



SBC

The Small Boat Club Kingston upon Thames

Newsletter: 26th Sept. 2020

Commodore's Message

Hello everyone.

September is nearly gone but Covid, with its associated restrictions, is still with us. The August and September newsletters were close in the Calendar because we expected to have so much to report on for the summer, but that wasn't to be. Our Sunbury Cruise/island tea party, Lady Lindsay's Lawn Cruise and Commodore Cruise all being affected by it. The latter, because of my own need to self-isolate for a period which means that. If my situation changes, and government restriction permit, I may be able to host a cruise – albeit at short notice.

In August we sent out renewal letters for both memberships and moorings. **If you haven't paid, please check the rates and pay now.** Cashflow can be a real problem for small organisations. Some members have decided not to continue with us this year. Peter Harvey, Fiona MacColl and their boat *Snow Goose*, Stephen and Dawn Perugi, and Jennie Zeman have not renewed. We wish them all well and hope to welcome them back as visitors in the not too distant future.

For those with boats moored on the island, we also sent out an updated Mooring Agreement. We are still waiting for a number to come back. If not already done so, can you read, sign, and return to Linda or Stephen. Scanned copies are fine. We have changed the wording in paragraphs 5 and 6 in respect of when mooring fees are due and considered in arrears.

All of this acts as a nudge for me to explain the increase in fees, especially this year when everyone is feeling impacted by Covid.

By far the biggest expenditure for the club is the rent of the island and, to a lesser extent, the jetty.

Combined, these exceed £15,500 per year. Our lease with the Environment Agency allows for Rent Reviews in 2017, 2022 and 2027. The first and last can be calculated using the CPI (Consumer Price Index) as a consideration. The review in 2022 however is based upon an "open market" review by an independent surveyor. Not only will the results dictate our rent going forward, but we have to contribute towards the costs of the survey! We also have to put aside 6 months' worth of rent by way of a termination fee should we not renew (to be clear, we are not planning this option). We don't know what the result of the 2022 review might be but can say, with some certainty, it won't be a reduction! Our approach has therefore been to put a small increase into the mooring fees over the years to reduce or negate the impact of a steep rise in 2022. At £41/foot (a 2.5% year on year increase) we still feel that the island provides good value for this part of the Thames. Next year we may look to spread that burden across the membership. Stephen, our treasurer did try hard with the EA and Kingston Council to get a Covid lease "holiday", he also went to other bodies, including the National Lottery, to get some club funding but all came back in the negative.

This newsletter is scheduled to be distributed between the two working parties being organised by James and Andrew. The "rule of six" being implemented just as these were being set up had added another layer of complexity! But a big thank you to all who have managed to do their bit!

In late August, Linda hosted a film crew to the island and on the Thames. Look for her report of the day later in this newsletter.

Looking forward now, it is becoming increasingly likely that the Annual General Meeting will be a Zoom affair. The required Covid measures becoming so stringent that hiring a venue is becoming close to

impossible, and we wouldn't want to put our own members at any additional risk by feeling compelled to attend. So, keep the date in your diary – Saturday 14th November, check your lights, make-up, sound and get ready for "action". More details will follow nearer the date.

Your Committee is starting to look at next year's schedule of events. Given that most of this year was "postponed", 2021 will look very much like 2020 should have been! As with 2020, we will give those who attend the AGM "first dibs" at choosing their preferred ferry duty dates. Hopefully we will get a New Year lunch organised where those in attendance will get their chance to select from the remaining dates before the Committee allocate whatever is left.

We are also working on the 2021 club handbook. If there are any items you think should be considered for inclusion, please let Linda and me know.

It has been a tough year for so many people in so many different ways. Thank you for your continued membership, support and understanding.

