

RYA North West

Executive Report 2014

The Committee has met twice at The Mount, Orrell and at the following clubs: Bolton in March, Coniston in June and Blundellsands in September.

Meetings in the clubs have proved a good way for the Executive members to get a better understanding of different areas in the Region, and for clubs to see, at close hand, the work of the RYA both nationally and in the Region; our thanks to the host clubs.

In September, we were sad to hear that our President, Bill Rhodes had passed away. Bill has been a stalwart member of the Regional Committee as well as Pilkington Sailing Club. Bill served as Chairman of the Regional Committee and more recently as our President. He could always be relied upon to give his advice and was ready to step in to help when required. Bill is a great loss to sailing.

Our 'Triage' group of Steve Hunt, Geoff Meggitt and Tony Halliwell have been kept busy both monitoring and responding to consultations regarding matters at sea, and in particular the development of wind farms off our coast and the new Mersey crossing. They have also dealt with proposals to remove some buoys in the Mersey area. Tony also represents the North West on the RYA Coastal Navigation panel. Because three people are involved in this group, it is rare that all are unavailable; it also means that no one person is overwhelmed. The Executive would like to thank Steve Hunt and his team for the work they have done during the year.

Following the success of the two previous Conferences in 2009 and 2012 we intend to hold another Cruising Conference in the Region on 14th March 2015. The organising committee, Geoff Meggitt, Paul Flower and Tony Halliwell has put together an interesting programme with a headline speaker, Paul Heiney, TV presenter and lifelong sailor. I'm sure this will be an event not to be missed,

Richard Hemingway our Regional Communicator has continued with the regional newsletter, Bow Waves. The format, with close links to the Region's website, has a punchy delivery which aims to present our news on a regular basis. Richard also uses social media to spread his information to a wider audience.

The Region continues to support the work of the Training Forum and the provision of regionally owned equipment which has been financed by money retained for the Region when it was amalgamated into the RYA structure.

The Training Forum reports separately, but it is important to recognise the work that it does and thank its Chairman Dave Woodhead in particular. This Region is very fortunate to have Dave working so tirelessly to support this activity.

This is Adam McGovern's first full year in the Region since taking over the RDO role. Along with the Hamble RDO manager, Adam has produced a development plan for the Region in consultation with your Committee. This plan supports RYA national strategic plan. Adam and his team have been implementing the development plan during the year. In the next year it is our aim to align the work of your Committee with that of Adam and his team so that we can better focus the Committee's business to support boating in the region.

Chris Blackburn is the Zone's High Performance Manager. This year he has taken over the management of the T15 windsurfing programme. Although there were initial teething problems with the revised T15 structure these are now resolved. T15 operates within the region as two segments, one in the south based on the Hollingworth Lake Academy and the other in Cumbria and the North East RYA Region. Chris continues to successfully select and encourage young people to join the training squads. He is ever present at events and meetings in the Region, and continues to support and promote RYA Champion Clubs. The RYA has established a number of High Performance Clubs in the South of England. Your Committee continues to be disappointed that there is not as yet a High Performance Club in the North West.

At the start of the year, Warren Price continued to drive the Sailability programme in the North West. His success in developing the programme within the Region has led to him being recognised by RYA Hamble and he agreed to take on a development role covering the whole of the North of England. Warren's role in the North West has now been taken over by Robert Paul. Warren and now Robert runs well attended Sailability events as well as delivering training. Sailability in the Region is developing more quickly than in other RYA Regions and this owes much to Paul and Warren's enthusiastic drive.

Dave Williamson, who stood down from the RYA Board, last year has been elected as a Personal member of RYA Council and attended the North West Committee meeting on a number of occasions. Dave continues to represent the NW position at the RYA Council. At the last RYA AGM, it was announced that RYA Council had elected me to serve on the RYA Board for a 4 year term. It was positive to have Dave along giving advice to the new boy.

Since joining the Board I have had the opportunity to serve the Awards Committee. It was pleasant to see the number of successful nominations for awards from the North West and I congratulate the recipients who will receive their recognition at the RYA AGM on 21st November.

I have also been involved in the review of the Regions. This has been a slow process and has now been widened to include a review of how Hamble provides services to the Regions. I will continue to keep you informed on the progress of this working group.

I would like to thank all members of the Executive, instructors, coaches and trainers and other volunteers who have supported boating in the Region in the last year. Without the volunteers who willingly give their time to the work of the clubs and the Region, boating in the North West would be poorer.

Finally, a thank you to my fellow Officers, Geoff Meggitt (Vice Chair), Louise Halliwell (Secretary) and David Helme (Treasurer).

Mike Moore