



# **Wormit Boating Club & Watersports Hub**

## **Trustees' Annual Report**

1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 to 31<sup>th</sup> August 2024

## **Charity contact information**

Wormit Boating Club and Watersports Hub (SCIO)

Scottish Charity Number: SCO **52016**

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Facebook: [@WormitBoatingClub](https://www.facebook.com/WormitBoatingClub) Instagram: [@wormitboatingclub](https://www.instagram.com/wormitboatingclub)

## **Charity Trustees**

Name all of your charity trustees for the period, and the date they left if they were not in post for the whole year

1. Captain Ralph Webster
2. Professor Lesley Holdsworth OBE
3. Mr John Don
4. Ms Gail Low
5. Mr Ralph Harrison
6. Mr David Shepherd



## Objectives and activities

### Wormit Boating Club & Watersports Hub (WBC)

The club exists to promote community participation in healthy recreation, in particular by the provision of facilities for safe boating and watersports, for the benefit of any and all of the inhabitants of the North East Fife Council area (and for the avoidance of doubt without discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion)

Wormit Boating and Water sports Hub (SCIO) attained charitable status in September, 2022. This was seen as the first step in developing the club for the wider benefit of its members and the local community. Although the club itself has been in existence for over 100 years, members felt that becoming a registered charity would afford us opportunities to develop the club for the benefit of its members but also for the wider local community. Being a registered charity provides us with the opportunity to raise funds not previously within our grasp.

The club has long supported the needs of the local community in accessing and enjoying activities on the River Tay. Like many coastal communities, the villages of Wormit and Newport have a rich history of being intimately connected with the water. Wormit has been fortunate to sustain a strong connection with the water through its base at Woodhaven and has grown a substantial community of users, whose interests range across sailing, rowing, and more recently kayaking, paddle boarding and open water swimming.

The club prides itself on its inclusivity and a welcoming attitude, and currently works on a voluntary basis to promote water sports for the whole community, offering water sports access for a catchment area of over 200,000 people – recognising and supporting the physical and mental wellbeing for all ages that the activity can bring.

We currently offer regular introductory sessions and train participants in boat safety and safe water practices. Following recent open days, we have had many requests to participate in future sessions. At our most recent open day, not only did we all have fun on and off the water, we had over 300 additional community members attending and recruited new members.

Wormit Boating Club and Watersports Hub therefore finds itself in the position of representing a strong sustained tradition of engagement with our coastal waters, with growing interest from all parts of the community and a well-developed ethos of inclusivity. We have established a Development Group to look at ways to consolidate and grow the role of the Club. The vision is to build on the work that has been done so far by establishing improved facilities that will enable a wider

range of activities to be accommodated, while also growing links to other local groups to encourage them to access the water and enhanced facilities.

A major aspect of developing the club will be to improve the facilities on offer to accommodate the growing interest and wider value the club could provide including the clubhouse, storage and the associated safety requirements. In addition to attaining charitable status in 2022, we have had our offer to acquire the land the club currently leases under a land transfer agreement accepted in principle by Fife Council. We are in the final process of concluding the legal aspects of this transfer. We feel that there are significant benefits for the club in owning the land and being able to develop it to meet our future vision.

As Trustees of the Club, we can report that we are both enthused and also delighted by what this 'small' club has achieved over the last few years. We may be a small community club of circa 240 members, but we believe that we provide facilities and opportunities that can grow and benefit even more members and our wider local community.

This is our second annual report since achieving charitable status.

## Governance and Management Structures

We have an active and committed membership, committee and group of Trustees. Each brings skills, knowledge and experience from a range of sectors relevant to managing and developing WBC. In addition to marine craft skills and sailing and instructing qualifications, we have members with strategic and major project management, risk assessment, finance, property management and maintenance, marine craft and maintenance, marketing, business, education, scientific and medical skills. WBC's constitution outlines our approach to governance and can be found at [www.wormitboatingclub.org.uk](http://www.wormitboatingclub.org.uk)

## Trustee recruitment and appointment

Our Trustee Board has expanded this year to include a total number of six Trustees, all re-elected/elected at the 2023 AGM by the membership. They have continued to oversee the Club this year and will stand again for election at the forthcoming AGM which is due to take place in November 2024. The current Trustees have a range of diverse and complimentary skills and experience. Ralph, our Commodore is a Master Mariner and spent his working life at sea. He is also a keen sailor and rower. John is one of the longest serving members of the club having been a member since 1960 and still maintains a keen interest in the club. Lesley belongs to the rowing section of the club and has significant experience as

a Board non-executive. Gail brings both an academic and enthusiastic interest in boat building while Ralph H, organisational and advanced boat building skills. Our final new member, Dave, has a wealth of sailing and club experience. All live locally and are committed to the club's development for the benefit of its members and the wider community.

