

TRUSTEES REPORT 2023-24

Formal Report to the Charities Commission

Welcome to the tenth Trustees' report under our constitution as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Mark Bouch, as Chair, prepared this report to the Charities Commission on behalf of the Club's Trustees for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

This report will be circulated to members with 2023/24 accounts for approval at the Club's AGM in November 2024.

CIO Trustee Committee

Devizes Canoe Club is a "Charitable Incorporated Organisation". Our Charity number is 1156402. We were registered with the Charities Commission on 27th March 2014. Legal decisions are taken by the CIO trustees, who in 2023/24 were Mark Bouch, Paul Papworth-Smith, Sue Colby, Lindyanne Ehrnrooth, Chris Jones, Nick Prichard, Hannah Snowsill, Andrew Park, Dan Colby, Hannah Snowsill, Trevor Hunter and Simon Darling. Our AGM 2023 approved a larger-than-normal intake of Trustees to allow for the transition of some long-serving Trustees in the next two years.

The CIO Trustees have a legal responsibility to the Charities Commission for effective governance and management of the CIO's assets in line with our CIO constitution and Charity Commission guidelines. CIO Trustees have six legal responsibilities, including delivering purpose, managing conflicts of interest, reporting information, safeguarding people, making decisions, managing finances and overseeing club policy. Club property, including the club's estate, is held by the CIO on behalf of the Club itself and not by any individual. Trustees meet annually and as required.

Trustees are appointed by a decision of members at the Club AGM. Seven new Trustees were appointed at the November 2023 AGM, making a total of eleven. At the forthcoming AGM, one-third of the trustees must retire (three to four people), and we will have an opportunity to appoint up to twelve trustees in total. Any club member is welcome to nominate themselves as a CIO Trustee at least fourteen days before the AGM.

Paul Papworth-Smith, Chris Jones, and Mark Bouch will retire at this AGM. [Paul Papworth-Smith does not intend to stand for re-election – TO BE CONFIRMED] . Simon Darling will assume the Club Treasurer's role as his replacement, subject to approval at the AGM. No nominations have been received for first-time election as Trustees.

Club Management Committee

The CIO Trustees delegate power to a management committee that meets monthly to coordinate the club's operational management. The Committee ensures club operations comply with policy and best practices.

The CIO Trustees appoint the key management committee roles: Club Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and invite the management committee to fill other key roles necessary for effective management.

The Chair and Deputy Chair divide their roles. The chair focuses on club strategy, development, and governance, while the Deputy Chair focuses on club operations.

The committee has invited other members to fill important volunteer roles, including leading paddling groups, managing boat storage, delivering the coaching programme, and providing bankside support during organised sessions. These appointments do not need to attend committee meetings but are welcome to do so.

All key volunteer appointments are recorded in the members' section on our website.

Our AGM provides the formal opportunity to approve management committee members. Committee membership is open to all Club members, though we will only appoint committee members to fill specific roles required to ensure the efficient management of club business.

Members wishing to stand for election to the management committee or challenge the nominations proposed should submit their names in writing to the Club Secretary at least one week before the AGM.

The Club management committee intends to meet monthly, except in August. Meetings take place face-to-face and virtually. Minutes are taken and are published on the club website. Copies of minutes are available on request to any club member without website access.

The proposed management committee are Sue Colby (Chair and Volunteer Coordinator), Simon Darling (Treasurer), Lindyanne Ehrnrooth (Secretary), Jenny Jones (Welfare and Safeguarding Officer), James Papworth-Smith (H&S), Stuart Colby (Facilities), James Mahoney (Coaching Group Lead), Nick Poole (Junior Programme Coordinator and boat storage), and Nigel Chivers (Senior Programme Coordinator and Captain of Boats), and Charlie Mayo (Club Public Relations and Press Officer).

Club Purpose

The Club's purpose is **"The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation, in particular by the provision of facilities for the sport of canoeing and kayaking"**. We have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. We provide identifiable benefits to the public in advancing health and sport. Our membership criteria and what we offer are inclusive and open to all members of the public without restriction. We make it clear that if anyone finds it difficult to pay our membership and coaching fees, we can help, and we regularly do.

