



CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
Registered Charity 1162659

**Trustees' Annual Report and
Financial Statements
for the year ending
31st December 2024**



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 2024

Whilst 2024 has been a positive in terms of ongoing development of infrastructure and community involvement, it has been a challenging year with regard to schools engagement and number of young people on the river.

- We have increased our volunteer coaching contingent as three more became fully fledged coaches this year
- Our fleet of skerries are in good shape for the future
- We have made several capital purchases including another set of new lightweight oars that will allow younger participants to use all our boats comfortably
- We have also raised funds for training future coaches and boat maintenance

Richmond

Whilst we have engaged and delivered 48 participant-sessions to a new school to the river (Greycourt Secondary), we have lost a number of sessions in our traditional client schools as they had staffing issues and couldn't facilitate them. However they still remain "on-board", for future seasons.

This has resulted in a downturn in bookings, but given us time to engage with more schools in the area with an eye to 2025.

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 & his team.

Reading

Due to a change in leadership at Reading Sea Cadets, our skerry Floreat, has had limited use whilst the troop restructures itself.

Again, whilst this has meant a downturn in usage figures for the 2024 season, the Sea Cadets, with Peter Young R.V.M should be in a position to maximise usage going into 2025. 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, so we are looking at potential partnership models to make the facility more accessible to the community.

Boats

Our proactive approach to boat maintenance has allowed us to identify issues at the point of 'minor repair rather than allowing issues develop to 'major problem'.

Trustees

We have welcomed Steve Rac to the Board of Trustees with responsibility for fund raising and Vice Chair.

Funding

We have successfully raised over £10,000 for specific projects and the ongoing running of the charity.

2025

Whilst the numbers for 2024 have taken a step backwards, it has allowed our team of Trustees, Ops Manager and volunteers to engage with a number of new local schools and bookings are looking towards being our best year ever in Richmond. We are also confident in our new approach to Reading yielding positive steps forward.

It has been a testing year, but each year we move forwards.



Robin Corti, 1942 - 2024

Operations Report:

2024 was a year that started like no other...

We sadly lost one of our founding members of Skerries for Schools, Robin Corti, who died from cancer in March. Robin was a huge advocate for youth rowing and as well as being Chair of S4S for many years, he was an enthusiastic and supportive coach and clearly loved providing opportunities for getting young children out on the water rowing. He will be much missed.



The Team: In 2023 we had set about expanding the coaching team in order to meet increasing demand from the schools and at the start of this year, Keith Carr, Tony Bethell and Owen Hughes completed their final assessments and became fully fledged British Rowing Level 2 coaches. Also, at the start of the year, rower Jonathan Howard joined Marianne Geary and the team as a coaching assistant.

Coaching assistants are increasingly important as we expand our work, particularly with junior schools, helping the coaching team successfully deliver the schools sessions. They are also invaluable, helping the operations manager with boat preparation for the various events our boats are involved in during the year.



Richmond Bridge Boat Club continues to be hugely supportive of Skerries for Schools and has once again provided access to and use of their clubhouse – a vitally important part of the junior schools' sessions. We begin and end each session in the clubhouse ensuring all the children are well briefed before we head out onto the water and to provide the obvious comfort facilities for both the school staff and children.



The schools: It proved to be a challenging year for our schools this year with several schools having to withdraw because of staffing difficulties. The river itself added to the difficulties with phenomenally high flow rates until well into May, resulting in several sessions having to be rescheduled. Twenty-one year-7 children from **Greycourt School** undertook six 'Learn to Row' sessions with us – twelve girls and 9 boys took to the water and in a very short space of time were showing off their newly learnt skills.



As ever, rescuing, 'Dead Fred' provided a popular and exiting end to the sessions!

Evaluation: In addition to asking teachers to evaluate their sessions with us, this year for the first time we introduced a short feedback form for children to complete - where teachers feel it's appropriate and can manage the additional administration in doing so. Grey Court School was the first to use them.

How did the sessions make you feel?



'They made me feel exhausted, but calm at the same time',

'Exited for the next one',

'It's made me feel happy because I'm learning a new skill',

'It was fun and really enjoyable'.

(Greycourt School, 2024)

Greycourt's lead teacher, Mateus, wrote that, *'In an era where physical inactivity among children ...is a growing concern, S4S recognizes the importance of providing alternative avenues for sports participation. With over 50% of children and young people failing to do an average of 60 minutes of physical activity a day (GOV, 2023), there exists an urgent need to create positive participation experiences that promote lifelong physical activity habits.'*



Head teachers conference: In July we were invited to give a talk to a conference of primary school head teachers through the organization, 'Achieving for Children'. It was a fantastic chance to talk directly to schools and our slot was followed by a heart-felt appreciation given by the Head of Lowther Primary School - he saw S4S as an excellent opportunity for schools, particularly emphasising the beneficial soft skills of team work and confidence-building that developed over a number of sessions. Following our appearance at the conference there was a flurry of contacts from schools who'd attended, with five schools new to us enquiring about sessions which bodes well for next year. Lowther too were looking to join us again for the 2025 season.

Fundraising for S4S: As always with our schools' work, the aim is not to make money, but to ensure the opportunity of working with us is as financially reasonable as possible, so the schools can afford to do it. Instead, we focus on using our skerries to raise funds through other means so we can keep the costs to schools as low as possible. The annual London Youth Rowing charity event, 'The Oarsome Challenge', again took place in July, this year expanded to a three-day event. Always an interesting experience with scratch crews who are often undertaking the gruelling row from Greenwich to Chiswick as first-time rowers.



