

**Minutes of the 175<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the  
Royal Welsh Yacht Club**

**Held on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 1400 hours**

**In the Clubhouse at Porth yr Aur and on Zoom**

**Members Present**

Jane Crowther, Eric Crowther, Tom Edge, Jan Edge, Frank Smykowski, Jo Smykowski, Neville Roberts, Beth Bushnell, Bill Barry, Alison Harrison, Eda Pelham, Liam Adams, Sarah Roberts, Clive Roberts, Mark Pearson, Julie Pearson, Malcolm Jones, Clifford Williams, Ian Park, Linda Park, John Summerfield, John Judge, Mike Hamer, Robert Hancock, Brian Oulton, Richard Hanlon, Jan Craft, John Illsley, Marion Wintringham, John I H Jones, Mark Walton, Carol Walton, Dawn Smith, John Whittaker, Matt Tuck

**Zoom**

Chris N Jones, Chris H Jones, David Richardson, Karl Behler, Mark Walker, Robert Lowe

**Apologies for absence**

Natalia Gomez Escobar, Mark Rayment, Iwan R Jones, Geoff Hilditch, Brian Roberts, Cathy Jones, Olwen Williams, Mo Judge, Steve Tiffin, Liz Tiffin

**Approval of the Minutes of the 174<sup>th</sup> AGM**

Proposed: Neville Roberts    Seconded: John Judge

**The Commodores Report**

There was a sense of optimism in the air as our 175 Anniversary year began and Covid seemed finally to be behind us. The winter programme of social events kicked off with one of Graeme's famous cheese and wine parties followed by regular quizzes and the annual Burn's night supper. The RNLi agreed to support our 175th Anniversary Celebrations and plans were soon afoot for a Gala Dinner to be held at the Celtic Royal to mark the start of the MS Regatta fortnight and a Grand Raffle in aid of the RNLi. By late January 175th Anniversary Regalia was available and continues to be popular today. On the building front we had a Dimensional and Ecological Survey of the Club premises carried out in preparation for the proposed building improvements including lift access, redesigned gents and lady's toilet facilities and eventually more effective use of the Snooker room. The endless process of trying to clear the Snooker room began with a sale of books and charts but it's an ongoing task without end in sight at present. Tom secured grants to cover the cost of the surveys and the prospect of our building development aspirations became one step closer. A proper flagpole arrived and was carried aloft from the CSC by a trusted group of stalwarts who then proceeded to man haul it up into position on the Barbican. This was a fine effort and finally we once more had a flagpole in keeping with our stature as a senior Royal Yacht Club. As summer progressed a Cruise in Company to Scotland set off north with a staggered start and the rowers entered the annual challenges such as the Montfort Challenge and the Castle-to-Castle race. Activity on the water was as enthusiastic as ever as we prepared for the busiest time of the year with our Anniversary Celebrations to be followed rapidly by the

Menai Strait Regattas. It had been decided that there was enough racing experience among Club members for us to now run our own Regatta and so, after a Race Officer training seminar and a dry run for the volunteers we were ready. As July drew to a close the Cane Toads returned to the Club and set the scene for a week of celebrations with a memorable evening of good old fashioned rock music. Our July 30th Celebration Day saw the first RWYC members racing - sorry competitive cruising - event for many years as 14 yachts and 2 rowing crews set off towards Britannia Bridge and back. It was a great fun spectacle receiving universal approval - so we hope it will be the first of other such events in years to come. Our 175th Gala Dinner Dance in the evening exceeded all expectations and was a tribute to all those Club members who put so much time and effort into its organisation. It proved so popular, as the start to the MS Regatta fortnight, that we may well combine with other Clubs to repeat the event next year. The following Wednesday the Race Through arrived and the Clubhouse was humming, as it continued to be for the next two days. Our Regatta happily went off without a hitch thanks to the diligent attention of all our volunteers and of course the weather. The following day we hosted Caernarfon Sailing Club Regatta, which after many years, sadly proved to be their last, but our intention is to continue to support racing at our end of the Strait in the long tradition of the Menai Strait Regattas. In terms of Royal Patronage this was a tumultuous year. In March our Honorary President Nev Roberts represented the Club at a Service of Remembrance in Westminster Abbey for Prince Philip. Then came the request from the town Council for us to light a Beacon as part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations - the downside was we didn't appreciate the fact that we'd end up having to buy one. Happily, the support of the Lord Lieutenant came to the rescue and the issue was soon resolved leaving the Club nicely in a position to fulfil our expected duty, particularly in the light of the fact that Prince Charles had agreed to take on the Royal Patronage of the Club for the next 5 years. Then on September 7th the world turned upside down with the news that Queen Elizabeth II had died, Prince Charles became King Charles III and for the first time since 1901 we had the Monarch as our Royal Patron. An ironically bittersweet outcome for the Club at a time when much of the Country was in deep mourning and struggling to come to terms with the loss of such an iconic figurehead. On the training front members attended training sessions in Rowing Coaching, First Aid, VHF Radio and PB level 2. The appointment of Iwan Rees Jones as Victoria Dockmaster cemented our liaison with the Doc on both sailing and rowing fronts and his interest and involvement with the Club as an Honorary member has been most positive. Jo Smykowski took over the monthly bulletin, after a long stint by Louise Messenger who deserved a well-earned break and at the same time it was decided to change the format to Quarterly Bulletins. Applications for membership steadily increased and the trend has happily continued throughout the year leaving the Club in a very healthy position. Socially the Club continued to benefit from Graeme's popular special event nights and regular quizzes, but we have also increasingly become the 'go to' venue for other allied organisations to run private parties. Our reputation as a friendly, welcoming Club for visiting yachtsmen remains undiminished and is a tribute to all concerned. Now on to the work of the Management Committee. Among all the other regular topics at our monthly meetings, the main focus this year has been over the pros and cons of changing the status of the Club from that of an Unincorporated Association to that of a Not-for-Profit Company Limited by Guarantee. The driver behind this debate primarily concerned the quality of protection provided by the existing Club structure for members and officers against possible litigation, although there were other potential benefits to be considered not the least of which was the perceived status afforded by being a registered Company when applying for external funding. The