## Achievements and performance

We exist as a club to provide the community of North-east Fife with opportunities to get involved with water sports on the river Tay. We have a range of watercraft that members can use at no additional cost including, dinghies, skiff rowing boats, paddleboards and kayaks. Many of our members have their own boats, kayaks or boards which they store at the club. We have seen an increasing interest in our activities this year with new members joining us. WBC has various sections, each of which is led by a team or committee of volunteers. We have sailing, rowing, kayaking, paddle boarding and open water swimming sections. The largest sections, sailing and rowing, have full committees overseeing their activities with designated individuals responsible for other key aspects such as first aid, safety, welfare, training, publicity etc.

In this report, we would like to focus on some key highlights from each of our watersports sections and also the overall club activities this year. And, these include:

## Open water swimming section

Our open water swimmers have again had a really good year. They regularly swim, and all year round, from Woodhaven to the Rail Bridge or beyond, tide permitting. They even managed to swim from Balmerino to the Road Bridge (7 miles) in 1 hour 20 mins which even with a tide assist, is pretty impressive. They report that they really value the facilities at the club and especially the hot showers!

A core group put themselves to the test in three race events from August to September. John and Graeme swimming in the 5k races and Brian in the 3k races at both Loch Tay and Loch Morlich in very challenging conditions. They won a few medals and came a very impressive firsts and seconds in their age group. The conditions on Loch Lomond were much better and very fast times including PBs for all of them, and age group wins.





In early January this year, one of the group, Euan Stewart travelled to Cheltenham for the British Ice Swimming Championships which were held in the 50m Sanford Lido. His swims there secured him a position on the 40 strong British team to compete in the first European International Ice Swimming Championships in Oradea, Romania which was held in a 50m outdoor pool with the temperature at 4c. Euan won all four of his events- 50m & 100m Butterfly & 50m & 100m Breaststroke in new world records for the 55-59 year age group. He was very quick to recognise the value of his acclimatization swims at Wormit supported by the other swimming members of the club and having the clubhouse to warm up in was a huge help. What a fantastic achievement! Wormit can now boast having a European champion as a member!



## Sailing Section

Although the overall numbers of dinghy sailors have decreased this year for a number of legitimate reasons, our sailing section remains keen and continues to meet regularly to train and race. Good use has been made of the club boats this year with two of them being spruced up with new covers and a general overhaul. We lost the main organiser of the cadet related activities this year so activity in this section has been limited. Plans are in place however to recruit a lead to reinvigorate the offer for cadets to get involved.



The club have a number of sailing dinghies that anyone in the club can use and these are maintained by a group of willing volunteers.





## Rowing Section

We have an active and keen rowing section at WBC which is growing month on month with over 75 enrolled members. In fact, it is fair to say that it is the largest section of the club. Our fleet consists of three skiffs (Catalina, Flying Boat and Tatha) who require a crew of four rowers and a cox and a number of smaller Skur boats which allow one or two rowers to get on the water.

Our rowing section, as well as training and social rowing on the Tay out of Wormit take every opportunity to get out and race against other clubs. Despite the poor weather early in the season that led to quite a few cancelled events, the number of regattas attended this year has exceeded any other. The club rowers took part in races and regattas in Ullapool, Cromarty, North Berwick, Castle to Crane, Glasgow, Inverness and Broughty Ferry with many medals being won.





In April this year, over 200 people and 12 teams from all over Scotland joined us in a 20-mile row from Perth to Wormit that initially took place in glorious sunshine but ended in cold, stormy seas! There were three legs; Perth to Newburgh, Newburgh to Balmerino; then the final leg, Balmerino to Wormit. The members of WBC then laid on a sumptuous spread for our visitors to balance out all those calories that had been lost during their efforts. This is an annual event that sees more and more teams from Scotland keen to take part and WBC are always happy to provide the soup and cake. So good to get so many keen rowers together in one spot and the blether goes on for quite a while!





