



CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
Registered Charity 1162659

**Trustees' Annual Report and
Financial Statements
for the year ending**

31st December 2023



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 2023

2023 has been a year of positive growth and continuing strengthening of our operational infrastructure.

Our number of users has grown through both returning, and engagement with new schools and groups.

We have grown our coaching contingent, making us future ready, and put in place a structured ongoing maintenance programme to care for our 5 skerries.

Richmond

Richmond has grown in strength both in terms of school users and operational capability.

We have successfully provided over 163 children an introduction to rowing and the river across nearly 50 hours of water time. This has been driven by our operations Manager Chris Leeson and her team of skilled and dedicated volunteers.

Recently recruited coaches have now qualified and put us in a strong position for future growth and relieved pressure on a few willing individuals who have taken the lion's share of volunteering up to now.

Our relationships with other nearby groups and organisations remain strong, including Richmond Bridge Boat Club, 14th Richmond Scout Boating Centre, St Philips School, and Master Boat Builder Mark Edwards & and his team.

Reading

In Reading, our skerry, Floreat, has had good use by the Sea Cadets. There has been a change in leadership from within the Sea Cadets at Reading, with Peter Young R.V.M taking over the unit. Peter is a qualified Fixed Seat instructor and will bring great experience and structure to developing fixed seat rowing through our partnership with the Sea Cadets.

Recruiting an operations manager to drive the schools model for the site has continued to prove challenging.

Boats

Chris Leeson (Ops Manager) has put in place an ongoing maintenance schedule for our fleet of 5 skerries, ensuring a more proactive approach to managing our primary assets.

People

We have successfully recruited a Social Media Officer (Ed Robertson) with the intent of developing our approach to publicity and marketing.

There remain a number of positions that we are looking for volunteer support with.

Trustees

Following the step down due to ill health of our Chair Robin Corti, Chris Shaw has taken the role of interim Chair whilst the right, long term, successor is found.

Funding

Our approach to boat maintenance has meant that the long term health of our assets is secured in a more cost efficient way, but in the short term means we need to change to a more proactive approach to fundraising over the next year to ensure a number of smaller donations allow the charity to function successfully.

2024

Our plans for 2024 are focussed on user engagement and fundraising.

This is across both S4S and Thames Community Rowing categories



Operations report:

The Team: At the start of the year, we ran and took part in various courses with the aim of increasing the volunteering team at S4S so our offer to schools can be enlarged and properly supported; a First Aid course geared to outdoor sports, a coxing course run by Richmond Bridge Boat club and a L2 Coaching course, the latter delivered by British Rowing. In the Spring, trainee coaches Marlene Lawrence and Alice Eastaugh, participants in last year's BR L2 Coaching course, completed their final assessment and joined the coaching team as fully fledged coaches. A further four volunteers (Joy Skipper, Keith Carr, Tony Bethell and Owen Hughes) were put through the BR coaching course during the year.

A new 'position' of S4S coaching assistant has been created with rower and cox, Marianne Geary becoming the first to join the team; the assistants are a welcome addition to the team, responsible for helping the smooth running of the schools' sessions, dealing with everything from boat preparation to setting up the clubhouse and working the pontoon.



This year we have come to an arrangement with the Richmond Bridge Boat Club to make use of their clubhouse during the day for our school sessions.



This an essential facility, particularly for our work with Junior Schools, providing a safe space for the start and end of each session and we are most grateful to them for this facility.





The school sessions: Two schools booked at Richmond for the season; returning Lowther Primary who booked their entire year group (year six) for four linked sessions, and Sheen Primary, a school new to us, who also booked the whole of their year six group, each doing two linked sessions. In all, a total 100 pupils were on the river at Richmond with 30 hours of coaching delivered by our volunteers. At the end of the Lowther sessions, the children were presented with Learn to Row certificates by master boat builder Mark Edwards at a small ceremony at the end of the final session.



