

Minutes for Hemel Hempstead Canoe Club AGM 2024

Tuesday 5th March 2024 7.30pm

Nash Mills Recreation Centre, Hemel Hempstead HP3 9TE



Attending:

John Bennett, Nick Godfrey, Leigh Van Der Byl, Will Dart, Sean Butler, Chris Sword, Elle Alderman, Isla Alderman, Jeremy Webb, Graham Rogers, Paul Rose, Graham Taylor, Harriet Nicholson, Ross Pearton, Steve Green, Dave Jones.

Apologies:

Adrienne Garner, Anna Hobbs, Andy Sands, Joe Walsh, Claire West, Rosemary Hansen, Bob Pearce, Darren Carter, Gavin Lee.

Agenda

- 1) Minutes of previous AGM** John Bennet approved the minutes from previous AGM and Jeremy Webb seconded.
- 2) Club report** – Chris presented the club report for the year.

Good evening fellow boaters and welcome.

2023 was another successful year. We have repeated many of the great aspects that made 2022 a success, including hosting introductory sessions and British Canoeing award courses throughout the season.

A group of 9 went on a white water trip to the Dart, this once again proved very successful (introducing one more member to the joys of moving water), enjoyable and alcohol drenched for some. Although there are a few more scratches on our kayaks due to low water levels, must practise our rain dances more this year.

We had 22 members on the water together for our Christmas paddle, and another 10 for the New Year paddle

We revived the club's slalom legacy in 2023 with a return to the renowned interclub slalom finals at Cardington. A team of 5 paddlers managed to make up 7 categories plus a vets team and came away with the "slalom sport shield" for the best performing team with no current division ranked paddlers! We'd love to field a larger team in 2024 and see a few more paddlers give slalom a try at some of the local races. We have club slalom boats available and Isabel & Steve are happy to support anyone wanting to have a go.

Our British Canoeing training courses were revamped in 2023 to be 6 weeks long and cover kayaks, Paddle boards and canoes. It was very rewarding to see people learn to enjoy the range of paddling even if some took 5 days to recover from an evening on a SUP. In 2024 we will continue this format, although the sessions will move from a Tuesday evening to a Wednesday evening. We are also looking to run shorter SUP only courses, and put more

structure to the Monday evening member paddles. Our highly successful Thursday taster sessions will remain the same chaos as always.

I'm grateful for the support of 42 continuing members, and welcome 15 new members in 2023. Many of our members have continued getting wetter and better – and I've personally contributed to that effort.

Over the past couple of years we have invested money and time in improving the club facilities; tidying club sheds, installing paddle hangers and supplying additional safety equipment. In 2023 we have invested in the members' facilities replacing the racking and lighting in both members' sheds, improving the quality of storage for members' vessels. We also made a start at fixing the clubhouse roof although that isn't complete and there are still leaks but this is being worked on. The focus in 2024 will be to thin out the club boats and ensure they are all accessible to for members to use. I encourage everyone to try something different during members paddles or any time over the coming months so we can get a good understanding of what will be used and useful and what is just taking up our limited space.

I'd like to thank everyone who has been helping with these activities especially:

- Anna who drives the activity and chases us until it's complete
- Nick who could be seen down at the club most weekends last year with his toolbox, sometimes with Anna watching and pointing out things he'd missed,
- and Graham who keeps our spending within our means and ensures we have light and hot water.

I'm keen for the club to appeal to all paddlers whatever we each enjoy and like most. I do however recognise that the preference of the core committee may perhaps be a little skewed. We try to ensure activities arranged stretch beyond these interests, but I would welcome all members reaching out to anyone in the committee or general membership if there are activities that they would like the club to enable, especially if they will help to coordinate.

So thanks again for a great 2023, and I look forward to a successful 2024.

3) Financial report Graham reported on the financial status of the club Chris Sword approved, Harriet Nicholson seconded.

The financial position of the club has overall remained very healthy.

Membership and boat store fees are broadly equivalent to day to day running costs, and it's sensible that we should seek for that to continue to be the case.

The majority of expenses are broadly stable, with the exception of electricity costs which have increased. It'll come as no surprise to any bill payer that energy costs have increased.

Income from courses and introduction sessions continue to make a large contribution to the club – and provide additional funding for us to invest in craft and club facilities, and we are once again grateful to those who give up a lot of their time in the organisation and running of those courses.

