

Oxford Paddlers For Life
Annual report and financial statements for the year
ending 31st March 2024
Registered Charity no 1178628

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Charity Details

Charity Name: Oxford Paddlers For Life

Charity registration number: 1178628

Company registration number: 1032145

Website: www.oxfordpfl.org

Registered Office: 56 Coniston Avenue, Headington, Oxford, OX3 0AW

1. Structure, governance and management

Trustees:

Susan Renn - Treasurer (Retiring)

Alison Muldal - Trustee

Peter Panagi - Trustee

Trustees are voted from within the club. The management structure comprises 3 trustees, with preferably at least 2 of whom should have had cancer. This is to perpetuate the ethos of meeting the needs of a club for those with a lived experience of cancer. As per the constitution and as recommended by the Charity Commission, at every AGM one trustee is elected or re-elected.

As a club we need to have a recognised structure to enable us to apply for grants and for safeguarding reasons. We have formal roles for:

- Chair – **Vacant**
- Treasurer - Susan Renn (**retiring**)
- Trustees - Alison Muldal, Peter Panagi x 1 - Vacant
- Head coach - Esmee Haigh
- Secretary (including membership) – Sally Crowe (**Standing down September 2024**)
- Safeguarding officer – Sarah Croft and Esmee Haigh
- Quartermaster - Simon Haigh
- Welfare officer – **Vacant**
- Social secretary - **Vacant**
- Social media - Sam Evans and Anne Marie Haigh - we'd like more help with Facebook and Instagram
- IT/Web and general technology - Toby Shephard with support from Michelle Nunn on the website

To share the workload within the club and enable the development of our skills personally and as a group we have separate informal committees/ groups which look at fundraising and other topics/issues depending on current needs.

We hold committee meetings, in a combination of zoom and in person to enable inclusion, every few months which are minuted. Some of these meetings are open to everyone within the club to create an environment where individuals feel they can contribute. The club benefits from everyone's skills and experience, however, if needed, the ultimate decisions are made by the trustees.

A charity requires an absolute minimum of 3 trustees and is recommended to have 5. A charity does not absolutely require a Chair, although it is highly recommended.

We ideally would like to have a total of 4 Trustees and one Chair. If you think you would like to understand any of the roles in more detail, please do look at the role descriptions in the Appendix section of this report and do not hesitate to contact Alison or Peter.

2. Charity Overview

Our aims and objectives have remained the same as last year;

'We are a dragon boat paddling team, set up to promote and support the good physical and mental health of people who have been affected by cancer, in particular but not exclusively breast cancer, and their friends and family by providing facilities and training in dragon boating in Oxfordshire. The aim is to keep things fun, full of camaraderie and mutual support.'

3. Achievements and Celebrations

We have had approximately 14 paddling sessions during the year, most of these have been on Saturday mornings, with a few on Thursday evenings (Spring and Summer). The number of paddlers per session has ranged from 8 up to a maximum of 15 paddlers during the year. New paddlers have joined us, some with relevant experience and some trying out paddling for the first time, all are welcome!

April 2023: Spring cleaning started e.g., cleaning the boats, bailing out and maintenance as needed, thanks to those that regularly do this less glamorous aspect of Dragon Boating. Sashiko (our smaller boat) was given a new lease of life over the Spring and Summer by DSC member Mark Colebourne, getting her 'seaworthy' for us at no charge, for which we are extremely grateful. It's been very helpful for us to be able to paddle in Sashiko when we haven't had enough paddlers to take out Kintsugi. Alison took Mark a gift and a card from all of us as a thank you.

June 2023: Robin from Dorchester Sailing Club upgraded our storage area, it now has adequate light and space for everything we need and use. We returned the gesture by supplying help for the working party to make the Sailing Club tidier.

Some members took part in the GB Outrigger National Sprints Event.

July 2023: Jennie Taylor organised a lovely summer social event for us - a delicious lunch at the Red Lion in central Oxford.

