

## From the Commodore



**T**he new boating season is just around the corner and as always this time of year brings with it our A.G.M.

We will be holding the meeting at the Orton Hall hotel:- and will start at 10.30am.

This year you have an excellent opportunity to help shape the future of the club.

Before we look at who is applying for what I feel that I really need to be honest with you all. I would like to present the facts that are recorded and my vision for the club. Please take time to read this Pennant and get ready to vote for the future of the club.

I will be re-standing for the commodore position but this year you have a choice! Eddie Hird has applied to complete a third term as commodore. I know that Eddie has his own reasons for standing and he has opted to tell you at the meeting.

Part of the reason is the fact that since my heart operation at the back end of 2017 I have struggled with my health and I have been honest when asked by members when I have said that managing a 15 hour day at work, fulfilling my duties as commodore and managing my health issues has been very difficult and I have said that unless something changed that 2017 would be my last year!

This is when the saying "be careful what you wish for" comes into play... On December the 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 I was made redundant from my paid job after my company went into receivership. I had been given a few weeks notice that this was likely to happen and this gave me the time to reflect on my next steps and future direction. At this point I had already sold my very much loved boat with the intention of adjusting my financial commitments in a bid to reducing workload and improving my health. When I sold the boat I had planned and still do plan to buy something a little cheaper-(if you hear of any great buys let me know!). By selling my boat it appears to have fuelled speculation that I am giving up completely and the question has been raised, "how can you be commodore without a boat or a chalet?"

The answer is simple and I have shared with anyone that has actually asked me. I have now been boating for over 40 years. I was "very" young when I started! I was totally captured from day one with the excitement of boating the opportunity to fish in unusual places and to explore. As I grew up in the real world I realised that the boating world was actually a great place to be with peace and tranquillity and great people always happy to say hello and to help when needed. I wanted and still want my boating experienc-

es to become "the real world". This is why many moons ago when I was asked to join the committee I was happy to do so. I didn't realise at the time that the club had been suffering split factions and instead of being a happy consolidated family the club actually had a few issues. At first I was surprised but the more I spoke to people I begun to understand that this has been the case for many years. Whilst I was disappointed I begun to look around at other clubs and realised that most had internal issues and shared common problems. As time has moved on and I have enjoyed the roles of assistant secretary, secretary, vice commodore and ultimately commodore I have realised just how difficult it is to get everyone to come together as one club.

In 2016 at my first AGM as commodore I proposed a rule that all full members under the age of 72 should carry out a minimum of 15 hours work to support the club. As I explained at the meeting to those that attended this rule was not meant in anyway to be a big stick with a big brother approach.

On the contrary I wanted to find a way to future proof the club and bring members together.

### Let me explain

- 1) The problem as I could see it was that a few were doing so much for the many. (Not such a problem as you always gets those that want to)
  - 2) The majority of the help was coming from older retired people (More time to spare!)
  - 3) The older the willing volunteers were becoming the more difficult it becomes to complete some tasks. (What happens when they are no longer able to do the work?)
  - 4) The club was finding itself having to look at paying contractors and outside sources on a more frequent basis. (Expenditure going up!)
  - 4) More members using the club as a marina and not as the club was set up "self-help".
- My observations showed me that when the regular helpers met at the club to do work they often ended becoming friends. They often used the club more frequently in the day and back then also attended the functions.
- My proposal was aimed at building on this in the hope that when people work together and get to know each other that they might actually build the friendships, use the facilities more and reduce the expenditure by doing tasks ourselves.

So what has happened.....?

### "The Positives"

- The same regular helpers have continued to help! (tick)
- More people have attended work parties and offered to help at other times (tick)

### The "not so positives"

- This system that we set in place to measure this has not been 100% successful (This and it will be improved)
- We have not managed as well as can be at pre-planning jobs outside of the work parties. (The aim is put a list in the clubhouse so that members can select a task at any time. Work parties will be set a year in advance to allow members to plan (and that doesn't mean to know when to go on holiday!))

