

**WELSH YACHTING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REVIEW
ADOLYGIAD BLYNYDDOL CYMDEITHAS HWYLIO CYMRU**

2012



CONTENTS

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Chairman's Report – Dafydd Griffiths
- 3 Chief Executive's Report – Steven Morgan
- 4 Director of Finance Report – Huw Stiley
- 5 Regional Reports
 - 5.1 South Wales - Andy Howard
 - 5.2 West Wales – Ian Carswell
 - 5.3 North Wales – Bill Barry
- 6 Welsh National Squad / Performance Review
- 7 Environmental Report – Bob Lowe
- 8 Big Weekend 2 – Separate Attachment (Poster)

1 WELCOME / CROESO

Welcome to the 2012 Welsh Yachting Association annual review.

Over the last 12 months the Welsh Yachting Association has gone through a period of change. Change is never easy and often leaves people feeling like they are being left out. The changes to our governance structure that came into force at the EGM in November 2011 have been implemented and two of our three sub committees have been established.

We are often asked who are you and what can you do for my club or organisation?

The simple answer to this question would be to say that we are about More and Better Sailing and we strive to “enable the best to reach for the top and encourage the rest to achieve more than they thought possible”.

The WYA is the National Governing Body for all boating in all its forms in Wales. We are the RYA’s Regional Council for Wales and we are the only Sport Wales recognised governing body for the sector. Our head office is located at Plas Menai National Watersports Centre, near Caernarfon and we have a Regional Office at the Sport Wales National Centre in Cardiff. WYA has five full time staff as well as a number of partnership and contracted posts that mean we are able provide a service in all three of our regions.

The WYA receives the majority of its funding from Sport Wales, and in return we are challenged to contribute to their Vision for Sport where their aspirations are to:

- Get Every Child Hooked on Sport for Life
- Create a Proud Nation of Champions.

Our current strategic plan – More & Better Sailing - is in its final year. In this time we have delivered or partially delivered on over 80% of the 55 targets that we set ourselves. The new plan is still in a draft stage and is available on our website at www.welshsailing.org/committees for consultation. This plan will be submitted to our funding partners in November and we hope will let us continue to develop and support clubs for the next 4 years and contribute to making Wales one of the best places in the world to be a sailor.

We have an excellent relationship with the RYA, and our colleagues in RYA Scotland and Northern Ireland. One question that is often asked is, “why do we need to affiliate to both organisations”? The benefits of RYA membership are well documented; the use of the racing rules, insurance, legal support to name but a few. However the RYA will not and does not have the capacity to help and support club development in Wales. This is our remit and in order to access this additional support all we ask is that you affiliate your club to the WYA.

If your club wants to grow and develop, if you need help and advice, please contact our National Development Officer or your Regional Club Development Officer or look for more information on our website www.welshsailing.org

2 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Dafydd Griffiths

At the end of my first year as Chairman of the Welsh Yachting Association I would like to take this opportunity to briefly summarise the year's activities.

Whilst the way the WYA is structured may not be high on the agenda of many Welsh sailors, good governance is an essential requirement of any National Governing Body. With some financial support from Sport Wales the board were able to work with a consultant to develop a set of proposed changes that were agreed at the end of last year. These have resulted in the restructuring of the organisation and updating our Articles that are now available on the website for all to see.

I am pleased to report that the new board of the WYA has successfully co-opted directors with the specific and very valuable skills necessary to run a successful sporting NGB. However there is still plenty to do and the board do need to urgently address the gender imbalance that exists. On a personal level I would like to thank my Vice Chair, Ian Carswell, who has stood in for me at a number of RYA meetings over the last year. Proposals to restructure part of the education service in North Wales have made it difficult for me to give as much time as I would wish to the role of Chair of the WYA.

With our current 4 year funding cycle ending in March 2013, this year has been dominated by the need to prepare our new strategy for 2013 – 2017. Once again Sport Wales were able to fund the services of a specialist consultant to facilitate a weekend that gave opportunities for key individuals from our sailing clubs to do some 'Blue Sky' thinking about the direction of the sport in Wales. This has then been refined by our board members and CEO and is currently available in first draft form. We welcome your views before the preparation of the final document that will be presented to Sport Wales before the end of the year.