Our priorities for 2023/24 were established in the 2020-2024 strategy document. This consisted of an intent:

To become one of the top 10 clubs nationally and top 3 clubs in the SW region, judging by growing participation, competitive excellence, and a varied development and activity programme that includes all age groups.

In 2023/24, our strategy was brought to life through seven ambitions that set high-level priorities for the club. The top priorities were:

1. To conduct a fleet and equipment review to identify future requirements
2. To complete all actions identified in the Quality Club assessment process
3. To conduct a membership survey and improve the club's offer to membership groups
4. To create additional opportunities for adventure and recreational paddling
5. To strengthen the coaching cadre

The 'main effort' (top priority was to strengthen the club's long-term financial resilience and governance.

The process of developing a new strategy began in early 2024 and concludes with a presentation of the strategy to the Club AGM in November 2024.

Development plans are then developed annually, providing a framework for the management team to implement the strategy. Our annual club development plan will be renewed in Q1 2025, identifying detailed annual objectives to deliver priorities identified in the 2025 to 2028 strategy.

Club Accreditation

In the period covered by the last report, the Club achieved accreditation under Paddle UK's Quality Club programme, demonstrating that we met the highest possible standards of governance and safeguarding. In 2023/24, we consolidated three separate action plans and focused on updating policies and practices identified in the Club's Quality Club assessment process.

Activity Report

This report includes a summary of our activities and achievements in 2023-24 in pursuit of our paddlesport objectives. By publishing this report on the Charity Commission website, we demonstrate the benefit to club members and society. More information will be given at the AGM.

The 2022/23 season we concluded in August 2023.

Our club Hasler Race in the 2023 season was co-hosted with Chippenham CSC on the Wiltshire Avon in May. We achieved a second-place result overall, with several podium positions for junior and senior paddlers. In the SW region, we also scored second places at Bradford on Avon and Tewkesbury and third and fourth at Saltford and Gloucester races, but we did not attend enough events to qualify for the Hasler Finals held in Norwich in October 2023. In 2023/24, no Devizes crews contested the national marathon championships held at Elmbridge.

At the end of the reporting year, the 2023/24 season was halfway through, with the club chasing a qualification place in the SW Region. The 2023/24 Hasler Final event, due to be held in Richmond in October 2024, was subsequently cancelled due to high fluvial flow on the River Thames.

The SW Region poses difficulties for Devizes CC as we are located at the far eastern extreme of the largest Paddle UK region in the UK. The Clubs that qualify tend to compete at every event. There are now about ten events in the calendar, fourteen active clubs, and 70% of the in-region races, which require four or more hours of travelling time, with the associated financial burden on paddlers and parents. The 2024/25 strategy must address the importance and relevance of the SW Region Hasler racing series.

In 2023/24, the club sent teams to

The Ghent Regatta: A team of eight DCC paddlers with three co-opted paddlers from other clubs produced an exceptional result. The girls won gold and silver in every race they entered. Our boys amassed 16 medals and one team trophy.

The 2023 Olympic Hopes Regatta was held in Poznan, Poland. Two juniors represented the Club, and our two junior paddlers (Philippe Ehrnrooth and Mollie Ball) were among the only GB K2 crews to make the A final.

We entered all Nottingham sprints and the National Inter-Club Regatta at Nottingham in September 2023 with distinction. Highlights from that regatta included:

- Philippe Ehrnrooth: 2nd in Boys A K1 1000m, 2nd in mixed K2 500m with Mollie Ball, 6th in Boys A K2 500m
- Mollie Ball: 1st K2 200m, 2nd in mixed K2 500m with Philippe Ehrnrooth
- Regan Toop: 2nd Boys B K1 200m, 3rd Boys B K2 500m with Dylan Martin, 3rd Boys B K1 500m
- Dylan Martin: 3rd Boys B K2 500m with Regan Toop
- Max Poole: 7th in Final Boys D K1 500m and 7th in Boys D K1 200m
- Fred Johnson and Max Poole: 2nd Boys D K2 200m
- Jared Kelly: 3rd in Boys intermediate K1 500m final
- Cameron O'Hare & Max Poole were promoted to Boys C and Jared Kelly to Boys D
- Two adult paddlers competed: Charlie Mayo (senior masters) and Alex Sheppy (senior).
- Devizes Canoe Club came 13th overall

In classic marathon competition, the Waterside Series run by Newbury CC in early 2024 is recognised as the classic build-up for the Devizes to Westminster Race. However, the Waterside Series offers its own challenge, and completing the series of around 80 miles in total over four races is an achievement.

