



[www.wabc.org.uk](http://www.wabc.org.uk)

## **Wallingford Accessible Boat Club (WABC) - End of Year Report 2024**

### **Summary**

Herewith the WABC report for the year ended 2024. On behalf of the Trustees, I am very pleased to write that we have had a successful year - in fact, a very successful one indeed!

Throughout the boating season (April to September) we took 405 passengers out on the river in our wheelyboat, WOW-one, over 89 trips, each trip accommodating one or more people with mobility issues, together with their families and friends. These numbers represent significant increases over 2023 – 61% up on passengers and 37% increase on river trips. Thanks to the efforts of our amazing volunteers, these set new records for WABC and enabled us to over-achieve our targets. What is even more remarkable, the weather and river conditions were far from ideal during some months of the year which led to the cancellation of at least 11 trips, but we still overachieved. Our passengers continue to get huge enjoyment from their river adventures which, for some, with particular medical conditions, benefit considerably from increased mindfulness and mental relaxation.

Whilst our volunteers are a critically important asset, our finances are equally critical and thankfully remain strong due to the support of sponsors, donors and the community at large, supplemented by the Club's own fundraising efforts.

The awareness of WABC in the community has grown throughout the year and our reputation remains very positive with all stakeholders, importantly including local & District Councillors and NHS-related bodies. In January we conducted a major awareness campaign to a multitude of health service providers and medical professionals in the County of Oxfordshire and we are sure this has had a beneficial impact. We work hard to continually develop our contacts.

### **WABC Operations**

In January, we undertook a major recruitment drive for additional volunteer boat crews. We had a very positive response from local water-loving people, many of whom owned a boat themselves, which made the training task that much easier. We embarked on our annual training programme not only for the new recruits but also the retraining of our existing crews. This proved successful. However, our commencement of passenger trips was delayed until May due to unpleasant weather conditions and strong streams but, apart from the few cancellations we suffered due to the risk of thunderstorms, we continued until the end of September.

Service delivery levels, measured by passenger feedback reports, remained at a very satisfactory 100% throughout the season. It is very pleasing to know that our passengers enjoyed their river adventures as much as our volunteers enjoyed delivering them – a 'win-win' situation for all. One feature of particular note is the flexibility of our crews and their willingness to 'fill in' in the event of a colleague being unable to undertake their standard shift, resulting in fewer cancellations that would otherwise be the case.

Our technology systems continued to work well, specifically our passenger booking and crew scheduling system integrated into our website, [www.wabc.org.uk](http://www.wabc.org.uk). This enabled clients to continue to book a voyage

according to their requirements with minimal human intervention of our back-office Administrator, neither an easy nor straight-forward accomplishment. However, our objective is to further refine our systems to automate as much of the booking process as possible – an ongoing task.

A significant development in 2024 was the publication of the findings of the Marine Accident Incident Board (MAIB) and its investigation into the Roadford Lake, Devon accident in 2022. The report identified a number of critical failures in the wheelyboat concerned. Following its publication, we immediately launched a study of the WABC wheelyboat and its maintenance procedures to ensure any weaknesses in our processes would benefit from the experience. We are pleased to report that, on review, we found our safety procedures already incorporated the MAIB learnings and apart from the tightening of documentation and record keeping, we had a 'clean bill of health'.

As reported, according to all the feedback we have had, our passengers thoroughly enjoyed their river experiences, and we have more lovely testimonials which give, in some cases, quite moving accounts of what a voyage on the river means to them – just wonderful and very heart-warming. If one ever wonders why we are doing what we are doing, then these accounts say it all! There is no doubt that the support we are receiving by way of cash donations and kind words of encouragement from every quarter confirm to us all that in WABC we have a 'jewel' of a project that really meets a major community need. This is just brilliant and so pleasing for us all.

So, in summary, our wheelyboat WOW-one has again been very busy this season, as have our wonderful volunteers. We could do nothing without them – their commitment and willingness to go that extra mile has made all the difference to our operational achievement!