This year, for the first time since pre-Covid, we have a new home for the summer term above Kingston at Barge Wharf Boatyard, Long Ditton, brokered by Neil Meers from St Phillips School. It's early days with this new relationship and we are very grateful to owner Geoff Cook for his willingness to host one of our skerries. The moorings are within the marina so safe from public access, but also with a public pontoon and close-by parking, making it ideal. This arrangement was successfully piloted for two months this year with agreement to extend to three months for the 2024 school Summer term. St Phillips school had 16 pupils on the water for four sessions as a pilot for the new arrangements and we look forward to developing this further next year.



The season ended with a hugely enjoyable visit from the International School of Verona, Italy. This was a major undertaking with all five of our S4S skerries on the water, accommodating 47, 13-year-olds (29 girls and 18 boys). A 10-strong team of coaches, trainee coaches and assistants made the event a great success with the school looking forward to repeating it in 2024.

Overall, this season we saw 163 children on the water aged between 10 and 16 (74 boys and 89 girls) and the team of 8 coaches and trainee coaches delivered over 41 hours of coaching with the help of three assistants.



Fundraising for S4S: As with last year, we make use of our skerries, hiring them to other organisations as a way to raise funds for S4S. We worked with London Youth Rowing (LYR) again this year, providing four skerries plus cox-coaches for their annual 'Oarsome Challenge' – a two-day fundraising event for LYR involving scratch teams rowing from Greenwich to Chiswick. As well as raising funds for S4S through the hire of our skerries it also increases our cox-coaches skills base by giving them valuable experience of coxing the more challenging part of the Thames on the Tideway.



At the end of August, our skerry 'Floreat' that has been based up-river at Blakes Lock with the Reading Sea Cadets since May 2021, was brought back to Richmond to be used in the annual Thames Great River Race (GRR). Rather than road-tow her back, Floreat was rowed back down to Richmond over two days. It was a great opportunity to introduce more potential rowing volunteers to the work S4S does over the two-day row. 17 volunteer rowers took part, rowing the 55 miles and passing through 18 locks on the way from Blakes lock back to Richmond.

This year, three of our boats were hired out to teams for the GRR – one to a private individual, one to a local school - Deer Park School - and the third to a charity, Kids Matter, all of whom successfully completed the GRR challenge. It's a great opportunity to raise funds for S4S and the early announcement of the date for the 2024 GRR made it easier to start the process even earlier and already, before year end, three boats were requested and holding deposits received.



Boats and other equipment: In line with increasing our insurance, this Autumn for the first time, we embarked upon what will become an annual schedule of maintenance for all our wholly-owned boats; taking them out of the water and checking them over for any issues and undertaking remedial repairs and each year, allocating one of our boats for deeper maintenance work.



This year, it was the skerry Jim

The weather in October was remarkably helpful to us, with the best part of three weeks with not only stable, but warm, dry conditions that were perfect for completing the work on all four boats at the same time which undoubtedly kept the costs down. All the boat hulls were given a new lick of paint. This regular approach to maintenance will ensure our boats are kept in good condition and any problems identified early and dealt with swiftly.

Clark receiving additional tlc.

In



for

the year, as part of a plan to keep the more friable cleaver oars for use only with junior schools, two new sets of Macon oars were purchased during the year. Over the next two years, subject to finance being available, a further two sets will be purchased so all our wholly-owned boats have complete sets of the more robust macon oars that can be used both schools and also corporate events. Other purchases made in the year included four double-sided flags were made up with the S4S logo and six aluminium telescopic boathooks, leaving the original heavier-weight, 2m-length wooden boathooks, for pontoon work.

The increase in our volunteer team and all the purchases and the maintenance work on the boats mean that we will start the next season in 2024 in a very good position.



Annual Report and Financial Statements

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Governing Document

Constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, whose only voting members are its charity trustees, adopted 13th July 2015

Objectives

- To provide opportunities for school children and other community groups such as the disabled to discover the pleasure, team spirit, discipline and vigorous exercise of rowing.
- To make these groups aware of the safety issues connected with water.
- To make these groups aware of the environment and their interconnection with it.

Patrons

Peter Dolan

Patron

Trustees

All served from 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 unless indicated.