Some of our most keen rowers ventured to the Isle of Arran this year with a skiff in tow with the intention to row right around the island. They nearly made it despite some weather issues but a great time was had by all and new friends made.



We also initiated a monthly social rowing activity called Fife Fridays which allows rowers to visit and use boats at other clubs in Fife as well as hearing about the local history of the area. As well as hosting other Fife clubs on two occasions, we have also visited clubs based in **Elie**, Anstruther, and North Queensferry.



In July, a new social event, Pizza and Rowing Fridays was introduced which was well attended by the club rowing section. Picnics to local areas also take place during the better weather.





We regularly hold taster sessions which allow potential new rowers the opportunity to try the sport before formally joining or signing up. This year to date, 17 people have attended, many of whom have become club members. We also regularly provide improvers sessions to allow newer club members to be instructed in technique and gain confidence on being out on the water. Each boat requires a cox as well as rowers therefore we have held a number of Cox Training Sessions during the year to increase the pool of members capable of overseeing rowing sessions on the river.



Although we tend to row during daylight hours, in November last year, one of our members with in-depth knowledge, led a series of night navigation exercises which included a mock casualty rescue event undertaken in conjunction with the RNLI Broughty Ferry lifeboat.



All skiffs require regular maintenance to ensure they are in top shape for optimal and safe rowing. We are fortunate to have a core group of members who are prepared to spend their time and expertise in boat maintenance led by one of our Trustees, Ralph Harrison to make sure that wider club members have access to safe and well-maintained boats to row. Great thanks to them and their efforts as there would be no rowing without them.



Special thanks need to be extended to Gail Low and Jenny Wilson who have been outstanding in organising rowing and training activities and the varied social events outlined above this year including very early morning training sessions and constructing the fabulous dragon heads for the skiffs.





## Kayaking Section



Our kayaking section goes from strength to strength with increased numbers of kayak members who also store their own kayaks with us. To this end, we completed building a large storage shed for this purpose and to free up much needed space in our dinghy park. We raised the funds for this build via a donation from the local Sunrise Trust (£3000), to whom we are most grateful, from the proceeds of the open day and from WBC's funds. We are also fortunate to have members who have given of their skills and time to make this happen and a particular thanks goes to Richard Holdsworth for fitting out the kayak shed to such a high standard. We recognised that kayak storage can be a problem for many but members can now store their kayaks safely and undercover for easy access to the water at any time of year.



A number of our members have completed an eight-week kayaking skills and safety course run by one of our members who is a qualified instructor. We feel that having such instruction at the club is important as it not only attracts more kayakers to the area, it ensures that they have a heightened awareness of safety on the water and their impact on the wildlife and environment.



## Open Day

In May, we held our usual Open Day which encourages the local community to come down to the club and experience the full range of watersports on offer, rides on fast ribs, raffles, tombola, children's games, face painting and lots of delicious food of course. Members provided food donations, and local businesses donated prizes for the raffle.

We had a visit from the RNLI lifeboat from Broughty Ferry which is always a crowd pleaser. Over 250 people came along to the open day and fun was had by all! This is always a great opportunity for the club to not only give people an





experience on the water for free but also to encourage them to come and join us as members so they can enjoy the Tay all year round.



## Our Rescue Fleet

A significant development for WBC this year has been the purchase and delivery of a UK built, RS Pulse 63 electric rescue boat which supplements the two other petrol boats we own. This is the first electric rescue boat to be purchased by any club in the UK and will replace our older boats which run on more polluting fuels.

