

RYA Club of the Year Award 2014 – Winner

Based on a South Derbyshire reservoir, **Staunton Harold Sailing Club** was selected as a Club of the Year finalist for the third year running.

The RYA Honours and Awards Panel felt that this club was the best all round entry in an exceptionally strong field.



The club has clearly demonstrated an ongoing commitment by developing both its facilities and the activities on offer. By continually revisiting their club development plan, reviewing their achievements and their aspirations and planning for the future this club has ensured they remain at the top of their game.

A spectacular growth in membership over the past three years has been attributed to their sustained efforts to promote the club within the local community, improving their local image and ensuring they have a friendly and welcoming culture throughout.

There has been a significant investment in their facilities, totalling £150,000 to date, with half of this being raised by the club itself, while over 100 volunteers directly contribute to the running of the club.

Their summertime Friday night club, where fun informal sessions are run for adults and kids complete with a BBQ, continues to be a huge success.

The club also runs five junior squad weekends a year, where youngsters who have completed RYA courses can receive extra tuition and enjoy time on and off the water with their friends.

RYA Club of the Year Award 2014 – Finalist

Brightlingsea Sailing Club, who sail in the Colne estuary near Colchester, has been transformed from a 'racing-only' club to one with a diverse membership enjoying a range of activities for all abilities.



Last year participation reached an all-time high and membership was up 13%.

Bridging the skills gap between training courses and club racing, creating clear development paths for all, and re-inventing itself from an inward looking club to one that welcomes everyone, have been central to the success of the club.

Introduced in 2013, their popular Monday Night Club provides free-of-charge skill development for adults and juniors who have recently graduated from RYA courses.

A clear junior pathway, that includes a Transitional Squad providing free coaching on Saturdays and the addition of a Novice Series to their racing programme, has also been a major success.

The completion of their biggest ever capital project in 2013, coupled with financial discipline and strong, resilient management, primarily by volunteers, have been key. The club has created a strong online presence too, including very active Facebook and Twitter followings.

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Ten years ago, **Horning Sailing Club**, in the Norfolk Broads, was an aging keelboat club with dwindling numbers.



Today it is a vibrant, active, thriving family club revitalised by a focus on youth dinghy sailing while still supporting activity growth in its traditional cruiser and keelboat fleets.

The club says being an OnBoard club and an RYA Champion Club have been key to their development, contributing massively to a 93% increase in junior membership plus many more through family membership.

Keeping membership affordable for all, with family membership less than £100 per year and junior membership less than £20 a year, is critical.

The increasing range and diversity of activities includes school, Cub and Scout sessions, popular Thursday night training, ladies keelboat sailing and a competitive, varied racing programme.

The club also hosts high profile events including the internationally recognised annual '*Navigators and General Three Rivers Race*'.

All this has led to the club being used five days a week in 2013, compared to one day a week in 2003. All of this is run entirely by volunteers.

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Sussex Yacht Club, in Shoreham-by-Sea, is as much about dinghies as keelboats.

The crossover between the fleets is great with the dinghy section helping the cruisers and vice versa, and the club is all the richer for it.



Club membership is over 1,200, a figure maintained and improved with innovative ideas like the club's New Active Member Scheme, with membership from as little as £7.80 a month.

The club shares their passion for all kinds of sailing by making it as easy as possible for people from the local community and beyond to join in.

An OnBoard club, Sussex Yacht Club has a vibrant youth section and their family and cadets sessions welcome youngsters from both within and outside of the club to learn how to sail, often getting parents into sailing too.

Making members feel valued is a vital part of the club's success, with regular email communication and a quality magazine being key.

In 2013 the club was immensely proud of their 'flagship' Shoreham Youth Team who competed at the 2013 Sonar World Championships in the USA.

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Ulley Sailing Club, in Rotherham, has enjoyed a renaissance since 2010, after four seasons' disruption due to repairs to Ulley dam following the 2007 floods.



Even with the club temporarily relocated to South Yorkshire SC, teams of volunteers continued working on facility improvements at Ulley ahead of the club's re-launch.

Situated in an area with low sports participation, the club ethos is 'Aiming to make sailing affordable and accessible to all.'

This is proving very successful, with individual and family memberships up about 40% on pre-flood levels. More members are also now sailing more often with record numbers turning out for club racing.

Becoming an RYA training centre in 2013 is the latest achievement in the club's robust club development strategy. Their first Level 1 and 2 courses sold out and their ladies who launch initiative oversubscribed.

The club has a buoyant year-round racing programme – with 30+ boats typically on the water each week and all youngsters encouraged to compete in the local Travellers Series and NSSA Regatta.