Details regarding recruitment/appointment and training of Trustees are shown under Governance & Management

Robin Corti

to 28th September 2023

Chairman

Chris Shaw

from 28th September 2023

Chairman

Peter Dolan

Patrick Ducker

Secretary

David Golton

Treasurer

Victor Griffiths

Justin Barratt

Advisers

Mark Edwards

Master Boat Builder

Chris Leeson

Administration (and Operations)

Charity Registration Number:

1162659

Bankers:

CAF Bank Ltd., West Malling, Kent

Custodian Trustee

None

Principal Address:

c/o 14th Richmond Scout Boating Centre,
The Hut, Retreat Road, Richmond, TW9 1NN

Website:

www.skerries4schools.org

Structure, Governance and Management

Skerries For Schools is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose only voting members are its charity trustees. Trustees are appointed by existing members. No specific training is required or given.

Day-to-day operations are in the hands of the Operations Manager for Richmond or Reading, the latter is currently vacant.

Thames Community Rowing (TCR) - During this year, the charity has been engaged in discussing and developing a longer-term strategy and to build on the ground work that was done establishing the Values and Vision & Mission for Thames Community Rowing. The first major change during the year has been to rationalise and develop the charities IT and to move to a single domain that would encompass all the charities activities; using 'Thamescommunityrowing.org' as the 'umbrella' for all the charities activities, would include the work with schools, currently under 'Skerries for Schools' and also for developing our future TCR work with adults.

Background

Skerries for School started as an unregistered charity (referred to as the “Legacy Charity”) with the same objectives seeking funding from loans, supporters and grant awarding bodies to build the skerries it needed. The CIO was registered on 14th July 2015 and the Legacy Charity transferred its assets and liabilities to the CIO on 1st January 2016 by means of a General Vesting Document dated 22nd December 2015. The transfer was accepted by the Trustees on 31st January 2016.

Statement of Trustees’ Responsibilities

Complying with the Charity’s Governing Document, the Trustees have a duty to act in the Charity’s best interest, to act with reasonable care and skill, and to ensure all regulatory requirements are met.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the CIO. They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the CIO and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are also responsible for the preparation of the Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission.

Reserves and Investment Policy

The Trustees adopted a Reserves and Investment Policy in 2022

The Trustees agreed that a reserve of £3,000 should be established to cover the risk of an unexpected fall in bookings due to major events beyond the control of the Trustees.

Financial Review

The CIO does not raise funds from the general public, either directly or through other people or organisations. It does seek grants from those organisations which award them and welcomes donations from organisations, and individuals, with similar aims and objectives.

The charity's trustees have elected to prepare accounts on a Receipts and Payments basis under section 133 of the Charities Act 2011. Under Guidance Note CC 16b, depreciation is precluded. While the value of the skerries have not been subjected to depreciation, the Trustees estimate that they have a ten-year useful life.

During 2023 several generous donations were received, both unrestricted and subject to restriction as to the use made.

Operations

In order to fulfil its objectives the Charity arranges the training of coaches to British Rowing Standards. All volunteers, Trustees and coaches are subject to Enhanced DBS clearance and coaches & volunteers working with children are given First Aid Training.

New Coaches are always being sought, and suitable training arranged subject to a commitment from the persons concerned. In the year in question, four further rowing coxes were put through the British Rowing L2 Coaching Course to increase both the number of coaches overall and to provide a coach specifically for the Reading operation.

Skerries are fixed seated rowboats designed for less experienced crews, with greater stability than a skiff or wherry. They carry a team of eight rowers, a coach and up to two extra passengers (e.g. teaching staff).

Participating schools are able to book coached sessions in skerries, for which they pay an hourly rate. The rate has been set to recover the Charity's marginal costs. Local Boroughs have been approached to help fund schools who might have had difficulties in meeting costs.

To enable the Charity to cover its operational costs, skerries are made available to other organisations and groups at times when schools are not using them, at more commercial rates.