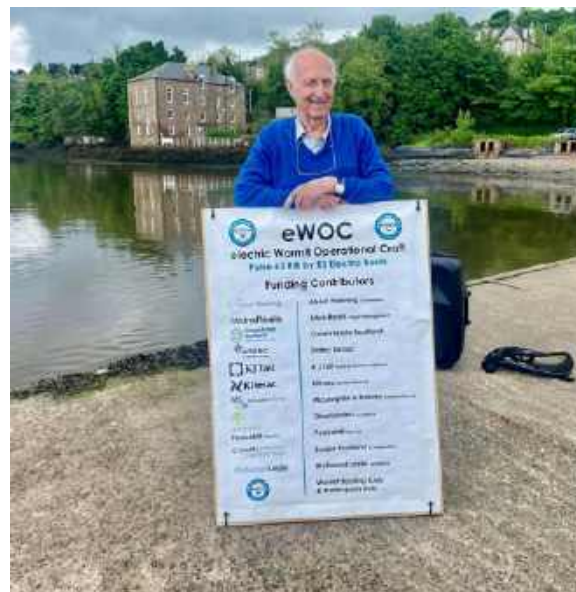


This represents our commitment to being climate ambassadors for the Tay and respecting the habitat of the wildlife with whom we share the water and signals our intention to move to more 'green' rescue opportunities. Local school children were invited to name the new electric rescue boat and the winning name was eWOC (electric Wormit Operational Craft).





We are most grateful to a number of organisations for much appreciated donations and grants that enabled us to purchase eWOC.



eWOC was also provided with a grand new home in the form of an extended and upgraded shed thanks to the efforts of our members.



This season, one of our other rescue boats was fitted with a new outboard petrol engine at some considerable cost to the club. As well as ensuring that we have two appropriate rescue boats, the new engine is far more efficient and therefore more ecologically acceptable than its predecessor and aligns with our values and desire to be more sustainable in the short to longer term.

This year, we have also purchased a Toro Utility vehicle to assist with launching and retrieving the larger craft from the Tay including eWOC . It was purchased from St Andrews Links Trust who most generously provided us with a 50% discount on the list price, many grateful thanks to them for helping to make life much easier for us, something particularly appreciated by some of our older members!





## Certified Training Centre

In 2023, we achieved Royal Yachting Association recognition as an approved training facility and, in 2024, again passed their inspection process with flying colours. This allows us to offer certified training. For example, our chief instructor, Andrew Lumsden, runs certified Power Boat 2 (PB2) courses which have proved popular with both members and non-members of the club. These courses have been financially supported by Fife Council, Community Sports Grant scheme.

In total, since the start of training, 24 individuals have attended RYA PB2 training with 23/24 fully passing. This has also raised significant funds of over £5000 for the club. We were also grateful to receive a donation in memory of one of our club members which was used to specifically subsidise the costs of PB2 training for 14 individual club members, all of which have been allocated.

It is important that the club has a healthy number of members who are certified first aiders to safeguard the overall membership. We do already have a number of members with such qualifications however continuing to 'grow the pool' is always important. Therefore, during the summer of 2024, we ran an RYA accredited First Aid course for interested members which was completed by eight members.



## Communications

Over the last year, we have continued to develop our website ([www.wormitboatingclub.org.uk](http://www.wormitboatingclub.org.uk)); with the on line membership form functioning well.



All documents, policies and information are available online, which enables the community to know what's going on at the Club and sign up to become members should they wish to join in our sporting activities, or just get involved generally. Our great thanks go to Evelyn Hardie for the tireless work she puts into maintaining the website and for the general club communications.

We continue to use the Spond app as our booking system for rowing, sailing and kayaking which continues to work well. We actively use social media to publicise our activities under the hashtag #wormitboatingclub.

## Historical Ties

The 333 Squadron of the Norwegian Airforce have longstanding ties with WBC as over 150 air crew were stationed there during the second world war. These ties have continued and it is usual for them to visit us each year to pay their respects and to lay a wreath at the memorial stone. The club is always pleased to see our Norwegian friends and use the opportunity to host a social event. Additionally this

year, we welcomed Eric and Morton who work with the Norwegian Air Museum in Oslo keen to see where their comrades were stationed during the war.