August 2023: We welcomed guest helms Wendy Grose (Pink Champagne Club) and David Coldwell (Kingfishers Club) to keep us on the water, whilst new helms are being trained. They brought a wealth of experience and a different feel to our paddles.

September 2023: Esmee (helming) and Karen took a small group from a company based in Abingdon, out for an evening of paddling in Kintsugi. Most of them hadn't ever paddled a dragon boat before, and loved it!

October 2023: Anne-Marie joined a 'Go Europe' Dragon Boat team (one of twenty competing) taking part in the Pink Butterfly Festival at Lake Albany, near Rome. Beautiful weather and a calm lake prevailed.

November 2023: Some members attended a rendition of Handel's Messiah at Queens College Oxford, thanks to Sonia for organising.

January 2024: A new years lunch was organised by Jennie and held at the Red Lion in Oxford, with a record turn-out of members!

February 2024: Our head coach got married! Congratulations to Esmee and Lewis.

March 2024: New helm training commenced - with Nicky, John, Jenny, Alison and Andrew, they will work with Esmee over the summer of 2024 to gain skills and experience, opening up more paddling opportunities for 2024/25. Thanks all.

4. Social Media

We continue to grow our following through the use of Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. We have posted on various topics including Breast Cancer month, World Mental Health Day and Mental Health Awareness week, International Women's Day and International Men's Day. We will continue to do so and encourage all members to comment on, like and share postings when they can.

Through the WhatsApp group, we communicated occasional opportunities to participate at events with other clubs here and abroad e.g. Barcelona, Vogalonga, and Donegal. More locally we keep the club up to date with events e.g., Oxford Breast Buddy Group. Members also share Dragon Boat related trivia and photos - which always go down well.

5. Membership

Membership on our BREVO database (this is where we send emails from and is linked to our website) currently stands at 152 contacts;

- 46 people directly affected by Breast Cancer

- 38 people who are 'Friends and Family' of above or affected by another type of Cancer
- 61 people from other paddling clubs
- 5 people who signed up for the newsletter (which Sally then follows up, some are bots), that have yet to be attributed to a category
- The official OxPFL email addresses (there are several)

WhatsApp Groups (membership will overlap between groups, depending on roles)

1. **'Dates' group who are active paddlers or paddle regularly = 34 (29 last year)**
2. General OxPFL group = 50 (49 last year)
3. Coaches and Helms group = 18
4. Committee = 12

The 'Dates' WhatsApp group (highlighted) run by Jennie and Leslie *probably reflects our active membership over the last year.*

Several people have joined, but are unable to paddle yet due to treatments, surgery or ill health, or have paddled in the past but are taking a break for similar reasons.

Personal recommendation still seems to be the most effective route for new members, with fewer finding us via posters (Maggie's Centre), and our book-marks.

6. Financial review

Income

During 2023-24 OxPFL **received £1,012.59** income mainly via membership (£340), paddling fees/donations (£541.19), donations (£131.40).

Expenses

Our total outgoing costs during the year totalled **£1,906.53**. Principal items were insurance (£598.03) and berth fees to Dorchester Sailing Club (£120) and lake use fees (£785.00).

In addition we have paid mileage reimbursements (£165.47) and guest helm payments (£178) with £60.03 on miscellaneous purchases,(e.g. bookmarks to promote OPfL).

There is a shortfall of £893.94 during the year 1st April 23 - 31st March 24.

Membership donations

Approximately 12 members have paid either a full or partial membership donation directly into our account. Whilst this is an optional donation at £20 per year, it is very good value for money. Given our membership figures, i.e., 34 people that currently paddle, some more regularly than others, this is not reflected in the number making membership donations.

Paddling session donations

These are to cover the cost of us using the lake. The SumUp card-reader process is running more smoothly than last year, and we agreed not to ask for donations from helms or those trying out OxPFL for the first time. Keeping a record of who paddles and when, and reconciling this with payments is an important function.