Several DCC paddlers competed in the Waterside Series marathon races with notable achievements in the series by Mark Ball and Steve Bush (overall series winners in K2 veteran) and Pete Clarke and Juliet Fooks (overall series 5th place in K2 mixed).

Other results included Edd Dobson and Mike Rees-Clark (3rd K2 Mens Waterside A), Nic Davey and Ros Gill (8th K2 Ladies Waterside A), Dan Colby (14th K1 Senior Mens Waterside A) and Ian Thackray and Martin Payne (4th C2 Waterside A, B and C), Matthew Hamblen and Craig Horrocks (6th K2 Senior Mens Waterside B and C), Dan Colby and Dan Darwall (8th K2 Senior Mens Waterside B), Peter and Abi Jones (5th C2 Waterside B and 3rd C2 Waterside C), Jenny Jones and Jill Priday (4th K2 Ladies Waterside C)

The Devizes to Westminster Race provides our focus for winter distance racing. The development programme for this race starts in September and is designed to progress novices to a standard where they have a realistic prospect of race completion in just six months.

The Devizes to Westminster Race 2024 took place on the last weekend of the year and was planned to run to Westminster, but the race was terminated for the majority at Teddington Lock due to unsafe conditions on the Tideway. Fourteen senior paddlers competed in the race with very strong finishes from Ian Thackray and Martin Payne (Senior C2), Pete and Abi Jones (Senior C2), Juliet Fooks and Pete Clark (Senior K2) and Edd Dobson and Mike Rees-Clark (Senior K2) who achieved third place overall. Pete and Abi Jones won the Canadian Trophy for being the fastest C2, Pete Clarke and Juliet Fooks came 3rd in the mixed crew class, and Pete Clarke and Juliet Fooks, Pete and Abi Jones and Ian Thackray and Martin Payne came 3rd in the Team Trophy.

Overall, our results have been excellent. They demonstrate the hard work and commitment of our paddlers, coaching team, and parents throughout the year.

Membership

Our membership number settled at 158 members on the books by year-end in 2023/24. Our pattern of 15% non-renewals was maintained, and the overall number of enquiries, members, and leavers suggests that the club may have reached a natural plateau as membership is no longer increasing on a 5% per year trajectory. Member reasons for non-renewal reflect previous years, such as moving house, job, and education commitments and competition with other sports being the most common reasons.

We concluded a member survey in early 2024, completed by a representative sample of 40% of club members. The survey concluded that members are pleased with the Club, finding it friendly, valuable for money, and well run, and they would strongly recommend it to others.

The organised paddle program generally meets the different groups' needs, focusing on junior talent development, marathon racing (including DW for some) and introductory courses. A number would like more recreational paddles, including paddles away from DCC, and an increase in our social activities.

We will use the survey results to inform our future strategy work and have published a summary for members.

Perhaps the most important conclusion was found in a standardised consumer satisfaction question called Net Promoter® Score. Our score was 78 NPS on a scale between -100 and +100. This score is in the 75th percentile of responses from 91,046 organisations, the average of which is 48 NPS. This is clear evidence of the success and commitment of paddlers, supporters and especially our hard-working volunteers.

Development

Introductory courses are a primary means of attracting new adult and junior members. Thirty-one people completed our introductory programmes in 2023, and 17 of those went on to join the club. This reflects the ongoing high demand for healthy outdoor recreation. We integrated other new members without them needing to complete introductory courses in cases where the new member had previous paddling experience.

In early 2024, we absorbed all senior and most junior adventure group membership enquiries and cleared the waiting list by creating a single 'adventure' paddling group with two dedicated coaches. We plan to build on this programme in the summer of 2024 by recruiting a new paddler cohort and expanding the racing group by adding a third group.