## Reserves Policy

WBC has a Reserves Policy which is reviewed annually. The club has on-going financial commitments that primarily relate to:

- maintaining the clubhouse, land and other buildings including utilities
- ensuring that the club has the right equipment to carry out its activities and that they are safe and well maintained
- Rent of land and launching charges to Fife Council
- Insurance and public liability
- Membership of the RYA and Scottish Coastal Rowing Association
- 

Our income is predominantly derived from:

- membership fees
- fund raising, grants & donations
- training courses

In 2023-4, the Trustees of WBC reviewed the financial situation and agreed that the club requires reserves to cover the financial commitments detailed above. For 2023-24, the level of reserves was set at: **£10,850**. The club has no deficit and a current cash reserve of **£76,019.65** which will be used to support our development plans. Our accounts and finances are audited by Montieths Accountants, Balmullo, Fife with input and final sign off from the WBC Trustees and Committee.

## Financial review

This year, we have again been successful in attracting funding in the form of donations and grants to support the construction of the new Kayak shed, purchase a new engine for one of the rescue boats, tools for maintaining the skiffs and subsidising the RYA PB2 training. Funds raised by the club have helped to offset the costs associated with other outgoings such as the upgrade to the rescue shed and costs incurred as a consequence of the launch of eWOC.

As well as a membership which regularly gives of their time and skills voluntarily, we have been most fortunate in receiving two personal donations /bequests (totalling £1250) and a grant of £500 for the purchase of boat maintenance tools. Our PB2 RYA accredited trainer has continued to raise funds for the club via training events.

Our volunteers run taster sessions for interested members of the local community to try out a range of watersports including monthly rowing tasters which allow people to try out before deciding to join the club. They also contribute to the upkeep of the clubhouse and land. For example, this year, we have completed the construction of an additional storage facility for the increasing number of craft, boats and kayaks our members want storage for. Regular work parties allow us to minimise the need to employ contractors and trades.

The other main fund-raising activities this year have included donations received from attendees of the Perth to Wormit Rowing regatta for the catering provided by club members and the proceeds from the Open Day. We have a kitchen, which in addition to providing snacks and drinks, regularly caters for the social events and the regattas we hold. We also rent out the club space for a few different community groups, including a knitting group, karate club, another local kayak club who do not have a clubhouse as well as a local women's group. This helps to generate an income and subsidises our overall running costs.

Despite the fact our overall funds in terms of cash in the bank has reduced by circa £10,400 this year, we believe that the club has have gained considerable benefits over the year. Improved facilities, boats, equipment and receipt of our electric rescue boat have increased our overall assets by circa £150,000.00 since last year.



### Analysis of Income for 2023-2024 (£)

Membership Fees	19,017.54
Restricted grants	500.00
Unrestricted grants	000.00
Rents Received	1,698.00
Donations	1,250.00
Fundraising & other income	8,945.37
RYA Training	1,620.00

**Total:** 33,030.91

### Analysis of Expenditure for 2023-2024 (£)

Rent/Utilities/Catering & Incidentals	8,137.64
Land/buildings enhancements, build & maintenance	8,597.37
Equipment & Fuel	16,663.81
Affiliations & Governance	1, 825.45
Insurance	4,321.07
Electric boat launch	2,686.85
Sundry Expenses	1,261.80