One highpoint at the start of the year was the Big Weekend. This was extremely well organised by our WYA staff. Many varied and interesting talks and workshops were delivered over the 2 days and the Plas Menai staff excelled themselves by preparing a wonderful Saturday evening meal. It is proposed to hold a similar event in 2013.

The WYA also hosted this year's RYA and Home Countries Conference at Plas Menai. This was a valuable opportunity to discuss matters of common interest and concern to the Chairs and Chief Executives of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Sarah Treseder the RYA CEO outlined the RYA council's initial strategy document that in the fullness of time will guide the strategic direction of the sport at GB level. As some light relief Alan Williams the principal at Plas Menai organised a 'World' championships in some of the centre's double handed dinghies. Whilst not quite achieving the top step of the podium your WYA team acquitted themselves well with a consistent set of results.

This year has seen a number of key staff moving on. Our High Performance Manager, Iwan Basten, left Wales for the attractions of teaching yacht cruising in Europe and shortly afterwards Ben Smith gained a University place linked to employment with a quantity surveying practice. We wish both of them well.

The departures offered opportunities to look at re-structuring our staffing to better support sailing in Wales and to make effective use of the financial resources we have available to us. Ruth Iliffe has taken on an expanded role as our National Development Officer, Alistair Dickson has been appointed as the new High Performance Manager and Sam(antha) Healy has taken on the role of South Wales

Regional Club Development Officer. I am confident that they will succeed in providing a first class service to our member clubs and our junior, youth and elite sailors. We are also considering our options in west wales and are in the process of consulting with clubs and key partners.

The performance report will highlight our successes in National and International sailing events over the last year but I am sure that most of us were watching the Women's 470 Medal Race on the tricky, in-shore Nothe Fort course where Welsh Sailor Hannah Mills and her crew Saskia Clark won a Silver Medal at the London 2012 Olympics. Hannah's success is the result of her talent and dedication but is rooted in the WYA Junior and Youth programme and the product of investment that started close to 15 years ago. I understand that the pair intend to campaign towards Rio in 2016 and we wish them well.

Congratulations also go to the two Welsh sailors Micky Beckett and Ellie Meopham on their selection for, and participation in, the 2012 ISAF Youth Championships in Dublin. Their results contributed to the GBR team winning the Nations Trophy for the best performing country. The WYA has high hopes for the future success of Micky and Ellie and many more of our young Welsh sailors currently involved in Junior, Youth and GBR Development squads.

Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, we are starting to see the results of investment in our participation programme. The On-Board scheme and other initiatives at clubs in Wales has seen increased numbers attending CYRC (Club Youth Racing Circuit) events and in September both the North and South Wales On-board Regattas had a huge number of entries. Attending the prize giving of the North Wales event I was very impressed with the organisation that blended the skills of WYA staff with those of a large number of volunteers from a number of clubs. It was also great to see the enthusiasm and good natured competitiveness between the sailors and also the support of parents. The success of these local and regional events needs to be built upon and they bode well for the future.

For most of us the sailing season begins to wind down over the winter. However the WYA staff and committees will be continuing to work hard to plan and develop schemes and individual sailors to ensure that 2013 builds upon the success of the past.

3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT – STEVEN MORGAN

2012 started as a year of hope and optimism with the London Olympic and Paralympic Games to look forward to. The games came and delivered one of the best celebrations of sport in the history of the modern Olympiad. We all bask in the success of Hannah Mills (and Saskia Clark) winning a silver medal in the Women's 470 and commiserate with Stephen Thomas and his colleagues in the Sonnar who missed out on a Bronze medal in the cruellest of circumstances.

Looking forward, we now need to use the success of the games to promote and celebrate our sport and to encourage more people to participate in our healthy and inclusive activities. This will be the main focus of our new Strategic Plan that is currently in an advanced stage of development. Our aspiration for the next four years is to make Wales one of the best places in the world to be a sailor. Our clubs and volunteers hold the keys to this aspiration and we will be working with you to achieve this aim.