Stay safe

AJ

A quick reminder of some useful websites:

The Club's website

<http://www.smallboatclub.co.uk/>

The Club's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/SmallBoatClub.co.uk/>

The Boat Safety Scheme's news website:

<https://www.boatsafetyscheme.org/about-us/news-and-press-releases/news-releases/>

The government's website containing information on the River Thames:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-locks-and-facilities-for-boaters>

RYA section on YouTube. It contains information on boating, safety and Covid:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=RYA+club+zone

From the Committee

AJ mentioned that Trevor had found some hygiene engineers who came and "cleaned up" our enviroloo. I hope people have found using it a less smelly experience recently. There are still a couple of improvements that could make the loo work more efficiently. The Committee has authorised that expenditure and also agreed to place an annual maintenance contract with the same company. So, we hope to improve it as a facility. A couple of

important reminders: we are advised that putting paper into the loo inhibits the drying and composting process so **all paper in the bin please**. And a reminder that **nothing should go in the loo unless it has been through you** first, but please don't empty portable loos down it.

We had a bumper crop of apples on the tree at the upstream end of the island. Pleased to say that they have all gone to good homes. Pictures were on our Facebook page: thanks to Gerry and John Roscoe for the photos.

I'm sure the battery booster has proved usefully to many members. It is charged using a USB socket so if you use it, please recharge it, but you will need something like a phone three-point plug to do so.

Thanks to James and Andy for organising the Working Parties on 20th September; I hope the two on 27th September will be just as productive. Still plenty to do, so if you are on the island outside a working party time, you are welcome to do something on the list! Brushes, material etc are in the shed. We are compiling a list for 2021 so if you see something you think needs fixing, drop me a line. We also need your help: there is no rubbish collection from the island so please take your "empties" home with you. The bins in the Clubhouse are really for events when we do organise disposal.

River News

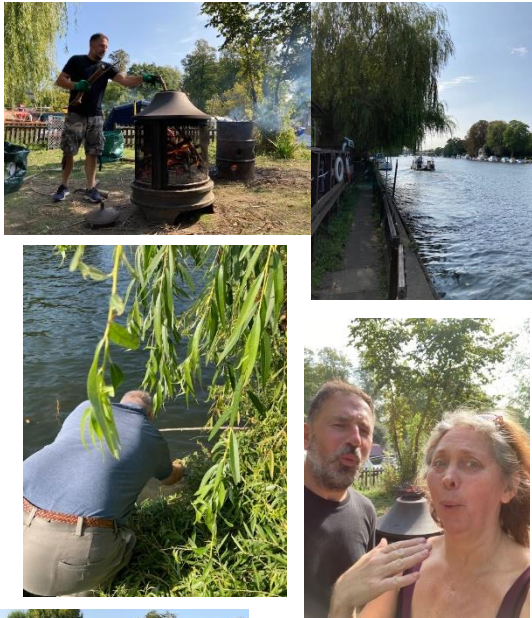
The EA has just sent out the second version of its winter works schedule. Molesey Lock will be closed from mid November 2020 but hopeful open again late January 2021. There will be work going on in the lock cut above Sunbury Lock to clear the rubble of Wilson's boatyard buildings following the fire last year; no exact dates for this. Teddington Lock continues to operate between 07.00 and 21.00 only. This is likely to be the case until further notice. Hammersmith Bridge remains closed to road and river traffic at present although an escorted convey a couple of weeks ago enabled those trapped "the wrong side of the bridge" to return to their home base.

Linda.

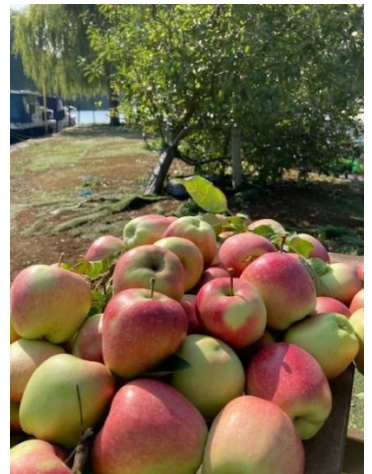
Moorings and Subscriptions

If you have not already done so, please adjust your Standing Order and sign and return the new mooring agreement. Membership subscriptions for the year were also due on 1st September.