Support to external organisations

In 2023/24, our support to external organisations included:

- **Support to Dauntsey's School.** We support three key school programmes. Weekly school sessions ran throughout the summer and autumn terms for approximately six students who chose paddlesport at DCC as their games option. Once again we delivered the weekly Moonrakers programme for 13 middle school students between April and June and finally, we delivered the Dauntsey's lower school Challenge Week paddlesport activity with 20 students attending the club on each of the five days of the programme.
- **Support to Wiltshire College.** We formed a College/Club Partnership with two Wiltshire College Campuses, Salisbury and Trowbridge. This programme provides structured

development support to groups of young people on the Public Service course as an integral part of their curriculum. Due to weather disruption between January and March 2024 we moved the programme start to the Spring, outside the period covered by this report.

These external commitments are only possible with the enthusiastic support of our coaching team led by James Mahoney with the external programme delivery led by Juliet Fooks. In 23/24, they once again rose to the challenge and delivered high-quality experiences to external organisations.

Although supporting external programmes places considerable demand on our coaching team, they provide a vital income stream for the club. Our new charging structure has been in place for a year and was well-received by all educational establishments we partner with as a more straightforward basis for budgeting. We reviewed our payments to volunteers policy in 2023 and now have a predictable surplus from our external activities. Coaching capacity to deliver mid-week daytime sessions continues challenging and stretching the team. This remains the single most limiting factor for future support to external programmes.

All support to external organisations is charged unless approved explicitly as a 'charitable purpose' to ensure we meet our costs and make a reasonable surplus for the club. This helps to keep membership fee increases to a minimum. Our trustees are mindful that loss of income from these programmes will have budgetary consequences for other discretionary activities, including investment in coach development, equipment replacement, and support for participation in competitive events.

Financials

Our financial accounting period runs from 1st April to 31st March 2024, so the accounts presented at this AGM relate to a period ending eight months ago. This report will provide a narrative to support the club's financial statement and a forward-looking view of the club's financial health. An informal update covering the more recent period will be reported at the AGM. At the end of the last accounting period:

- The club held an operating surplus of £24,095, of which £14,211 are unrestricted reserves. This represents a decrease of £7,661 on 2022/23. The club has outstanding fees from courses delivered in the school programme which was received in 2024/25. Had it been received in 23/24 it would have resulted in a surplus for the year.
- The ongoing unresolved storage fee issue with the REME Kayak Club was resolved during the year. Their K2s stored at DCC were accepted as settlement for the outstanding fees (with a net write-off of £288 in FY 2023/24).
- Most income lines are in a healthy state despite some reductions which may reflect the cost-of-living increases:
 - Membership income and the related boat storage income were reduced slightly, reflecting the reduction in the overall number of club members.
 - As explained above, coached activities increased compared with 2022/23, all attributable to increased external courses.
- Expenditure has increased in several areas with significant increases above 2023/24 on:
 - Overall, total expenditure for the year was very similar to the previous year, with sharp increases in electricity, insurance and premises maintenance
 - Utilities costs show a significant increase over 2022/23, reflecting increased use and above-inflation increases in wholesale electricity prices.

The club maintains around one year's operating costs in general reserve. Our restricted reserves included, at the end of the 2023/24 year, a £884 junior fund for the exclusive use of junior projects and bursaries and a facilities (property) reserve of £9,000. In the coming year, in addition to the Junior fund, any monies raised for the specific purpose of purchasing competition boats will be held as a reserve, and any asset purchases will be deducted from that reserve when made. The club's trustees plan to review the club's reserve policies to assess if the current property reserve is adequate or if this needs to be further built up over time.

As last year, our expenses in 2023/24 include the payment of entry fees for all crew boat entries to incentivise crew boat entries in competitions. We also instituted a 'towing fee' to encourage larger teams to travel to events. Although this policy is expensive and accounts for some of our excess expenditure over income, it reduces the cost of competition and eases the burden on families of participation in regional and national events.

The club received no grant funding in 2023/24, although it made two unsuccessful applications. This illustrates the tough economic climate for grants, which increasingly set specific criteria for grant objectives such as economic deprivation, sustainability, or accessibility. With increased costs putting pressure on club funds, the club must emphasise securing grant income for all capital purchases. The Trustees have undertaken a thorough fleet and equipment review to identify and prioritise future needs as a basis for grant funding applications. As a result of this review, the trustees decided that future purchases of high-quality competition boats for the juniors must be funded through external grants and specific fundraising.

Club trustees approved several projects to improve club facilities, including security upgrades. All these projects were delivered on time and below the approved budget. We put on hold plans to re-render the building pending development decisions.