The last 12 months has been fairly successful as far as the delivery of our programmes are concerned

- OnBoard in Wales broke the 28,000 sessions barrier – 18,000 more than the target we set ourselves in 2009 at the start of this current strategic period.
- There was an increase in family and junior membership in OnBoard clubs
- Our national and local events have seen an increase in participants especially those moving from the regatta fleet into the main fleet.
- Welsh sailors won medals at Olympic, World, European and at UK Championships
- Our new Governance Structure was implemented and our Sub Committees are now in place and working well.
- The Board was expanded and new directors appointed
- All three Regional Committees met on a regular basis and support the work at a local level.
- A revised staffing structure was put in place moving back to a more regionalised structure

There have also been some frustrations at the lack of progress in some areas of work and being able to communicate with the correct people within clubs remains a frustrating challenge that we need to improve on.

- No headline sponsor
- Website development behind schedule
- Not achieving our OnBoard Retention targets
- The development of windsurfing

Trading wise we made a slight loss on the year and the accounts are available on the website for those who wish to go through them. Our new Director of Finance, Huw Stiley, was appointed to the Board of Directors in September. Huw brings a lot of experience and enthusiasm from a successful career as a businessman and we all look forward to his valued input over the next 18 months.

At the start of the year our sailors were triumphant in the Tri Nations Cup, beating Scotland & Northern Ireland on home waters. We look forward to travelling to Largs to defend our title in 2013 and to the inclusion of an English Team. Our Big Weekend Conference in February 2012 was a great success and we were able to recognise and value the work of our volunteers. Congratulations to all the winners. This will now become an annual event and the nominations for this year's awards will be open shortly.

The Chairman has already talked about the departure of two long serving members of staff at the start of the season. We were fortunate to have the services of Sam Healy who has since been appointed as our South Wales Club Development Officer and Sarah Williams as Performance Officer. Both helped us move forward over the summer and Sarah did a great job in organising our Zone Championships at New Quay Yacht Club in September.

We now move into the next four years and we will find out in February how much funding we will receive from Sport Wales. Our new strategic plan and the supporting documents detail our aspirations and the importance of our clubs and the hundreds of volunteers that make things happen.

Retaining our funding depends on several factors. Naturally if we don't deliver against our strategic targets we will be penalised. Sport Wales is now introducing results based accountability, and the clubs play a key role in this as one of the key measurements will be measuring the overall club membership figure in Wales. I hope that you will be able to support us when we come to you for these figures. The WYA and RYA estimate that there are over 25,000 club and individual members in Wales. This makes us a significant force and one of the largest sports in Wales. This will open doors to further opportunities and resources for us all.

Finally, I would like to thank the volunteers that support our clubs and help us to run our national and regional events. Without your support we could not do what we do. There will be an opportunity for clubs and the WYA to recognise the commitment of volunteers at the Volunteer Awards Dinner at the Big Weekend in February; the nomination forms will be out soon!

My final thank you goes to the WYA staff. It was a difficult summer when five became three and it took us a bit of time to recover with people taking on additional responsibilities and work. Looking ahead we hope that funding will allow us to implement our regional staffing structure that will ensure a WYA member of staff in each of our three regions. We are here to help clubs to grow and thrive. We can't do the work for you, but we can't do it without you.

4 HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT – Huw Stiley

It is with great pleasure that I submit the accounts for your review.

This is my first report to the AGM after being recently appointed to the Board as Director of Finance. This new position has been created following the Governance Review that took place last year.

This report relates formally to the 2011/12 Accounts that were approved by the Directors on the 23 of September 2012.

Following approval at the AGM on the 17th of February 2011 the accounts have been sent out electronically to all member clubs and are available on our website for anyone to download.

The Board and I will endeavour to answer any questions at the meeting or subsequently by correspondence. Members who would prefer the accounts in a paper or hard copy should contact the office and we will facilitate this for you.

The last 12 months was fairly typical for us with our main income still coming from Sport Wales and the RYA. We made a small loss on the year primarily due to income from the sale of assets having to be included in the following year's accounts.