The main base of Skerries For Schools is the pontoon near Richmond Bridge and as part of the post-covid re-build, the charity has consolidated relationships with other organisations to help deliver to schools. During the year, the aim to re-establish a base on the non-tidal Thames up at Kingston saw the development of a pilot with a local boatyard at Long Ditton which it is hoped will develop into a permanent arrangement.

The charity's Reading base has taken time to establish. Currently, Floreat, our boat based at Blakes Lock on the Kennet at the home of the Sea Cadets, has been used as part of coaching young cadets to row. A first step in developing a wider community-based offer has been the addition of a Reading-based coach (one of the new coaches for 2023) and the charity is still aiming to appoint an operations manager specifically for the base to develop that offer.

Public Benefit Guidance

The Trustees are confident that Skerries For Schools has been run for public benefit as evidenced by efforts to keep costs to schools as low as possible, by the provision of suitably trained and qualified coaches who give their time unpaid, and by direct contact with schools to encourage participation. Since their discussions leading to the registration of Skerries For Schools with the Charity Commission, the trustees have had due regard to the Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

Policies

Trustees have adopted policies as follows:

- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Expenses Policy
- Financial Controls Policy and Procedures
- Grievance Procedure
- Reserves and Investment Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Safety Policy
- Volunteer Policy

Objectives, Activities, Achievements and Performance

No sessions were possible in 2020 due to Covid-19 Restrictions. The number of individual skerries booked, and paid for, excluding the "taster" and other promotional sessions were

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
32	35	48	60	48	None	7	10	37

Sessions with schools have been growing steadily in the two years since we were forced to stop operations in 2020 due to Covid.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit

- The acquisition of suitable skerries through donations and grants.
- The training and vetting through DBS of volunteer coaches.
- Encouraging the participation of Schools and pupils in safe sporting activities on the river.
- Arranging the coached rowing sessions for Schools.

Independent Examiner's Report
to the Trustees of Skerries For Schools
A Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registered Charity 1162659

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2023 which are set out on page 15.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Paul Alexander FCA

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Accountancy Management Services Limited, 51 South Street, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 7AA

SKERRIES FOR SCHOOLS
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	Total 2022 £
Incoming Resources				
Donations & Gift Aid Repaid	12,390	1,500	13,890	3,493
Write back of debt	-	-	-	60
Bank interest received	83	-	83	33
Use of Skerries	7,815	-	7,815	4,966
Total Incoming Resources	20,288	1,500	21,788	8,552
Outgoing Resources				
Direct Activities				
Operational Costs	19,025	-	19,025	3,950
Promotional Fees & Costs	-	-	-	-
Total for Direct Activities	19,025	-	19,025	3,950
Overheads & Administration	-	4,197	4,197	727
Total Outgoing Resources	19,025	4,197	23,222	4,677
Net Incoming (Outgoing) Resources	1,263	(2,697)	(1,434)	3,875
Change in Fixed Assets	-	-	-	-
Net Movement in Funds	1,263	(2,697)	(1,434)	3,875
Funds Brought Forward	78,300	27,555	105,855	101,980
Funds Carried Forward	79,563	24,858	104,410	105,855
of which				
Tanagible Assets	75,923	-	75,923	75,923
Current Assets	1,626	24,858	26,484	29,932
	77,549	24,858	102,407	105,855

SKERRIES FOR SCHOOLS
BALANCE SHEET

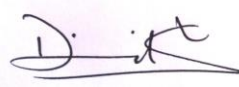
	as at 31-Dec-23 £	as at 1-Jan-23 £
Fixed Assets		
Tanagible Assets	75,923	75,923
Total Fixed Assets	75,923	75,923
Current Assets		
Debtors	-	180
Cash in Hand and at Bank	34,484	37,872
Total Current Assets	34,484	38,052
Current Liabilities (due with one year)	-	(120)
Current Assets	34,484	37,932
Long Term Liabilities	(8,000)	(8,000)
NET ASSETS	102,407	105,855
represented by		
Unrestricted Funds	77,549	78,300
Restricted Funds	24,858	27,555
TOTAL FUNDS	102,407	105,855

Notes

Signed



Chris Shaw
Chairman



David Golton
Treasurer