A summary of financial recommendations for AGM 2024

1. Trustees reviewed the affordability of the competition entry fee and towing policies and will make new recommendations at the AGM.
2. We will continue tightening control of event budgets to ensure they deliver an overall surplus so the overall programme is self-funding.
3. All purchases of competition equipment must be based on matched funding from grants or fundraising activities.
4. The club will continue to maximise income streams from external programmes.
5. Trustees will invite the AGM to approve proportionate increases in 2024/25 member fees and boat storage with appropriate adjustments to reflect the use of club boats.

We are pleased to report that, despite an operating deficit of £7,661, the club is in robust financial shape at the end of this year.

A summary of the accounts is sent with this report to the Members before the AGM, and full accounts are submitted to the Charity Commission and are available for public scrutiny.

Strategic Development

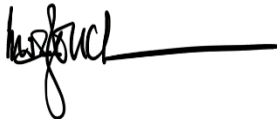
At our last AGM, we further informed members about plans, now in the public domain, to develop Wadworth & Co's brewery site adjacent to the Club.

In 2023/24, we engaged with the consultation process being undertaken by Wiltshire Council regarding the Local Plan, with local councillors and Wiltshire Council's planning department regarding the proposed adjacent development.

No tangible progress has been made to influence the proposed development, which remains undetermined, and a planning committee meeting has yet to occur.

Our engagement strategy is to have conversations with critical stakeholders who are directly involved and privy to confidential information. These include Wiltshire Council, Devizes Town Council, the planning department, Wadworth & Co and the Devizes Assize Court Trust (DACT). It remains vital to build the club's public profile over the next few years to give key stakeholders a much better understanding of our priorities and development needs.

The Club Trustees' position remains that we have no concerns about the club's long-term viability or the site we occupy. We have a 125-year lease and 25-year leases on the section of Lower Wharf roadway within club boundaries and the launch area. With a legally sound right of access over the Lower Wharf roadway, this gives us a strong hand in any negotiations and unfettered ability to ensure that development, whilst inconvenient, does not restrict club activity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Bouch', followed by a long horizontal line.

Mark Bouch
Chair, on behalf of the Trustees



Charity Name Devizes Canoe Club	No (if any) 1156402
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Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date 01/04/2023	To	Period end date 31/03/2024
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants and donations	468	-	-	468	122
Members subscriptions	8,508	-	-	8,508	10,639
Fundraising events	2,760	-	-	2,760	9,921
Boat storage and fobs	3,412	-	-	3,412	3,071
Memberships in advance	-	-	-	-	720
Camp income	3,848	-	-	3,848	-
Equipment sale	865	-	-	865	350
Merchandise	485	-	-	485	485
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	20,346	-	-	20,346	23,868
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	20,346	-	-	20,346	23,868
A3 Payments					
Cost of Fundraising events	9,608	-	-	9,608	11,517
Lighting and Heating	3,473	-	-	3,473	2,864
Insurance and subscriptions	2,046	-	-	2,046	2,208
Grant related expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Camp expenses	-	-	-	-	-
Premises expenditure	5,027	-	-	5,027	3,903
Welfare and training	691	-	-	691	-
Sundry	1,999	-	-	1,999	1,390
Website	-	-	-	-	101
Sub total	22,844	-	-	22,844	21,983
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Equipment	5,163	-	-	5,163	6,391
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	5,163	-	-	5,163	6,391
Total payments	28,007	-	-	28,007	28,374
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 7,661	-	-	- 7,661	- 4,506
A5 Transfers between funds	85 #	- 85	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	21,787	9,969	-	31,756	36,747
Cash funds this year end	14,211	9,884	-	24,095	32,241

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank	13,705	9,884	-
	Cash	506	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	14,211	9,884	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Equipment	Unrestricted	-	0
	Stock	Unrestricted	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		<i>P A Papworth-Smith</i>	P A Papworth-Smith	17/01/2025



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Devizes Canoe Club

On accounts for the year
ended

31/03/2024

Charity no
(if any)

1156402

Set out on pages

1

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

**Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

- In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention
1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

S Holland

Date: 17/01/2025

Name:

S Holland

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body**

F.C.A.

Address:

29 Devizes Road

Swindon

SN1 4BG