Over the next four years we will be working with Dave Vickery our Financial Advisor to simplify our accounts and to look at how we present them to members in the future.

I would like in particular to recognise and thank Dave Vickery and Ceri Yeomans for all their hard work in preparing these accounts and developing our management accounts system over recent years.

5 REGIONAL REPORTS

5.1 South Regional Report – Andy Howard

This report is a brief overview of the South Region for all of 2011/2012

Regional Organisation

We have had 3 meetings of a forum of South Wales Clubs; in November 2011 after the AGM, in January 2012 at CBYC, in April at Sully YC, and July at Cardiff YC. We also have a conference call planned for September to review the proposed WYA Strategy 2013-2017 in advance of the AGM. This demonstrates that we are getting to grips with communication with each other and with the WYA. Additionally, we were well represented at both the “Big Weekend” and the Springboard meetings at Plas Menai in the spring.

We have representation on the Performance and Club & Community Development sub-committees, and anticipate being able to fill the posts on subsequent teams as well.

This year has seen changes in personnel. Our thanks to Iwan and Ben for their work in the past, most visible in the Youth Squads and Onboard successes. Sam Healy stepped in and has provided some excellent co-ordination and communication across the region.

Push the Boat out

Nigel Vick co-ordinated this Olympic linked event in Cardiff Bay in July. We had support from Barry, CBYC who laid on 2 racing fleets of Flying Fifteens and Blazes, plus the Old Gaffers, and CYC hosted the event. The boats paraded together past Mermaid Quay with dinghies, yachts, and power boats. We had the press, television and Jane Hutt, Welsh AM in attendance.

CYRC

Yet another successful CYRC was held, with the final event being held in white water in a gale at Tata sailing club in July. We have a fearless youth team! According to the results, 77 competitors in total entered the races. There were 5 events, 3 to count, but not every fleet had a qualifying entry (notably the General Handicap fleet). Perpetual prizes now exist, and there was prize-giving at the final event. Thanks to all of the Club organisers and Sam Healy for co-ordinating the final results with the Tata team.

From calm winds to the gale, from fresh water to tidal, this was a varied series and I think we are in a good position to continue feeding the squads and performance pyramid. We are going to start organising the 2013 series in late 2012. We do need to raise the awareness at clubs as not all parents are aware of the CYRC events until they happen at their own club.

5.2 West Wales Regional Report – Ian Carswell

A great summer of sport, both Olympic and Paralympic; fantastic sailing moments and certainly plenty of anguish and nail biting, but not a good summer of weather for sailing, which has affected so many events both far and near.

The West is moving on with more clubs engaged and working with WYA and using Welsh Sailing initiatives to progress young sailors and support wider club initiatives.

We sometimes forget just how many good young sailors there are about, both nationally and locally and whilst I decline from listing their achievements I would like to draw attention to some of our young sailors who have originated in the West and are now achieving both on the national and international arena, and some of those who promise to do so:- Michael Beckett (Solva), Ellie Meopham (Fishguard), Danielle Rowe (Neyland), Tilly James (New Quay), Megan Boorman (Fishguard), William Thomas (Teifi), Deryn May (Tenby), Ben Roberts (Saundersfoot) and Tom Renny (Teifi).

West has always had a core of clubs working together for mutual benefit and we hope to expand and develop that strength. Dale Yacht Club has introduced junior sailing and has aspirations to increase numbers and equipment as has Pembrokeshire Yacht Club with a new Junior initiative. Tenby and Saundersfoot, already successful, are building on previous plans and Neyland continues to develop their On Board status with increased sailing and sailor qualifications.

Further up the coast Fishguard is working toward Training Centre status and Teifi has become a Volvo Champion Club. The staging of the RYA Volvo Zone Championships at New Quay engages New Quay Yacht Club and the Watersports Centre in what is hoped will be an expansion of the regional involvement north. Carmarthenshire has only one club affiliated to the WYA and contact with Towy BC hopefully will see yet another club fully involved.