Looking ahead

In previous years grants have helped to keep us in credit. Assuming OxPFL wants to be self-sustaining in future years we need to take action. Options may include:

- A detailed reconciliation of membership, and make a better 'case' for donations.
- Being more proactive about regular paddlers setting up standing orders for membership donations, currently at £20.00 per year.
- Ensuring that we maximize our ability to claim Gift Aid by recording paddlers' names against paddling donations.
- Paddle more often - thus generating more session donations
- Increase Paddling Session payments - currently at £3.00 per session
- Have an incentive system whereby people that make membership donations have a reduced paddling session payment.
- Apply for grant funding

7. Recognition and thanks

- Thanks to Jennie and Lesley for arranging paddling sessions - please watch out for their messages on the WhatsApp 'dates' thread (not the general info thread).
- Gratitude to our old and new helms and regular paddlers that keep our sessions running, when the weather does not prevent us.
- Huge thanks to Esmee for running helming training for existing, and new helms.
- Thanks to Nikki, Rob and the DSC committee who continue to support our activities and requests when possible. We appreciate our current home at your location.

- Thank you to Sam and Anne-Marie who continue to keep up our social media presence, and to Michelle for working on our website and Toby for troubleshooting this year.
- Thank you to Susan for her financial acumen and Treasury skills.
- Thank you to the Trustees and our Secretary who put in time during the year to make sure all club administration activities are covered.

8. Looking ahead and priorities for the coming year

To continue with our recruitment efforts, establish a more secure financial footing and re-supply the committee and roles required to make the club what you would like it to be.

Appendix - Charity role descriptions

Trustee role description

Trustees are the people that share responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run for the benefit of members and users. They need to act in the charity's best interests and help manage the charity's resources responsibly and in an accountable way. This will mean taking part in meetings (mostly online) about 4 times a year. They will also need to

contribute and take responsibility for signing off important documents such as the Annual Report and financial summaries.

Chair role description

The chair helps plan and run trustee and member meetings and takes the lead on ensuring that meetings are properly run and recorded. Ensures that trustees comply with their duties and the charity is well governed. They might have a second or casting vote if a vote on a trustees' decision is tied. They can act as a spokesperson for the charity acting as a link between trustees and members.

Secretary role description

The secretary helps keep the administration running for the club. This includes preparing agendas and taking minutes at meetings, helping to prepare the Annual Report, and keeping the membership lists up to date. All of our administration is kept on a secure Google Drive, where we have templates for everything. In addition we run a database (BREVO) for emails and campaigns, again we use templates for emails. Candidates for this role need to be comfortable with administration tasks and using Google Drive (guidance can be given if you are new to this). The 'info@oxfordpfl' email is assigned to the secretary, so that information concerning the charity (requests for info, new members, insurance renewals etc) come into one place. This role would suit someone who has an interest in or experience of administration.

Oxford Paddlers for Life financial report for 2023-2024

Income 1Apr 2023 to 31 Mar 2024			Outgoings 1 Apr 2023 to 31 Mar 2024			
		Notes				Notes
Quarterly/annual donations via Standing Order	£340.00	From 11 members	Insurance	Circle	£251.60	paid 09/06/2023
Paddle session donations via SumUp	£541.19	For all paddles between 1Apr2023-31Mar2024		Towergate	£346.43	paid 21/12/2023
Amazon credits	£26.98	Amazon Smile?	Dorchester Sailing Club	Berthing fees	£120.00	paid 26May2023;
Other credits	£100.00	From private donor		Lake use fees	£785.00	paid 30May2023; 8Sep2023; 5Jan2024
Other credits	£4.42	GoodHub Plat FMQ	Mileage reimbursements		£165.47	
			Guest helm payments		£178.00	
			Misc purchases		£60.03	Bookmarks (£40.03); gift for person who repaired Sashiko (£20.00)
TOTAL INCOME	£1,012.59		TOTAL OUTGOINGS		£1,906.53	

NOTE: There was therefore a shortfall of **£893.94** during the year 1 Apr 2023 to 31 Mar 2024