Working Party 20th Sept., morning



Working Party 20th Sept., afternoon



The Wily Waterman
Hints and Tips passed down

Winterising your engine

When the autumnal chill settles over the UK, it really is time to think about putting your boat to bed. An important part of this is winterising your engine. It is important that you winterise the engine, otherwise come the spring you may start to incur problems, the key is to get the basics right. So here are some of the basics:



1.a **Diesel** – Make certain your diesel tank is full (take care not to spill any diesel).

It is important that water does not enter the fuel tank as the interface between water and fuel is where diesel bug thrives.

If you suspect signs of the bug then this would be a good time to add a fuel additive to keep it under control. Check out the [Green Directory](#) for useful products which can kill the 'diesel bug', reduce emissions and remove water during the combustion process.

1.b **Petrol** – Modern petrol can deteriorate. Consider emptying your tank or adding fuel stabiliser such as STAB-IL 360

2. Check the fuel filler cap 'O' ring seal and using a light (Vaseline) smear around the thread to give a better seal.

This helps stop any rainwater entering the tank, it also makes it easy to open in the spring.

3. Change and drain the fuel pre-filter. You will find that a large clear plastic lemonade bottle cut in half is ideal for this job as you can drain the fuel and in some cases catch the filter in the bottle and, because it's clear, you can examine the condition of the fuel. The top end of the bottle you can use as a funnel to use to pour into a container for disposal. Once you have refitted filters you will need to bleed the system (some fuel filters may need to be filled with fuel from a can).

It is important that we find out if we have a problem with the fuel.

The only way is to remove the filter and inspect. If you find a problem then you can make a decision about what to do about it well before the spring. You may want to have the tank emptied and cleaned or, what is becoming more popular is fuel cleaning with a filtration system. This of course re-uses your fuel which means you don't have to pay for disposal.

4. Change the engine oil. The cleanest and easiest way to do this is to use a vacuum pump. A vacuum pump has its own self-contained reservoir and tube that is inserted into the dipstick hole. This makes the whole process very clean and helps prevent spills. Remember to change the oil filter before filling with new oil.

Refill the sump with clean oil and of the correct grade for your engine

This is to ensure any corrosive acids formed as by-product of combustion do not remain in the engine over the winter.

Using oil absorbent mats and a bilge sock will make sure that a) your bilges stay clean and minimise smell, important when a boat is closed up for prolonged periods over the winter, and b) that you will not have a nasty haze of oily water coming out of your bilges in the spring.

5. Check the freshwater cooling level and top up. It is also important to ensure that you have the right ratio of water to Anti-freeze. If you have been topping up with just water all season you might like to drain the system and top up with the correct mixture. Manufacturers will recommend that the system is drained at a particular service interval.

Anti freeze or coolant doesn't just protect your engine from the cold but more importantly acts as a corrosion inhibitor that protects the internal water ways within the engine.

6. Remove the SW pump impeller and tie to the side of the pump.

If the impeller remains in one position for too long then it might become deformed, become less effective and fail. You should always change your impeller annually at least. I personally don't like the idea of using an old one as a spare as they tend to fail.

7. Relax or remove the drive belts. Again, leaving them in one position for several months may cause them to deform and crack. In the spring we strongly recommend that you replace them if there are any signs of wear. Signs to look out for is black belt dust on the engine and engine bearers this means the belt is slipping.