Lawrenny, previously associated with larger boats, is striving to introduce dinghies and younger sailors to their programme and we look forward to seeing their youngsters enjoying the wider challenges the West can offer in the not too distant future.

The weather did affect the CYRC series forcing cancellation of the events at Saundersfoot and Tenby. Dale did manage to run a very successful event with a little bit of course jiggering to accommodate the conditions and by the time we visited Fishguard the wind had disappeared and we had to manage on rising zephyrs. Pembrokeshire Yacht Club will be hosting the final CYRC on 22nd Sept so let's hope we can get a good result from a three regatta series.

Winter training extending into open training was well supported but this year will be reviewed to see if things can be improved to provide greater consistency and a greater melding of clubs and sailors into a best practice for the West

Last year we were talking about the possible effect of the reorganisation of the WYA and this year we can reflect on that reorganisation. The demise of Strategy committees has led to the introduction of sub committees, with specific responsibilities, below Board level. Regional committee representation through election at the WYA AGM is no longer and club delegates now have voting rights and proxy voting has been introduced. West now have representation on both the Performance Sub Committee and the Club & Community Development Sub Committee. The

appointment of Huw Stiley from Saundersfoot SC to the Board as director with responsibility for finance and Andrew Campbell from Teifi BC giving direct advice to the Board on matters of sponsorship and advertising, plus my own appointment as Vice Chairman and director with responsibility for Child Protection can only mean that the West now has a greater voice than for many years.

The introduction of a three pronged approach to club development and coaching in the West has seen a partnership agreement with Pembrokeshire Adventure Centre to deliver to the clubs based in the Haven, with Saundersfoot and Tenby buddied together under the responsibility of Nick Berridge with Teifi and Fishguard coming under the umbrella of Chris'Jaffa'Jeffries. The introduction of a specific West 'Oppie' team coached by Chris proved to be a very successful venture creating a pathway into both Regional and National squads. The lack of Topper sailors prevented a similar scheme for Toppers, even at Regional South/West level, but this year numbers are up and a similar scheme for Topper sailors is envisaged.

The WYA suffered a significant body blow with the resignations of Iwan Basten (HPM) closely followed by the South/West RDO Ben Smith; we wish them both all the best for their future careers. Ben's leaving did have a significant effect on the West and Steven Morgan (CEO) stepped in to take on the overview of the newly introduced three pronged initiative.

A review of WYA staff structure has since taken place with the appointment of a National Development Officer (Ruth Iliffe) with an overview of all regions. South will have a part time Club Development Officer and the situation in the West will be reviewed with the intention of creating the best possible club development structure before the current contracts are up for review next year.

The West Regional Committee has also taken on its own restructuring with the appointment of a CYRC coordinator plus assistant and a Minutes Secretary, moving away from the previous forum with chairman approach. I must thank all the club representatives on the Regional Committee for all their hard work over the last year and First Milk at Haverfordwest for allowing us the use of their conference facilities. We will need to address financial management; currently Ceri at the Plas Menai office cares for our finances but it is clear that we will need to have greater awareness and planning to allow financial control over our own projects.

When I took on the role of Vice Chairman, last year, I said that this would be my last year as Regional Chairman and I have found that working at all three levels of sailing in Wales; Board, Regional Committee and Club, plus attending RYA council meetings; very interesting but quite demanding on my time and attention. I wish my successor as Regional Chairman all the best for the future. I will always be available for advice and try hard not to interfere. WYA staff work at a very high level of commitment and dedication and the workload taken on by the multiple layers of volunteers is prodigious. The organisation and the events held rely heavily for success on significant time and boundless energy from all involved and we must never stop saying thank you to everyone; without the combined commitment shown sailing would be a poorer sport and no one I know wants that. I think the future looks good.

5.3 North Wales Regional Report – Bill Barry

The Big Weekend was both inspirational and invigorating, and also an opportunity to meet old friends and make new acquaintances and to gather new ideas and information, and I look forward to the next Big Weekend in February 2013.