There are still a few people who have said that they are far too busy to help or attend the club for anything other than taking the boat out..... This is disappointing. We are only looking for 1 hour 15 minutes a month ... Having said that all genuine situations will be considered including health issues. (It was not intended to be a big stick)

I have been told that some members have talked about downgrading their membership to associate to avoid having to contribute and indeed others have talked about leaving? (It would be a real shame if this is true and if I was one of those people I would not be very proud of sharing that thought.... Genuine reasons for not being able to support the club will be listened to. (Current mooring fees in Oundle marina are, according to their website, approx. £1500 for a boat up to 40 ft and over £2000 for boats over that. You would not be asked to join in and partake anything in a marina... We have been asked if in the case of a joint membership could one or other partner do more or less work. I feel that from the work point of view this is acceptable. It would however be nice to see everyone mixing and enjoying the club.

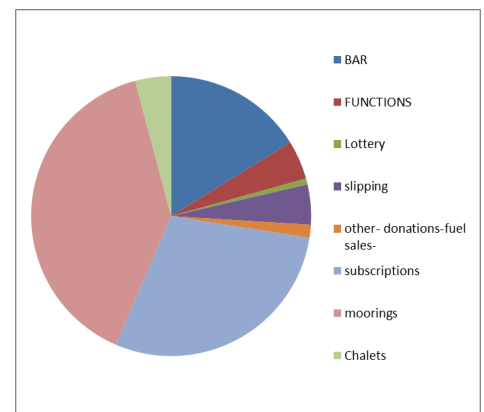
### In summary

The rule has had some effect but not the total desired effect. Hopefully that will improve as everyone gets to appreciate why it was put in and what it is intended to do. I hope that has helped you all to understand my vision?

Feel free to talk to me if you have any further questions. Interestingly I have cleared up a few misconceptions recently just with a face to face conversation.

### Now for a few facts.....

I have tried to bring our income to life to demonstrate areas that make up our income; I am sure that it is no surprise that the majority of our money comes from moorings and Subscriptions.



Projected Subs etc 2018	
Subscriptions	12000
Moorings	17000
Chalets	1863
	30863
Other income	
2018	
Bar	5000
Functions	1500
Lottery	300
slipping	2500
IMFs and entry	
fees	2000
other-	650
	11950
TOTAL Income	43317

Estimated General Expenditure for 2018 is approx. £33000

As you can see unless we continue to bring in income from other than subscriptions, moorings and chalets we will run a deficit!

If we want to continue to grow and enjoy the club we have to protect our other income.

At the last two AGMs I have made promises to try and bring the club room up to date.

We have discussed options in the committee meetings but it is felt that we need your help!

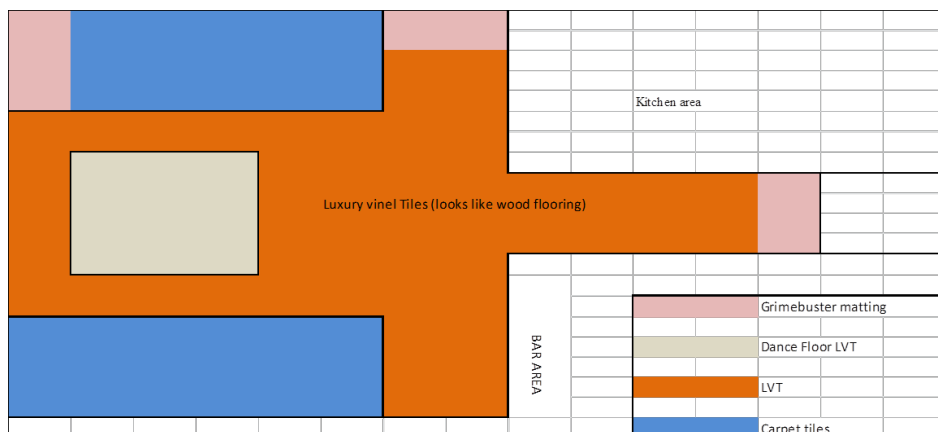
This year I will be asking you to vote on updating the club flooring. There are members that believe the current floor is perfectly acceptable; others feel that we need to avoid carpet in case we get flooded.

