

Alton Canoe Club Annual General Meeting

8:30 pm on Friday 11th October 2019

Held at the Alton Sports Centre

1. Apologies

The Chairman, Adrian Scott, welcomed everyone to this year's meeting. Apologies were received from Mike Pearman and the Howes family.

2. Minutes of previous AGM

Copies of the minutes of the last meeting were distributed to those present. Adrian read through them briefly. The minutes were agreed as being a fair record of the meeting and the Chairman signed them.

3. Matters arising from these minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

This year has been very similar to previous years. The junior sessions have again been well-attended, and it has been great to have assistance from some of the young adults (previously junior club members) in running the club 6:30-7:30. As always, the Committee would like to thank the regular adult leadership for their dedication and commitment to running the junior sessions.

If any parents, or other adult members of the club, could spare a Friday evening to help out in the coming months, this would be appreciated.

While the junior session has been running at a maximum capacity, numbers in attendance at the senior session (7:30-8:30) have been stable but lower than the capacity. The Committee are keen to see more adults/parents-of-junior-paddlers coming along to the later session to help support numbers, and possibly to learn some skills – maybe with a view to helping out in the future.

Of the 27 pool sessions since our last AGM: 8 have been polo; 5 paddle skills: 4 rolling or rescues; 4 slalom; 3 own boats; 2 general skills and 1 Christmas competition evening.

Of the 19 outdoor paddles: 11 have been sea/coast/harbour trips; 5 river trips and 3 canal trips. The number of paddlers attending outdoor evenings has been variable.

Additional Events

New Year's Day Paddle

As with the previous year the annual January 1st paddle was held from the Water Witch, Odiham, and a good number turned up for a bright but slightly chilly paddle.

River Wey Clean-up

To coincide with both the Surfers Against Sewage 'Big Beach and River Clean' and the Keep Britain Tidy 'Great British Spring Clean' campaigns, the club organised a clean-up of the River Wey around Guildford on Sunday 14th April. This was well-attended by a number of club members and families and between us we managed to remove a huge amount of rubbish along the river between the viaduct and Debenhams. We had offers of help and support from both Guildford Sea Cadets and Wey Kayak Club (WKC cleaned up the section of river nearest to their clubhouse around the Slyfield end of Guildford). This was a fantastic and surprisingly fun morning made all the better by good weather, and it was nice to have a number of passers-by thank us for the effort.

The National Trust assisted by providing a skip that we could dispose of all the collected rubbish, which we did our best to fill. Afterwards, we were welcomed back to Wey Kayak Club for a BBQ lunch where it was good to meet a number of WKC and share stories of the random items of rubbish we had managed to collect!

Thank you to all who took part both on the river and along the tow path.

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2019 Canoe Slalom World Cup

A number of club members made separate arrangements to attend (watch) the 2019 ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup in mid-June at Lee Valley (home of the 2012 Olympic Slalom course). The Event was a great opportunity to see some world class paddlers pit themselves against the Lee Valley course, and those that stayed later got to witness the Extreme Slalom competition – 4 paddlers in white water creek boats racing each other simultaneously down the course. It was white-water chaos!

River Wey day trip

At the end of June around 14 of us had a leisurely paddle from Farncombe to Guildford and back, stopping in Guildford for a lunchtime picnic. It was a really good day's paddle.

Poole Harbour

Adrian thanked John for organizing it. Going across Poole Harbour was certainly not leisurely but it was certainly rewarding.

5. Treasurer's Report

The accounts for 2019 were distributed to those present. Stephen Mannerings, the Treasurer, reported that this is the first year we have made a loss, mainly due to a lower number of members and considerably lower number of collections poolside. Pool hire was slightly lower than last year as we had fewer weeks. Most costs were similar to previous years apart from the Anniversary Evening. Overheads were less than the year before but income was lower so we had a loss of £473. We have £6624 in the bank so the club funds are still healthy.

The pool costs £126 for 2 hours each week which is £3325 for the season. This is quite a bit to collect from membership fees and pool fees. We collect on average between 17 and 18 £5's every week which covers only about two thirds of the cost of the pool so the rest is covered by membership fees. We need 25 people paddling and paying every week to cover pool costs. Collections have been in the region of just under £100 per week. Looking forwards we will need to push membership and attendance. We have in the past charged non-members more but it gets complicated. Open days were good. On the last 'Try It' session, we did gain a few people that have stayed and joined, and a couple of juniors too.

As a fund raising idea, it was suggested that we could invite cubs, scouts, guides etc., and charge £5 each. However, we would still need to offset it against an advertising cost when hopefully one of those would join. Another idea would be, like the Alton Scouts Camp and Blackwater Valley Club do, is to rope off a stretch of the River Wey, take our canoes and allow kids to paddle whilst plenty of experienced adults are also on the water. However, we would need qualified people with instructors in the club and at the moment we only have one person.

There was more discussion over covering the pool costs, including 'Have a Go' sessions and increasing the poolside fee. We have for many years worked on the current arrangements and they seem to work out over the course of the year.

6. The Future of Alton Canoe Club

Current standing with the Sports Centre is that they want us back in the new pool but they haven't proven to us yet that we can trade from it. The pool has level access with a deep end, which will be an interesting addition to our teaching sessions. The centre, which is due to open on 9th January, looks very nice. They will provide facilities in the main building to store boats and equipment. We (Kate and Stephen) did go to a meeting which didn't last long. There will be no extra charges and we will be given free access cards to get through turnstiles, or friends and parents can ask to be let in. In theory the centre could give us data on who attends. We will not be allowed to bring our own boats to the pool. Blackwater Valley Club will have to chemically wash their boats before bringing them in via the carpark or the road. A manager has asked for the required height for the slalom

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poles by Monday. We are unsure about the locating of ropes and goals, for us and Blackwater Valley, which needs to be sorted out by the centre. A pool storage room will be available to share with the swimming club. The new centre management have confirmed they do want us.

7. Membership and fees

Membership is due by the end of October. Stephen proposed that membership fees should stay the same as last year and to review them at Christmas. Members discussed increasing the fees, postponing them until January, reducing them or to not having any at all. Some membership is needed to be covered by British Canoeing. Members present voted in favour of keeping the current membership and poolside fees the same as last year.

8. Retirement of existing Committee and election of new Committee

Adrian is stepping down after 5 years. It is the right time for someone else to take the club forward in the new facilities and look after the club more locally. We could do 6 months in the new facilities to see if it works. The pool is booked termly in advance.

The outgoing Committee were thanked for their support over the last year.

Stephen proposed Amanda Pagett as Chairman and Adrian seconded the proposal.

The new Committee members are:

Chairman	Amanda Pagett
Treasurer and Secretary	Stephen Mannerings
Welfare Officer	Liz South
Training Committee	Mark Overd Kate Mannerings

The training committee work on a rota basis and meet poolside at 6:30 pm to help out with the juniors.

9. Awards

The Brian Barton Award for services to the club was presented to Adrian Scott for being the Chairman for 5 years.

The Personal Achievement Award was given to The Pagett Family. It has been encouraging to see how the family have developed over the last couple of years and how they have inspired us to keep teaching.

10. Any other business

Adrian added that there is a European Slalom World Championship taking place next summer at Lee Valley. Information is available on the British Canoeing website. It's well worth watching and a brilliant day out. You can book a place for an hour at Lee Valley and paddle (or swim!)

Amanda will arrange the next meeting at a suitable time next year.

Adrian thanked everyone for coming and a round of applause was given in appreciation.

The meeting closed at 9:25 pm.