We have invested heavily improving the racking in the stores, which we believe should make them much more suitable for different craft. We have also paid for roof repairs in the year.

The cash position at the end of the year is healthy. This is mostly due to historical one off support receipts, and we are therefore conscious that, when it comes to spending decisions, that we can only spend sums once, except where amounts are spent on initiatives that generates income to replace the funds.

We should also bear in mind the age of our club house, and it's inevitable that at some stage large sums may be required to be spent on its upkeep.

Year to December 2023

Starting balance (Current account)	39,289.76	
Savings accounts	3,212.13	
Payroll	504.09	
Cash	11.05	
Creditors	(432.67)	
		42,584.36
In:		
Course fees	4,710.50	
membership & boat store	3,910.80	
Boat and equipment sales and rentals	270.00	
		8,891.30
Out:		
courses		
Building and maintenance	10,674.78	
Courses, certificates etc	274.48	
Internet and website hosting	114.00	
Electric	2,262.71	
Cleaning	630.69	
Other	0.00	
Rent	250.00	
Decorum - business rates	224.30	
British Canoeing	384.80	
Card / transaction and booking fees	349.18	
other admin	0.00	
		(15,164.94)
Operating surplus / (deficit)		(6,273.64)
Equipment and repairs		(885.62)
Interest receipt		8.15
Balance		35,433.25
Being:		
Current account		31455.5

Lloyds	729.74
Savings	3220.28
Payroll	16.68
Cash	11.05
Creditors	
	35,433.25
	0.00

Recommended allocation of funds:

Recommended minimum funds	10,000.00
Building reserve fund	10,000.00
Courses	2,000.00
Membership subsidy	1,500.00
Equipment	2,000.00
Other	9,933.25
	35,433.25

4) Election of committee members

Position	Nominated	Nominated by	Seconded by	Roles and Responsibilities
Chair	Chris Sword	Nick Godfrey	Graham Taylor	Leadership & co-ordination. Provide visibility of Committee. Determine strategic direction and focus of Club.
Secretary	Anna Hobbs	Will Dart	Harriet Nicholson	General administration of Club. Administrative point of contact with BCU
Treasurer	Graham Taylor	Will Dart	Nick Godfrey	Financial administration of Club. Preparation of club accounts.
Coach Co-ordinator	Sean Butler	Nick Godfrey	Graham Taylor	Development / training of Club coaches through Paddlesport courses. Fulfilment of coaches for Club courses.
Safeguarding & Welfare Officer	Harriet Nicholson	Nick Godfrey	Will Dart	Responsibility for welfare and safeguarding issues within Club. Promotion of appropriate welfare issues to Club coaches.
Equipment and Building Officer	Nick Godfrey	Will Dart	Chris Sword	Responsibility for general maintenance of club equipment and building

5) Membership and costs –

The committee recommended a 5% increase to charges for 2024 and rounded up. This matches the change made in 2023. The exception is for Scout sessions which suggests change to 75% of taster sessions.

Approved by Graham Rogers seconded by Elle Alderman

Category	Current	Proposed	Agreed @ AGM
Adult	£56.50	£60	Y
Junior	£28.50	£30	Y
Family	£75.50	£80	Y
Over 60	£30.50	£32	Y
Taster	£10.50	£11	Y
Scouts	£5.50	£8.25	Y
Boat storage	£27.50	£30	y

6) HHCC Name – British Canoeing is rebranding as Paddle UK, should HHCC consider rebranding away from canoe and towards paddle?

WhatsApp poll open to members prior to the AGM had the result:

24 votes to not change as the history of HHCC is a benefit.

2 votes to change as HHCC doesn't cover all our facilities.

3 had no opinion.

Decision at AGM:

- Keep as HHCC – unanimous. Discussed that considering a name change in a year or 2 if BC's rebranding prompts it.

7) AOB

Will Dart: Retention of new members after courses: Is there something to be said about doing some sort of winter courses / engagement? Could set up 5 or 6 "peer paddles" to show a plan of events during the year. Will nominated Leigh to organise these.

Will also suggested start of season / end of season barbecues.

It would be good to have regular "Members' nights" (Committee said that we do plan to do so this year)

8) Next AGM meeting date Tuesday 4th March 2025 7.30pm