely to be very substantial.

We have simplified our IT system. Several club members have helped us develop this product to meet our requirements which are quite distinct from most other sailing clubs.

We are replacing of our Weevil Lake bollards and yard outlets with metered units. This has been forced on us as the cost of electricity for the club – particularly in the winter period, has gone through the roof. For this reason, we will be installing metered bollards on the pontoons and metered outlets in the yard.

Our informal racing continued, with Around the Cans attended by 8 boats and the Nab N' Back with 21 starters. My thanks go to Mike Childs and to the others involved in setting these up and running with all the associated background work.

The rallies were very well attended in 2023, with the Marchwood SC rally, the Folly Jolly and Lyminster Overnight Potter proving popular.

We had two very well attended work parties in April, 152 attendees and in October 140 attendees.

The training, evening talks and social events continue to be well attended.

East Coast Yacht Division (ECYD)

Freyja, a Najad 380, purchased by ECYD in 2005 has more than exceeded every expectation, thanks to the maintenance regime planned and executed over the years by our excellent yacht husbands and the small band of committed members who have supported them.

This season, Freyja has covered about 2,500 miles and visited many ports, including a passage through the Kiel Canal and going to in the Baltic, Weather varied from flat calm, to storm bound in Force 9.

Our planned winter 2023/2024 programme to maintain and improve Freyja was completed.

The loss of our status as a RYA training centre, after the death of the exceptional Peter Burry, has impacted on our ability to attract members to our pre- and post-season programme, with candidates then joining ECYD as active members.

Happily, thanks to the efforts of many, in particular by our treasurer with advice from a retired HMRC club member and support from CSSC, the issue was finally resolved just before Freyja set off for Europe. HMRC had accepted that the VAT due on the purchase of Freyja had not only been accounted for satisfactorily at the time of purchase and that skippers could complete Form C1331 when returning to the UK without perjuring themselves and being open to prosecution.

A diminishing active membership and with few members being prepared to step forward to fill committee roles, particularly a yacht husband, led to a decision to consider an orderly dissolution of the club. Happily at the AGM in November a new committee was formed whose members committed to serving for two years, giving the club an opportunity to continue providing sailing opportunities for members of the civil service and associated bodies.

Now we look forward to 2024 with a return to the Baltic and also opportunities to sail in more local waters.

Channel Sailing Division (CSD)

I am pleased to report another successful and well supported sailing programme during 2023. The Dufour 380 has now been in service for 2 years following its naming in April 2022. It has been well used and well liked, although the build quality has not been as good as we would expect. However, there have been no significant periods of unavailability and utilisation has remained strong.

2023 saw a summer cruise to France with 7 weeks based in Pornichet and in 2024 Sea Essay will be embarking on her 12 weeks cruise based around the Channel Islands and the south west of the UK. In 2023 saw the usual full programme of day sails, seatimes, training and charters which continue for the 2024 season.

I wanted to record my thanks to the CSD committee for their ongoing hard work and particular thanks to those stepping down from roles at the AGM and to those new members of the team.

Jumbles Sailing Club (JSC)

Sailing improved throughout the year as the water levels rose back to normal levels but at least the low levels earlier in the year enabled some much-needed work on the reservoir wall to be successfully completed!

In 2023 Jumbles Sailing Club started a new scheme to welcome Paddle Boarders into the club. The pilot scheme facilitates a Day membership allowing up to 6 visits a year to use their paddle board on the water. Started mid-year we had a small number of participants late summer and hope to attract more in 2024. The club also welcomed a new group membership from Wave Adventure who support vulnerable adults, young people and other underrepresented groups to experience outdoor activity helping them to socialise, reduce anxiety and isolation and learn new skills.

5 Kingdoms Sailing Club (5KSC)

It was a good year for 5KSC, our yacht YNOT was in use most of the time. There have been cruises in the Orkneys, several training courses and successful Yacht Master exams.

During the winter (22/23) the yard fitted a new anchor winch and reinforced the deck over it. We had a lift-out in Ardfarn for a polish of the hull, gelcoat repairs, replacement of all seacocks and to sort out a missing bolt on the rigging. The engine behaved itself this year after fitting new water inlet hoses. The search continues for a suitable replacement yacht.

Training: The 22/23 winter training included Radar, First Aid and Manoeuvring courses. In May we had a YM prep for women and three RYA practical courses running out of Largs: coastal practical, comp crew and day skipper. In the autumn there was another prep week followed by the MCA exam which produced four new YM coastal skippers for the CSSA, then another day skipper and a comp crew. It was great that only one course out of seven was not fully booked.

Cruising: the years main event was a trip to the Orkneys, Paul Brereton skippered this over 6 weeks, making two trips around Cape Wrath and offering skippered seatime as well as his private charters. Our regular Clyde skippers sailed the boat to and from Oban which was very helpful. There was also an Inshore Skipper week and a couple of private charters on the Clyde. For the second year on the run YNOT had to stay in Troon until the end of November as bad weather prevented a safe trip back to Liverpool.

Racing: The winter program of races on the Mersey with Liverpool Yacht Club is in full swing and attracting CSSA members who wish to join in the 2024 program.

Rutland Civil Service Sailing Club (RCSSC)

Sailing activity in 2023 was severely curtailed by weather conditions being predominately cold wet and windy.

We did however in collaboration with CSSA Commodore Paul Brereton organize the CSSA National Dinghy Championship in April designed to coincide with the CSSA AGM also held at RSC.

We continue to offer in conjunction with CSSC National & Regional Events Team our successful series of Taster Days for CSSC members, their families and friends

Our members continue to help organize and participate in CSSA offshore events with numerous CSSA Clubs

Our boats celebrated their 50th birthday in 2022 so we decided it was time to celebrate by renovating three of our boats. The project took 12 months due to the poor weather conditions.

We remain in a solid financial position. This is only possible because of the huge effort put in by club committee members. Our membership fee includes use of boats,

maintenance, insurance & corporate membership of RSC. We were grateful once again to receive our part of the CSSC / CSSA Distribution Grant of £926.

Chris Peck Club Captain stood down; John Cranwell-Ward was elected Club Captain. Dave Grundy stood down after many years as Club Treasurer and new member Mark Davies took on the Treasurer role. Pete Shuttleworth agreed to take on the role as Committee Chair.

RCSSC wish to become a CSSA Division. RCSSC will present a proposal prior to that discussion.

Griffin SC

Griffin has organised a Brittany trip and the annual Griffin regatta in September. Griffin became an Associate Member of Cotswold Sailing Club. Griffin's reliance on CSSC funding has increased to maintain affordable event prices as costs spiralled.