

Trustee Report 2023

Trustees of the reporting period : Shane Cleaver, Ian Stevenson, Steve Atterbury, Gurkamalpreet Singh and Craig Mercer

Introduction:

The Gravesend Regatta Society, guided by its dedicated board of Trustees and volunteers remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting community participation in fixed-seat rowing along the historic Thames at Gravesend. Our objectives, rooted in organizing regattas, maintaining suitable boats, and fostering a rich rowing heritage, continue to shape the core of our mission.

As we reflect upon the 2023 rowing season, we are met with a blend of pride for our collective achievements and a solemn acknowledgment of those we've bid farewell to. In this year's report, we honour the memory of esteemed members, friends and associates who have left an indelible mark on our community. We extend our deepest condolences to the families of Mick Ramsey, Jeannie Baldwin, and Brian Webster, each of whom played a significant role in shaping the legacy of Gravesend Regatta Society.

Mick Ramsey, a former rower, Club Captain, and dedicated Committee member, left an enduring impact on our community. His prowess in both rowing genres, coupled with his leadership in maintaining our skiffs, has left an indelible mark. We remember Mick not only for his rowing triumphs but also for his coxing expertise, a skill that added trophies in equal measure. Mick's passing leaves a void that will be felt by all of us at the Gravesend Regatta Society and the wider community.

Jeannie Baldwin, a cherished friend and supporter, brought joy to our regattas for many years. Her face painting stall was a highlight, enchanting attendees of all ages. Jeannie's warmth and creativity will be sorely missed, and we offer our sincere condolences to her family and friends.

Brian Webster, coxswain and a pivotal figure in our rowing community, left us earlier in the season. The Brian Webster Memorial Race, organised in his honour, stands as a testament to his lasting influence. We express our

gratitude for his contributions to our events and extend our sympathies to his family. we extend our heartfelt thanks to TJ's Pub for their invaluable support in the inaugural Brian Webster Memorial Cup. This newly organised race, dedicated to the memory of Brian Webster, became a reality due to the generous sponsorship from TJ's Pub.

Tom and Iris from TJ's Pub not only sponsored a new plate for the event but also graced the riverside to witness the crews set off. Their presence added a touch of warmth and community spirit to the occasion.

In commemorating the achievements of the 2023 season, we pay tribute to Mike Fitzsimons, a stalwart with a remarkable 50-year journey within our society. His legacy, woven into the fabric of our community, transcends roles, encompassing various contributions and community service beyond the Regatta Committee. As Mike bids farewell after announcing the 177th Gravesend Town Regatta as his last, we extend our deepest thanks for his immeasurable contributions.

Community Engagement:

Our members & volunteers actively participated in the Maritime Volunteer Service's Open Day, showcasing the spirit of community service. Taking a skiff along, we reciprocated the support received from MVS, allowing everyone to experience the joy of rowing.

Charitable Endeavours:

In a display of unwavering commitment, four of our members embarked on the 4x4x48 challenge, an idea born from one of our more eccentric members and Trustee. With help of volunteers without whom wouldn't be possible, together they rowed 4 miles every hour, for 48 hours, each outing was different as no two tides were the same, nighttime rows presented unfamiliar challenges, but the weather was fair. This ambitious endeavour was not only a physical feat but also a testament to the spirit of community and the dedication our members have for both rowing and charitable causes.

The challenge culminated in a heartwarming presentation where the rowers had the honour of handing over a substantial donation of over £2000 to a fantastic local charity, The Ellenor Hospice. These rowers, volunteers and organisation should feel proud to be a part of such a selfless endeavour.

Challenges include low numbers of participants, this coupled with spells of bad weather resulted in various events being cancelled including the mixed Dartford bridge, the mini regatta being postponed and our flag ship event The town regatta had to be adapted but still showcasing a mini points competition on the Saturday and a time trial on the Sunday. Those who were able to participate events across the season demonstrated great spirit and contributed to the success of each event.

New Skiff Naming Ceremony:

The naming of the red skiff, sponsored by Smith's Funfairs and named "Floating Position" in honour of the late Alfie Smith, added tradition and continuity to our fleet. The launch from the New Bridge jetty, with the Smith family on board, strengthened our ties with the local community.

Financial Performance:

Gravesend Regatta Society has been blessed with financial prosperity through grants and sponsorships and a record number of registered members. Successful grant applications, notably from the Lower Thames Crossing Community Fund and KCC ensured the acquisition of essential safety equipment and courses. The Safety Boat Course, made possible by these funds, contributed to enhanced safety protocols, underlining our commitment to the well-being of our members.

Sponsorship includes, the three Daws, The Jolly Drayman, Alfie Smiths funfair and Councillor Lauren Sullivan, without these sponsors we would be unable to maintain our boats and equipment.

Throughout the season, our society experienced a modest increase in memberships and volunteers. While this growth is promising, it is imperative for us to continue expanding our membership base. This

strategic growth is essential for the effective distribution of responsibilities, ensuring a streamlined and well-managed operation.

It is worth noting that several pivotal positions within the society, including Treasurer and Secretary, remain vacant. Additionally, we are actively seeking volunteers for our crucial training nights. The success and sustainability of our organisation depend on the commitment and engagement of our members.

Considering this, we extend an earnest invitation to any of our current members who possess the skills and dedication required for these roles. Your active involvement will contribute significantly to the continued success and growth of the Gravesend Regatta Society. We appreciate and welcome your willingness to step up and offer your valuable time towards these essential responsibilities.

Acknowledgments and Appreciation:

A heartfelt thank you extends to the dedicated trustees, volunteers, and staff who have been the driving force behind the Gravesend Regatta Society's success. Your unwavering commitment has steered us through challenging times.

Recognition goes to Jason Arthur for capturing the essence of our regattas through his skilled lens. His artistic contributions have allowed us to share the beauty of our events with a broader audience.

We express our gratitude to the Maritime Volunteer Service (MVS) for their continued support, ensuring the safety and success of our events. Kent Sheds' invaluable contributions have strengthened our operational capabilities.

We look forward to getting stuck into a busy season in 2024.

Gravesham Regatta Society

Financial Activities

January - December 2023

	TOTAL
Income	
Donations and legacies	-12.47
Membership	860.00
Services	7,310.09
Total Income	£8,157.62
Cost of Sales	
Cost of sales	-50.00
Mooring Fees	257.30
Regatta Expenses	-219.94
Total Cost of Sales	£ -12.64
TOTAL	£8,170.26
Expenditures	
Advertising/Promotional	156.00
Boat House Expenses	1,367.59
Heat and Light	494.00
Insurances	1,559.25
Interest Payable	-16.87
Paypal fees	12.60
Purchases	283.80
Total Expenditures	£3,856.37
NET OPERATING INCOME	£4,313.89
Other Income	
Grant Income	560.00
Total Other Income	£560.00
Other Expenditures	
Rates	238.34
Total Other Expenditures	£238.34
NET OTHER INCOME	£321.66
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	£4,635.55