proposal obviously marked a major potential change in the management structure of the Club and was initially greeted by responses ranging from sighs of relief to cries of shock horror that such a move should even be considered. It was clearly not a process to be rushed, and some careful research and sensitive deliberation was required. However, as time went on the proposal received sufficient support for the Management Committee to continue preparations and we arranged an open meeting for members to share thoughts and concerns on the proposal. The final stage was arranging an EGM for the membership to vote on the proposed change, and this took place on Saturday September 24th. The result was a vote in favour with only two abstentions and no votes against. Approximately 18% of the eligible membership took part in the vote, which was somewhat less than we had hoped for, but that's democracy for you. Subsequently the work of transposing the existing Club Constitution into Articles of Association and related Bylaws for the new Company proved to be a lengthy exercise involving a select group of much wiser folk than me, until we finally have a version worthy of being placed before this AGM for adoption. So, as my period as Commodore comes to an end, I feel confident that our Club is in a good position to go from strength to strength as long as we work together to fend off the ever-present risk of complacency and do our utmost to anticipate and fulfil the future needs of our members. Our finances are in sound condition at the moment, although there will be increased pressure as time goes on, with running costs going up and the need to contribute to the costs of our building improvements. Membership continues to grow, and I'd like to pay tribute to those who not only support the Club through their membership fees, but who are also prepared to work behind the scenes in support of others - as always, they form the backbone of the Club. So, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who go that extra mile and in particular to the Officers and Members of the Management Committee, including those retiring this year, for their work, support and advice. Finally, my very best wishes go to the incoming Flag officers and Committee members for a very successful and enjoyable 2023. So, a very good morning to you all from New Zealand and do enjoy the Annual dinner tonight.

### **The Treasurer's Report and Accounts**

Commodore, Flag Officers and Members of the Royal Welsh Yacht Club.

I would like to start by thanking members for their confidence and trust in my handling of the Club's financial affairs for the year 2021/2022. Also, a big thank you to the former Treasurer, Malcolm Jones. He has continued to support me, looking out and applying for the remaining available grants from the Welsh Government towards the end of the Covid lockdowns. Malcolm also took back the responsibility of bank payments while I was away with the Club Scottish cruise this summer.

It started out as a more challenging period with the Covid 19 crisis continuing to restrict bar opening hours and number of members allowed in at any one time. However, things soon returned to what we remember as "normal". Only for me, this was not normal, because lockdown took hold just 2 months into my period as Treasure so a year with a full social calendar, Regatta and then the 175 Anniversary events to top it off, has been quite a shock!

Items of interest: -

The bar sales have risen back up to pre covid levels and we have regained our income from social events. Profits from all events in this 175-anniversary year will be shared with the RNLI – the exact total amount to donate has not yet been calculated.

Graeme's position was supported by the furlough scheme until the end of lockdown, but the bar is now fully self-supporting and making a steady profit. Frank has stepped up to support Graeme offering a second, very capable pair of hands behind the bar and allowing him to take much needed holiday.

Graeme's Ukraine appeal has raised £1322.37 up to year end and the total is still rising

Membership has again increased, and thanks must go out to the loyal members for their support!

Liam has worked hard to create a basic operating budget based on fixed term and regular costs. Just before the world went crazy, he secured a fixed price contract for both Gas and Electric, running on to 2024.

The late Margaret Crozier left the RWYC an extremely generous legacy of £46,000, a clear indication of the love she felt for the Club and its members and for which we are all very grateful.

Thanks to Margaret, available grants, Membership Subscriptions and of course the bar sales (well done everyone! Keep up the good work!) the club finances have remained in a strong position and a surplus of income over expenditure of £49,800 has been realised.

The Club's accountant Mrs Laura Adams, along with her team, has been extremely helpful and efficient in managing the furlough scheme, PAYE and giving in us advice on the Incorporation issue as we requested it.

I have strongly recommended that WJ Matthews and Son be appointed as the Club's accountants for 2023

**To elect for a period of 1 year from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 the following officers:**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominee Name</b>
Commodore	Tom Edge
Vice Commodore	Sarah Roberts
Rear Commodore	Frank Smykowski
Secretary	Keith Belfield
Treasurer	Jane Crowther
Membership Secretary	Daniel Hanlon
Sailing Secretary	Chris Jones
Rowing Secretary	

All were duly elected

**To elect, for a period of 3 years from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 the following members of the Management Committee:**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominee Name</b>
Regalia, Minutes Secretary	Jan Edge

Cruising, Whats App Manager	Bethan Majski
Committee Member	Kate Jones
Committee Member	Elin Dillon
Committee Member	Clive Hancock
Committee Member	Iwan Rees Jones

All were duly elected

### **Approval of Amendments**

Proposed amendment to Constitution Article 62 also to be reflected in Article 13.8

**Carried unanimously**

Proposed amendment to Constitution Article 12 also to be reflected in Article 3.3

**Carried unanimously**

Proposed increase in Membership fees from the 1st January 2024