I have spoken to other commodores on the river and all have carpet in some areas and say that if their floor needed to be updated they would definitely use carpet again.

Richard Ganderton (past commodore- Oundle) "we laid carpet tiles 20 years ago and they are as good now as they were then. We have suffered 2 floods in that time but a quick once over with the wax and they have been back to normal".

Northampton B.C. "Carpet every time! Times have changed you cannot expect people to use the club without a few creature comforts now days"

This is the most generally accepted floorplan from members who have seen it



### What have we achieved this year?

The answer is excellent!

18 Projects plus too much to mention.....

Functions generating in excess of £2000

2017/18 Projects undertaken	
1	Hedges cut
2	Electronic banking introduced
3	continued bankside piling program
4	Carp hole dredging
5	Club ceiling re skimmed
6	Club hallway re skimmed
7	New Bluetooth entertainment system
8	New cooker / New till for bar
9	New powered projector screen installed
10	New under counter cooler unit
11	New cruiser trailer
12	Solar panels for dumper and fire pump
13	Trees felled
14	2 moorings upgraded
15	Mooring rebuild-
16	New furniture ordered
17	New projector installed
18	Insurance - substantial savings
PLUS	
	fantastic and well received Rally
	6 Film Nights hosted by Bev and Kev
	Childrens Xmas Party
	Xmas Carols
	80th Celebration
	9 other events
	Wendy's winter walks

With all of that said I would be very happy to do another year. I feel that I have been restrained somewhat by my illness and other work commitments..

Now that this is changing I would be happy to finish what I have started if I am elected commodore.

This year's nominees for officer and committee posts are unprecedented!

Now that is either because we are doing an absolutely brilliant job and people want to join the team or alternatively there is a feeling of discontent in the ranks and members want change.

My heart lives with the club. Eddie is an experienced commodore and more than competent to take his third term to run the club.

Following the January deadline for nominees and the dramatic response I am delighted to say that you have real choice to vote for what you want. After discussing the situation with several members it would appear that a lot of the passion and strong feelings are born from misunderstanding and miss communication.

Rather than accept that this is ok, if I am elected I will look to take the following actions:-

(Just remember I can only direct and present ideas but ultimately the committee members have the vote and the commodore only votes on split decisions. Something that I have not had to do yet. Also actions taken by the committee vote are democratic and the officers only issue communications, letters etc. on the committee direction-

The Secretary does not send letters unless instructed to do so.

Nobody gets paid for the role that they .do

Officers and committee rarely claim fuel or travel expenses.

### Problems and solutions

#### Real time communication

re implement text contact and introduce a "notice board, text, email, Facebook ,website approach"

all non-urgent projects to be posted in club house three weeks prior to it being started

Continue to open committee by appointment Matters arising to be restricted to projects only. ( No business of a personal nature to be discussed here)

Current restriction on discussing committee business until minutes approved to be lifted for matters arising "projects- work to be done"

#### Club bar not open regularly

Make the room more inviting- Flooring/ furniture/ multi use room. (Work in progress for the last 10 years!)

DC to ensure bar is open on proviso that floor is completed and clubhouse regenerated.

Also investigate fast food offerings to see if we can provide meals.

#### Members accessing the club

Railway gates review- see if there is any way that we can have lights added as a safety enhancement.

( A meeting with the railway is agreed with a view to improving safety and making access easier )

#### Parking is insufficient for functions

Investigate the possibility of additional parking on the grass area next to the club.

One option would be to install "GRASS PROTECTOR MESH" this can be seen fitted on Youtube and looks like a possible solution.

It goes onto the existing grass and the grass continues to grow but the surface is then strong enough to park on!