**Total:** 43,493.99

### Funds at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 (£)

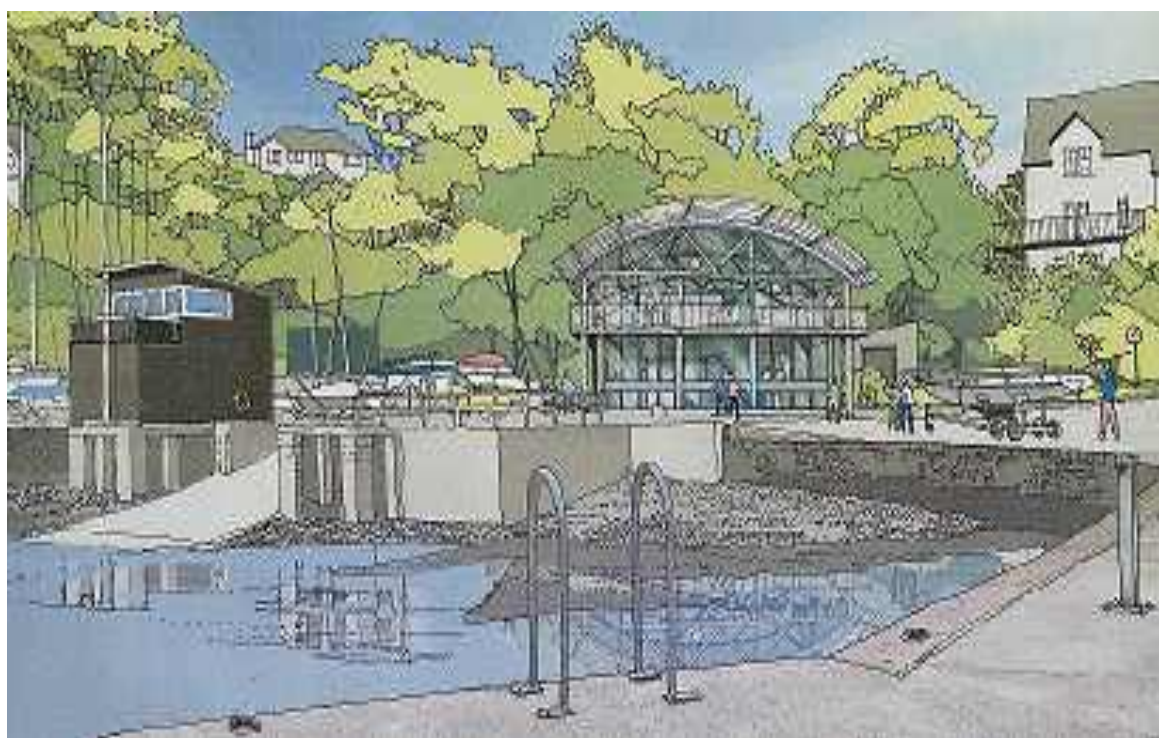
Reserves:	Restricted	0
	Fixed Assets	481,500.00
	Unrestricted:	76,001.65
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>557,501.65</b>

## Future Plans

Our aspirations for a new two storey modern purpose-built community clubhouse have moved on considerably. With the support of the membership, in 2023 we lodged papers with Fife Council using the Community Asset Transfer legislation to become owners and custodians of the Woodhaven Pier and the grounds we presently lease from Fife Council. These have been agreed in principle and the next stage is to finalise arrangements with Fife Council and gain final support from the membership which we anticipate will be completed by the end of 2024.

We see the future of Woodhaven Pier as a centre of national significance – as an exemplar of innovative, creative and inclusive use of our shared common waters.

Our ambition is for the club to be the focal point for three things:



- safe, accessible leisure use of the river,
- developing excellence in watersports, and
- enhancing people's knowledge of the scientific and cultural traditions associated with these waters.

To this end, we want to be able to offer a 'living space for water access' that clearly links to the work of our neighbours such as V&A Dundee (sharing knowledge on boat design and boat building), and Discovery Point (climate science and exploration), and continues our successful work with partners such as the village fetes in Newport, Gauldry and Tayport and our local schools and Universities.

WBC aims to be able to offer local school aged children the opportunity to have taster sessions and try a number of different watersports as well as running a week of watersports instruction. We have also participated in Dundee University's creative writing projects about our relationship to the water as part of Book Week Scotland and the Dundee International Women's Centre. We have also hosted rowing events for women who use the DIWC facilities. We hope to continue with similar types of events in the future. As well as growing our club and welcoming new members, the focus of our efforts during 2024-25 will be on finalising the Community Asset Transfer we are in the process of agreeing with Fife Council. This will allow us to begin progressing our plans and raising the funding required to re-build the clubhouse. We are pleased to say that our project has the backing of our MP, MSP, local councillors and community council who have all visited our premises and written supporting documentation.

We also plan to strengthen all sections of the club over the next year and offer further training in watersports as well as social events. For example, as well as our end of season water and social activities, in November of this year, we will be holding a ceilidh which as well as being a fun event, will also raise funds for the club.

#### Our 2024-25 objectives are to:

- Acquire ownership of the land and Woodhaven pier from Fife Council.
- Engage/involve members and the local community in developing fully costed plans for improving the facilities including a new clubhouse and enhanced storage
- Start to raise funds to support these plans
- Safely, efficiently and sustainably manage WBC into the future
- Become recognised as a community ambassador in the area
- Become recognised as a climate change leader for watersports in Scotland



## Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:



Ralph Bruce Webster

Print name

Designation

Commodore

Date

22/10/2024