We are very thankful for the facilities at Benson which have enabled WABC to operate from the Marina so successfully; for the WOW-one mooring at a private residence, for use of the slipway and the facilities of The Waterside Cafe.

Building work remains ongoing for our new 'HQ' (passenger loading and support facilities at Riverside, Wallingford) which South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) are undertaking. Progress has been made on this project following the start of work on site in September and at the end of the year it was estimated as being 50% complete. It was cut short by two rapid rises in the river level, resulting in significant flooding, which terminated work for the year. The 'river gods' are certainly not helping but we hope work will be able to continue in early January 2025 with completion well in time for our April season operations. Fingers crossed!

## **Financials**

As a small voluntary organisation, our finances continue to be critical to our development progress and we have to keep a very watchful eye on them. We need to raise approximately £15,000 per annum, our strategy to achieve this being through the kindnesses of the local community by way of donations, the generosity of grant making bodies, trust funds and sponsorships as well as our own direct efforts. At year end, I am glad to say we have achieved this, no small thanks to a very special fundraising event we staged in October, a dinner dance, which proved to be very successful in terms of guest attendance and enjoyment as well as funds raised

A 'bucket collection' completed our 2024 Fundraising programme – a collection at Wallingford's very popular Firework Display - followed by a very generous donation by the charity Wallingford 1155. Thank you!

Our wonderful Sponsors have again proved to be a critical success factor in our development to-date as it has allowed the Trustees to plan ahead with a level of confidence in our financial stability. Once again, our sincere thanks to Tailormade Building Solutions, Pettits of Wallingford, Champion & Co., Winterbrook Estate Agents, InstaVolt and NP Design & Print as well as, our most recent recruit, Driving Miss Daisy. I am very happy to include their logos here which we try to promote at every opportunity. Our Sponsors, as well as our Patrons, give us that extra confidence and additional substance which is critical for our sustainability – we plan to be a permanent feature of Wallingford Rivertown Life for many years to come so it is important we get the building blocks right with an eye to the future.



Our promotional activity continues to be critical to our future aspirations. Whilst our brand is recognised by some, there is a lot more we have to do to get our message fully understood by the majority, especially the fact that we offer our clients the unique experience of a river adventure free of charge. We anticipate that operating in central Wallingford will offer us much greater visibility to the general public and thus help our promotional efforts.

As such the promotion of our simple consistent message, using all practical forms of media, has continued throughout 2024 and will do so into next year. As Club objectives are simple to understand they are very attractive to the public at large which is extremely gratifying and makes our PR task easier. We just have to do our best to keep our name 'out there' via press releases for the media, our bi-annual newsletter 'Wheels on Water', as well as face-to-face discussions and presentations. I am delighted our promotional video, available on the home page of our website, continues to prove to be very successful and is now a key element of our Awareness Programme.

In November 2024 we held a Team Strategy full-day session to develop a 'meeting of minds' with regards to our future direction. With the help of an excellent Facilitator, the group concluded a forward path, the first stage being an expansion programme in our operations – more passengers, more river voyages, a 7-day operating week, and specialised, focussed interest-group sessions. Our task in 2025 will be to implement these plans and manage all the implications that result – increased costs, another volunteer recruitment programme and even greater efforts by our wonderful crews. It will be fun!

### **Next Year - 2025**

We are hoping (once again) that 2025 will be 'our year' when our plans for Stage One development of WABC finally come to fruition. Completion and delivery of the river access/landing platform (known as our new HQ) by South Oxfordshire District Council is essential and at this point seemingly achievable as we understand 50% of the development work has been completed and providing there is no damage to the work that has been done by the latest flooding, the development should be completed in the first month or two of the year.

We are planning to increase the number voyages we operate as soon as we can in 2025 but are, again, dependent upon the availability of our new HQ. Our 'stretch' target for 2025 is to increase the number of passengers we accommodate by 25%, to 500 by season end. Our recruitment of additional crewing resources is critical here. Getting the maximum use of the community asset we have in the WABC operation remains a key priority.