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## 2018 Projects and Wish List

Essential Maintenance	£
Piling of 50m of Banks	5000
Wish List	
Clubroom Flooring`	5200
Additional Parking	500
Workshop renovation	3000
Conservatory	11000
Railway Crossing	?
Total	24700

## How much money will we have

in the kitty after subscriptions etc have come in? Our planned General Expenditure will be covered from subscriptions and mooring fees. Long term maintenance and improvements is financed by the surpluses on the bar and functions which are projected to raise about £8k in the coming year

We ended 2017 year with approx. £42k available 'cash' in the bank less committed expenditure of £7k leaving approx. £35k for projects on our 'Wish List'

We forecast to maintain the "other income" at around £8000 !

As in previous years it is important to leave a reserve in case 'nasties' such as Goldie Lane pop up.

If we completed all the projects below we would exit the 2018 season with approximately £18k AND a club for the future...

I will explain more if needed at the AGM but we will also get your chance to vote for what you would like to see at your club.. If you have any feedback or would like to add a project let me know.

I have said this over and over again but

"IT IS YOUR CLUB"

## Problems and solutions -continued

**The Cooker** (Suitability, use and cleaning)  
New catering cooker purchased.

Proposed to add a domestic cooker for everyday use, this solution will enable both members and function organisers to have suitable equipment.

### Club Camera access

THIS WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE AGM

The current committee decision to restrict access is based on the following:-

'The system was built as a "LOW COST" deterrent and offers suitable but limited views (Not every boat is covered and we do not want to expose weak spots or encourage conflict from individuals feeling their boat should be covered.)

'We have a lot of members; there is uncertainty if the system will sustain high volume use (this is being investigated )

'Security; difficult to police who has access with a volume of users. ( this is being investigated)

A solution would be to make specific cameras accessible to members and current thoughts are one to show river level and flow

This is Agenda item 8 at the AGM

### Dogs in the Clubhouse

There are strong feelings on this subject. In the last pennant I asked anyone who felt strongly enough to request a vote at the AGM. This has not happened; a solution could be that if a conservatory is constructed dogs be allowed in that area.

## Looking forward to the AGM

Whatever the outcome the club will go on.

Be open and honest with what you want- IT IS YOUR CLUB!

The following people have been proposed for committee or officer positions:  
Dean Chapman and Eddie Hird for commodore.  
Ricky Loach and David Gregory for Harbour Master

Committee nominations are:- Kev Bending, Owen Bowyer, Kath Conroy, Barry Eagle, Bev Huff, Scott Lewis, Phil Mathias, Stan Prosser. Roger Simmons-Brown, Neil Tabram and Colin Wilson

That means that you will need to firstly choose your officers and secondly select a team to support them and the club.

Due to the unprecedented interest in the committee I gave everyone standing the opportunity to introduce themselves and give you an insight to who they are, what they feel about the club, what they would change (if anything) and how they see themselves helping to bring about that change.

Here are the responses that I have received.

Where people have opted not to write anything it is because they would prefer to stand and answer any questions on the day.

### Harbour Master Nominees

#### Ricky Loach

I have been boating and a member of PYC for many years. I have been the assistant harbour master for past committees and I stepped up to acting harbour master when the role was vacated earlier this year. Whilst in this position I have fully adhered to the job description and helped members wherever possible including the rescuing of a sunken boat.

If I am elected I have further plans to improve the moorings and manage rules compliance.

#### David Gregory

"To all the members, a lot of the members know who I am. My bid for harbour master just made sense to me as I do spend a lot of time at our club and also living locally is a real benefit as should a problem arise I'm only 5

### Duties of the Harbourmaster are as follows:

- To allocate berthing space to members.
- To advise the Treasurer of the name, boat and measured length when the allocation is made.
- To explain the circumstances regarding safety, under which mooring space is offered.
- To obtain the signature of the member on the Mooring Agreement. See appendix 3.
- To keep record of the insurance documents relating to the vessel.
- To advise the mooring holder of his responsibilities on the upkeep of the structure, the surrounding area and the suitability of mooring posts.
- He will report at the monthly meeting to the general committee, allocations to members and movement of boats between moorings.
- To keep at least three moorings available for short term use by visiting boats.
- To provide a written notice to all visitors, regarding the safety requirements for any space that is offered.
- And to provide such other service or information as directed by the committee.