This year has been very busy with the usual CYRCs and Regattas and training also the Olympics and Para Olympics. Although the weather has had some effect on the CYRCs with Port Dinorwic being cancelled but to be re-run in October. Clywedog and Red Wharf Bay have been run with challenging weather conditions. Congratulations go out to all the fleets at all events and heartfelt thanks to not only those who took part but also to those who volunteered and helped organise the events.

The Welsh Youths was well attended and also the Adion Advion: this was Conwy Schools Onboard Festival, and the prize giving took place in the Big Airplane Fuselage Project which was part of 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

On Board goes from strength to strength in our region with double the number of participants at the North Wales Festival at Bala. The weather was kinder to us at this weekend and all the boats and crews had a fantastic weekend with an enjoyable evening BBQ - all thanks to Bala Sailing Club for hosting the event and all the volunteers.

Clubs to be mentioned this year are **Port Dinorwic** who put on a very good roadside display for the Olympic Torch going through their village and for their exemplary retention and training during the year. **Clywedog** who had 100 boats out on the water in Push Your Boat Out. **Penmaenmawr** had 3 Olympic Torch Bearers from the club. **Rhyl** from a new beginning three years ago have had attendees at the CYRCs and a squad attending the North Wales Festival and this bodes well for their future. **Dovey** Yacht Club ran some taster sessions.

New activities in the region are:

Pwllheli doing keel boat training and racing with their young people.

Holyhead are now engaging with WYA and are reorganising their training with Optimists and great things are expected here.

Post the Olympics and the Para Olympics we must trade on the goodwill and success of our Olympians and build on the feel good factor for the future with the wealth of experience our clubs have to offer.

So all round a very impressive and positive year for North Wales and for Wales!

6 WELSH NATIONAL SQUAD / PERFORMANCE REVIEW

This report summarises the achievements of the Welsh National Squad during the 2012 season. This report goes on to highlight our key performing athletes and shows the strength across the programme from Junior to Olympic level.

2012 marks another outstanding year for Welsh Performance sailing; beginning at the top our highlights include:

Olympic

Hannah Mills World Champion and Olympic Silver medallist! Sounds great and I am sure she and crew Saskia Clark will look back with pride at what was a very good year. Hannah's medal is the result of development work started 15 years ago at Llanishen Sailing Centre, Corus Sailing Club(Tata) and the Welsh National structure. We celebrated Stephen Thomas's selection when he became the first UK athlete selected for the 2012 Paralympic Games back in July 2011 following 2 Golds in the World Cup series and a silver medal at the IFDS worlds. Missing out on a medal in the cruellest of ways was terrible and I am sure no words will compensate for how he feels. We hope that he will come back stronger and look at Rio in 2016.

We have strength in depth and the future looks good with sailors like David Evans, Chris Grube and a host of our current youth sailors looking at a Rio Campaign and Olympic Development Squad selection.

As our future Olympiads fly the flag for GBR and Wales it is down to us all to play our part in supporting the team via the array of multimedia platforms leading into the games and concurrently help raise the profile from schools and clubs to the tea rooms of Sport Wales and the media or any other business environment for that matter!

Tri Nations Cup

The re-introduction of this event in January was a great opportunity for Welsh sailors to represent their country. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland all entered sending 6 Toppers and 6 Lasers to the event hosted by Pwllheli SC. Wales won in style and we look forward to defending our title in Largs in February and to the introduction of an English team.

Youth

WYA Laser Youth Academy sailors had a very good 2012 after the launch of the programme in 2011. Ellie Meopham and Mickey Becket became UK Youth Champions in Pwllheli in April and went on to represent GBR at the ISAF Youth Worlds in Dublin. Both acquitted themselves well and helped GBR to the overall team prize. Ellie narrowly missing out on a podium finish. It was a similar story at the inaugural Eurosaf championships in Holland, however this time Micky won silver and Ellie once again narrowly missed out on a podium place in 4th.

Jack Preece from Cardiff was selected for the Laser Radial Youth Worlds and came a very credible 35th.

In the 420 class Toby Morsely from PDSC narrowly missed out on a UK Youth title, but came a very close 2nd, gaining selection for both the Worlds and European GBR Team. He was joined by Cardiff sailor Molly Frost and both acquitted themselves well with Toby finishing 12th boy



and Molly 27th in the girls' category. Toby also finished 19th at the 420 Europeans.