Our boats also took part in the Great River Race (GRR) in September, the annual rowing marathon on the Thames. All five boats were hired out - two to local school, Deer Park Primary parent-teacher crews, two to an American team and one to an individual for a 50th birthday celebration. The 50th birthday crew did particularly well, winning the skerry class with a scorching time of 2 hours 25 minutes.

The Americans enjoyed their time so much they made a wonderful and unexpected donation to the charity of £600, and signed up to come again next year! All of our boats were spoken for, for the 2025 GRR before the end of the year.

The now annual row-back event of our skerry, Floreat, took place at the start of September. We bring her back from her season stay with the Sea Cadets at Blakes lock in order for her to be used in the Great River Race. As in previous years, it is a great opportunity for our coaches and assistants and for those new to us who might be encouraged to volunteer with us, to bond together over the two-day row to Richmond. Not even a downpour of biblical proportions on the first day could dampen the enthusiasm of the team!



Boats and other equipment: This year, in keeping with our now annual Autumn round of boat maintenance, as well as general upkeep on all our boats, we selected one boat for more in-depth work. John Bryant was singled out because of damage to her during an event tow.





All the boats are carefully checked over and repairs carried out to keep them in good order.

Once the repairs to two of our skerries had been completed, they were taken off to winter storage. They'll be brought back to Richmond again in the Spring.



In 2023 a plan of gradual oar replacement was agreed which would mean ultimately all four of our boats would have medium-weight macon oars, keeping our more friable, light-weight cleaver oars for use with our youngest school children (10-year-olds), and protecting them from potential damage during events.



In 2023, we were able to purchase two sets of macons and this year, through the help of one of our partner schools, we were able to purchase a third set of macons, ahead of schedule. These oars were brought into service in July, just in time for the Great River Race.



At the end of the year, a successful bid to the Tallow Chandlers meant that we were able to order the final set of new macons and we expect to take delivery of them in the new year – this will mean all our wholly-owned boats will benefit from having the more robust macon oars for use with older children and for events.

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
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Trustees

All served from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024 unless indicated.

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

Chris Shaw	Chairman
Peter Dolan	<i>To 18th March 2024</i>
Stephen Rac	Vice Chairman
Patrick Ducker	Secretary
David Golton	Treasurer
Victor Griffiths	
Justin Barratt	

Advisers

Mark Edwards	Master Boat Builder
Chris Leeson	Operations and Administration

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

Skerries for School 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 2024 several donations were received, both unrestricted and restricted. We were doubly pleased when Mrs Christina Gascoigne, widow of our founder Bamber, generously allowed the loan made by her husband some years ago to be released into general funds. Mrs Gascoigne also confirmed that she would be continuing the annual donation of £2,000, established by Bamber for general use. We also received a donation of £2,000 from the Dolan Family trust to cover our administration costs. Finally, we received a donation of £10,500 from the Tallow Chandlers for coach training, equipment and repairs.

As stated elsewhere in this report, due to the knock-on effects of the Covid pandemic and staffing issues at local schools, we have not been able to provide our core aims of delivering rowing sessions as we would like. As a result, our income from this source has been severely limited. We have relied on the hiring out of our boats for London Youth Rowing and The Great River Race to fund our core boating costs. The outlook for 2025 is positive with more schools coming on board.

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 School children rowing sessions booked, and paid for, excluding the "taster" and other promotional sessions were

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
School children rowing sessions	33	48	335	135

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 2024 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.

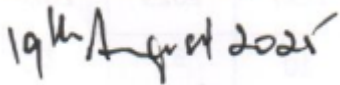
I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



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 2024 to 31st December 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	Total 2023 £
Incoming Resources				
Donations & Gift Aid Repaid	5,080	12,500	17,580	13,890
Write back of debt	8,000	-	8,000	-
Bank interest received	81	-	81	83
Use of Skerries	11,016	-	11,016	9,829
Total Incoming Resources	24,177	12,500	36,677	23,802
Outgoing Resources				
Direct Activities				
Operational Costs	9,985	300	10,285	21,039
Promotional Fees & Costs	-	-	-	-
Total for Direct Activities	9,985	300	10,285	21,039
Overheads & Administration	-	643	643	6,211
Total Outgoing Resources	9,985	943	10,928	27,250
Net Incoming (Outgoing) Resources	14,192	11,557	25,749	(3,448)
	-	-	-	-
Net Movement in Funds	14,192	11,557	25,749	(3,448)
Funds Brought Forward	77,549	24,858	102,407	105,855
Funds Carried Forward	91,741	36,415	128,156	102,407
of which				
Tanagible Assets	75,923	-	75,923	75,923
Current Assets	15,818	36,415	52,233	26,484
	91,741	36,415	128,156	102,407

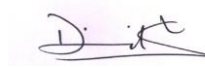
SKERRIES FOR SCHOOLS
BALANCE SHEET

	as at 31-Dec-24 £	as at 31-Dec-23 £
Fixed Assets		
Tanagible Assets	75,923	75,923
Total Fixed Assets	75,923	75,923
Current Assets		
Debtors	-	-
Cash in Hand and at Bank	52,433	34,474
Total Current Assets	52,433	34,474
Current Liabilities (due with one year)	200	-
Current Assets	52,233	34,474
Long Term Liabilities	-	(8,000)
NET ASSETS	128,156	102,407
represented by		
Unrestricted Funds	91,741	77,549
Restricted Funds	36,415	24,858
TOTAL FUNDS	128,156	102,407

Signed



Chris Shaw
Chairman
20 August 2025



David Golton
Treasurer
20 August 2025