### Committee Nominees

#### Kev Bending

Membership of PYC has added much to our lives in the last couple of years, from learning the joys of boating on the Nene (and often breaking down!) To the friendship, camaraderie and good company of so many members that I have had the pleasure of getting to know. I have particularly enjoyed doing my bit in supporting the club by regularly running the bar, and assisting my partner, Bev, with the running of social events for the benefit of all members.

#### Kathryn Conroy

"I have been a member of PYC for over 20 years and feel that I can bring experience and knowledge to the club. I also feel that this committee is woefully short of female members, which is therefore not representative of our club membership, a point that should be rectified."

#### Barry Eagle

Barry probably doesn't really need introducing but for the benefit of any new members he has served the club for many years and most of you will know him as the slipway manager.

This year Barry has also made huge contributions by saving thousands of pounds on our club insurance and also by being instrumental in the building of the new pyc club cruiser trailer

#### Bev Huff

In the two and a half years since I joined PYC, I have thoroughly enjoyed getting involved with the various events that have taken place at the club, and getting to know the members of the club. I consider myself to be a 'people person' and it is one of the pleasures of membership to have the opportunity to interact with so many people, and learn from their experience of boating – on that I still have lots to learn! I am not someone who sits back and lets others do all the work so, in addition to staffing the clubhouse bar and taking part in the working parties, I have also put myself forward to take over the running of the club's Christmas Carol nights, and to introduce Saturday film nights.

I realise that members have a variety of different reasons for being members of the club and that there are a number of different ways to enjoy membership. I want to do my bit to help all members to feel valued and included, and that is why I wish to stand for membership of the committee. I will bring an open, friendly approach and hope to help the club continue to be successful and enjoyed by all members to the full."

#### Neil Tabram

I thoroughly enjoy my time at PYC and whilst I have been on the committee I have added value and saved money. Amongst other things I have saved money with the electricity meters, LED lighting, regularly helping with functions, running bbqs, buying kitchen equipment from my own money and selling it on to the club at what it cost me only after it has proven useful. When projects or ideas are floated I often do the research to help the committee to make decisions/ I have devoted many man hours to the club and would like to continue to do so if I am re-elected.

## Provisional Calendar of Events

### 2018

March	4th	Sunday	PYC AGM at Orton Hall Hotel, 10.30 a.m.
	24th	Saturday	Work Party from 9.30 a.m.
April	30,31st 1st, 2nd	Friday - Monday	Easter Weekend
	21st	Saturday	Fitting Out Supper, 7.00 p.m.
May	5th to 7th	Saturday to Monday	May Bank Holiday Weekend
	25th to 28th	Friday to Monday	ANRC Rally at Oundle Cruising Club
June	23rd	Saturday	New Members Garden Party from 3.00 p.m.
July	21st, 22nd	Saturday, Sunday	PYC Regatta
September	t.b.c.	Saturday	t.b.c. PYC Charity Day
October	6th	Saturday	Work Party from 9.30 a.m.
	20th	Saturday	Laying up Supper
November	t.b.c.	Saturday	Fireworks at PCC
	17th	Saturday	Film and Fishn' Chips, 6.30 p.m.
December	8th	Saturday	Carols Night, 7.00 p.m.
	9th	Sunday	Childrens Party, 11.00 a.m.
	16th	Sunday	Christmas Lunch, 1.30 p.m.

## 100Club

Winners in the 2017/18 lottery are

### XmasDraw

First Prize	£50	No.	40	M Tabam
Consolation prizes	£20	No.	68	I Cash
	£20	No.	46	D Pritchard
	£20	No.	50	R Dixon

### March 2018 Draw

First Prize	£50	No.	33	R G Preece
Consolation prizes	£20	No.	54	Mrs G Fisher
	£20	No.	53	C Marshall
	£20	No.	6	M J Forth