An important activity for the start of the year will be the consideration of our future plans not only in terms of strategy implementation but the structure of our organisation to ensure it continues to function efficiently, and the administration and operational workload is manageable for all.

## **In Conclusion**

So in conclusion, a very good year for WABC and we are all committed to make 2025 an even better one.

Finally, the Trustees want to acknowledge and thank all our volunteers in all departments of our increasingly sizeable operation – without them we could get no-where and it really strikes home to us all that no matter how innovative an idea may be, it means nothing without the people, their commitment and expertise, to make it a reality. So, a big thank you to them!

Additionally, we are extremely fortunate to have wonderful community support which gives us all great confidence that we shall indeed get to the end of the road and achieve our objective with a community service that enables the impossible to become possible for many local disabled and less mobile people and a service of which that we can all be very proud. We are all very thankful for that support.

John Jenkins MBE

Chair of Trustees  
Wallingford Accessible Boat Club  
Tel: 07976-297835  
[john.jenkins@wabc.org.uk](mailto:john.jenkins@wabc.org.uk)  
January 2025

**WALLINGFORD ACCESSIBLE BOAT CLUB**  
**Receipts and payments account for the period**  
**1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024**  
**Registered Charity No. 1179179**

**Receipts and payments**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total funds £	Last year £
<b>Receipts</b>					
Grants	5,250.00	0.00	0.00	5,250.00	2,097.00
Donations	20,516.00	0.00	0.00	20,516.00	26,140.79
Interest Received	765.84	0.00	0.00	765.84	494.27
Raffle		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sponsorship	7,700.00	0.00	0.00	7,700.00	7,950.00
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>34,231.84</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>34,231.84</b>	<b>36,682.06</b>

**Payments for charitable purposes**

Fund raising expenditure	2,190.86	0.00	0.00	2,190.86	3,831.30
Wheelyboat		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Training	2,998.00	747.00	0.00	3,745.00	5,420.00
Insurance	1,626.53	0.00	0.00	1,626.53	1,600.39
Life Vests		0.00	0.00	0.00	243.00
Stationery and PR	3,301.45	0.00	0.00	3,301.45	1,352.43
Boat repairs and maintenance	960.59	971.00	0.00	1,931.59	2,343.46
Equipment		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Storage	1,223.37	0.00	0.00	1,223.37	899.15
Subscriptions and other fees	160.00	0.00	0.00	160.00	567.97
Independent Examiners Fee		0.00	0.00	0.00	180.00
IT Software & Consumables	1,533.99	0.00	0.00	1,533.99	0.00
Telephone & Data Costs	251.45	0.00	0.00	251.45	773.22
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>14,246.24</b>	<b>1,718.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>15,964.24</b>	<b>17,210.92</b>

<b>Administrative expenses</b>		0.00	0.00	0.00	1,883.22
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<b>Total payments</b>	<b>14,246.24</b>	<b>1,718.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>15,964.24</b>	<b>19,094.14</b>
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<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>19,985.60</b>	<b>-1,718.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>18,267.60</b>	<b>17,587.92</b>
<b>Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>59,037.73</b>	<b>14,328.95</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>73,366.68</b>	<b>55,778.76</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>79,023.33</b>	<b>12,610.95</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>91,634.28</b>	<b>73,366.68</b>

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total funds £	Last year £
<b>Represented by :</b>					
Lloyds Bank Treasurers Account	9,996.46	0.00	0.00	9,996.46	18,526.70
Lloyds Bank Reserve Account	69,026.87	12,610.95	0.00	81,637.82	54,839.98
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
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	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Current value
<b>Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Wheelyboat	Unrestricted	40,328	40,328
				-

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval

# **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF WALLINGFORD ACCESSIBLE BOAT CLUB**

**PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31 December 2024 set out on page 1

## **RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES AND INDEPENDENT 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 above.

## **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.



**B R Haines FCCA**  
Independent examiner

Rear Of 81 High Street  
Wallingford  
Oxfordshire  
OX10 0BX

14/5/2025



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