The 29ers are back in force in Wales and we have three boats in the GBR Transitional squad. The 29ers are steered by Jonny McGovern our Double Handed Academy Coach. Some changes will be made to the programme over the winter class specific training in the regions and guest coaches supporting the programme.

Junior

Optimists

The year started well with Matt Whitfield competing at the Worlds in New Zealand in his last Optimist event and finishing a very credible 21st, the best finish by a GBR sailor.

Other notable success saw Daniel Whiteley gain British European Team selection. Wales has 5 GBR Team members and a further 5 in the Intermediate Squad.



Topper

What a year for the Welsh Toppers, Junior Silver and Bronze medals for Tilly James and Mari Davies, and Iago Davies also chipped in with a Bronze in the 4.2 category at the World Championships in Holland.

WNS sailors have done well during the National ranking series and Tilly James finished 1st Girl at the UK Nationals in August. Frankie Dickens from Mumbles secured 4th overall in the National Ranking Series and finished 1st girl, emulating the feats of Danielle Rowe and Ellie Meopham

Laser 4.7

The transient 4.7 class found Wales picking up GBR Gold at the Laser 4.7 Nationals for the second year in succession, however this year it was Will Creaven's turn. Matt Whitfield won the National Ranking series and 3 Welsh sailors were selected for the GBR Squad.

Staffing Changes

2012 also heralded a change in High Performance Manager. Iwan Basten left WYA in April after being HPM since 2008. Iwan left his mark on the performance programme in more ways than one and I am sure that all the sailors will miss his good humour and enthusiasm and passion for the sport. A new era dawned on the 15th of September when Ali Dickson took over the role of HPM. There will no doubt be some changes to the programme as we move forward to ensure that our sailors are at the top of the fleet and challenging for GBR places and winning medals across the world.

7 ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING REPORT – Bob Lowe

This has been another busy year providing advice to the RYA on several consultations by the Welsh Government on marine issues in Wales and on applications for marine consents that affect boating interests.

I finished my term on the RYA Planning and Environment Committee in January. I am pleased to report John Eddington has taken on this role and is also acting as the RYA's Regional Planning and Environment Coordinator. We both attended the RYA's environmental and planning update for all RPECs in London and a further meeting in Cardiff for a discussion on Welsh matters. I remain a member of the Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership that advises the Welsh Government on marine issues including marine planning, marine protected areas and marine management.

I estimate over 85 applications for marine consents have been vetted for their impact on navigational interests during the year. These applications vary from major offshore renewable energy projects, maintenance dredging of harbours and marinas, works by statutory bodies/public organizations and a myriad of other 'projects' below the high water mark. Special thanks are due to our local planning and environment volunteers – Susanne Newbold, Dominic McDonough and Tim Bowden – for their help in assessing and responding to these proposals.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has recently approved the Caernarfon Harbour Trust (Constitution) Revision Order 2012 and I am pleased to report that this includes an Advisory Committee on which the WYA, Plas Menai and local sailing/yacht clubs will have seats. This is an important safeguard for recreational boating interests along the Menai Strait.

A significant amount of voluntary effort has gone into responding to the Welsh Government's consultation on Marine Conservation Zones. Many clubs objected to potential threats to the recreational boating by proposed bans on anchoring, mooring and even navigation in the 10 identified potential sites. There was overwhelming local public objection across Wales. WYA contributed to the joint formal response by the RYA to the consultation. We wait to see how the Government reacts to the response later this year.

WYA has contributed also to RYA responses to three public consultations on 'Sustaining a Living Wales', Natural Resources Wales and the merger of CCW, the EA (Wales) and Forestry Commission into a new Single Environment Body in April 2013. The responses seek to ensure our approach to recreational boating is properly understood in Government and to secure appropriate provision for recreational boating and marine licensing activity in the work of the new agency.

As we 'go to press' WYA is collaborating with RYA on a response to the National Assembly for Wales' Environment and Sustainability Committee Inquiry into marine policy in Wales.