



Commodore's Report for HSC AGM 2024

This year concludes my 6th on the Committee and 5th as your Commodore. I now commence my 3rd year of a second stint which should be my last under the club rules. The club is going from strength to strength and the finances are in rude health so a good place to start this report.

It seems like it was another mixed summer of weather but maybe I'm just dreaming of endless sunshine and light breezes? Still we have had plenty of fun sailing, paddling and social activities at the club this year to justify being a member. The club is developing into a true community activity hub with something for everyone so lets continue this into next year. We are already working on next year's activity programme targeted at all levels and abilities, your chance to get on the water. To deliver all of this, friendliness, respectfulness and generosity of our time should serve us well as we are a volunteer run club.

We have again made some major improvements to the club facilities this past year completing the renovations programme started some 5 years ago. The improvements include the opening of the superb upstairs bar, the upgrade of the existing back bar storage facilities, replacement of the front door and alarm system (no more lock/unlock duties), refurbishing the Bosun's shed into a workshop with upstairs storage, the new secure sail locker with paddle storage and the full upgrade of the gents changing room and toilets (a major undertaking). There are numerous other smaller projects that were also completed, all of which improve the running of the club. It's a massive achievement but also a major financial investment and yet none of this would have been possible without the tremendous efforts by a small team of members giving of their skills and time freely and generously. **You all know who you are, we know who you are and we are very grateful to you.**

This is also the first year that we have had a part-time club manager (and sometimes it appears to be a lot more than part-time) which started as a 3-month trial after the last AGM and quickly gathered momentum to become a cornerstone of how the club runs. Those on the Committee have experienced the benefits at first hand and we all consider it to have been a huge success, much of it down to the manager herself who is always available to help members and who has added much rigour to our day-to-day management processes. I'm not sure how we managed before but then again we have grown from some 250 members to over 800 this year which adds up to a lot more work. The way we run the club is still developing along with the growth in membership and activities so please understand that we are all learning and doing our best so we won't get it right every time.

Your Committee meets monthly to discuss the day-to-day activities of the club and while we try to offer flexibility, we cannot meet everyone's expectations and we ask for your understanding in this regard, particularly when discussing in open forum on WhatsApp as this tends to grow arms and legs. WhatsApp has rapidly developed into the cornerstone of our communication system and the most efficient means of effectively managing our activities



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and getting the information to you in a timely manner. But it also has its drawbacks and folk have different opinions as to how it should be run. We have considered at length how to effectively deliver communications to and amongst you as well as controlling the content and volume of traffic. It doesn't mean you can't react to the messages with a 'like' or 'dislike', we are just trying to manage the volume so that key messages are not lost. We are still trying to optimise our WhatsApp Groups and where necessary, we have limited posting to the admin teams only but in certain teams, a more open exchange is necessary due to the frequency of activities. Different groups have different needs so there is no one fits all solution and we recently asked for your feedback which we are acting on. We have recently introduced HSC Community to allow open discussion and we simply ask that folk think before posting and react rather than send a new message. Currently we are encouraging members to join the main groups as follows:

WhatsApp Group	Access
HSC – All Members	admin only
HSC – Community	unrestricted
HSC – Paddlers	admin only
HSC – Sailing	unrestricted
HSC Blokes in Boats	unrestricted
HSC Ladies that Launch	unrestricted

With the clubhouse works all but completed, our attention now turns to the dinghy park. Over the past few years the shoreline erosion has accelerated and last years aborted attempt by BCP to improve the situation has left us with unusable slipways in places, no additional protection along the shoreline and a dilapidated fence. This year we have agreed with BCP to reallocate 25 dinghy spaces further down the dinghy park as a mitigation for spaces lost and spaces in jeopardy from storm damage. We have a plan to reposition the affected kayak racks while also building more racks to meet the storage demand from existing and new members. We are very proud of our growing kayak fleet which has added a new dimension to the club. We will also rejig the dinghy fleet and collocate the club boats which had to be moved from their usual position due to the storms. We will provide details of the plans in the coming weeks as well as ask for volunteers to help with the moves. In the meantime, we continue to request BCP replace the dilapidated border fence which is long overdue to ensure the security of our property.

Looking further ahead, our current 30-year lease runs out in 2028 and we need to prepare accordingly. BCP is our landlord for both the clubhouse and dinghy park so a small team is forming to start the conversation with a view to getting a fair deal. This past 6 years has been a running battle with BCP over rents and the Valuation Office over rates all of which have been unreasonable (in our opinion) but we have come out on top thus far in the endless disputes. The club has the right to renew the lease as long as we behave as responsible tenants, it's a question of what terms are acceptable to us. The earlier we engage and prepare, the more likely we will get a favourable outcome so we have started the process.



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I always like to finish with a thank you to all the members and particularly the Committee who give of their time so generously to keep the club running and growing. As members, you too can help by simply lending your support starting with submitting timely votes required for this AGM to appoint your Committee for next year. This time we are using a third party to rollout an e-voting system to make it easier for you all to respond and simpler for us to track.

Lastly, I believe that we all would like to offer our sincere gratitude to Steve Waite who steps down as Treasurer and who has done so much to keep the club going for many years through good and bad times alike, he leaves it in rude health and in good hands. Also we would like to thank three other Directors who are stepping down, Graham Platt who has run and built up the Sailing Group (164 WhatsApp members), Dennis Stephens for the Paddlers Group which he helped start from scratch (195 WhatsApp members) and Debbie Fisher as Club Secretary. We also thank the other members of the Committee and their deputies who I can't all mention by name but who make the wheels turn so smoothly.

Jim Brown
Commodore HSC