8. Clean the engine and inspect it from all angles looking for anything amiss, check all jubilee clips for corrosion, electrical wiring for corrosion and chafe and, of course, any water fuel or oil leaks. This will give you good amount of time to put things right, also make sure the bilges are clean. Use a bilge sock to soak up oil and fuel from the bilges before cleaning. There are a range of environmentally friendly cleaners available these days: choose ones which are low in phosphate and bleach. Clean bilges make it easier to spot faults earlier. Finally, after cleaning the engine, coat it with duck oil or corrosion block to prevent any corrosion, pay particular attention to the drive belt pulleys, these must be kept free of rust otherwise, when the belts are replaced, they will wear down in no time.

9. Batteries: If possible, remove them, charge them up and check the water levels. Once charged, the

condition of the battery can be checked with a hydrometer measuring the specific gravity of each of the cells and comparing the readings. Check and charge them every month to keep them in order. If batteries are 6 years old or over then it might be time to think about replacing them.

10. Exhaust and Inlet: It is a good idea to block off the exhaust and, if possible, the air inlet to the engine this can simply be done with tape or wooden bung. This prevents moisture from getting into the engine. Don't forget to remove before you re-float!

Filming on the island

I get a variety of queries and offers via the SBC website – people asking for moorings, offers of discounts or entertainment. But this message was a bit different. It started as “could someone hire a couple of our dinghies to do a bit of filming” and developed, after a conversation with Amina, into could we help a small group of professional film makers to produce a short film. Michaela the Director (who had canoed along our stretch of river) came to see us the next day. The scenario was a post flood world with a female survivor paddling a small (rather tatty) boat, finding various things in the water. Michaela looked at our boats, the surroundings and we talked to Ulla Wilke about using the river frontage of the Velma boathouse. All seemed to be well; they wanted to film the following Sunday.

On Saturday I did a quick check – bailed out the dinghies, checked fuel for the ferry and, fingers



crossed, the wind would have dropped overnight. No such luck – Sunday morning was just as much a challenge from the wind.

Michaela wanted to film on the river before it was too light and became busy. So we set off on the ferry toward Kingston, the “survivor” paddling gallantly. The wind was making it tricky to stay on station – we didn’t want the buildings in shot. Then the crew decided the sound recording was picking up too much engine noise – cut power. It was now very interesting because we were being blown up river against the

flow and toward the Middlesex bank. Fending off started in earnest! Rowers began using the river but, as we were being blown into the bank, we managed to stay out of the way. Just one strop rower commented unfavourably. After about an hour and a half, Michaela decided we probably had enough shots for that part of the scenario, so we could return to the island for a break. 08.10 and James had arrived to help out. Filming recommenced – close shots with the dinghy just off the island. We weren’t needed for a bit but had to be very quiet. Kristiina who had accompanied James was not impressed! Michaela had the scenario planned but wanted to cover all eventualities so loads of shots in the ‘can’. Another break; then over to Velma boathouse for the scenes where the survivor puts together what she has found in the water. Bill had now arrived as duty officer for the day so joined in ferrying the crew about. Filming eventually finished just after 13.00, too late for their planned lunch at The Boaters.

The group comprised members of BAFTA who had come together to make a film for the Sundance Film Festival in the USA. They didn’t



seem to know each other before the filming. After filming there was a very tight schedule to get the film edited for the Festival. SBC has been promised a location credit and a copy of the film. Michaela also makes documentaries for Channel 5 so we have access to a film she made on the history of the Thames. Winter film night sorted.

Linda

Duty Officers

27th Sept	Simon Green & Sarka Juric
4th Oct	Simon Price
11th Oct	Gary & Suzanne Gilmour
18th Oct	Linda Varney
25th Oct	Vaughan Simpson

Gerry continues his History of the SBC

The Build. 1995

It wasn't until the summer of 1995 that the plans were finally passed and accepted by the EA, and the building of the new boathouse could be started. It was agreed by the steering committee that Rod Mackay (a Club member) would work with the builders full-time. They estimated that it would take 8 to 11 weeks, with two carpenters. A contract was



agreed. Build estimated for labour of £9000 for two carpenters to commence work on Monday, 5th June with

completion in 6 to 8 weeks, With Rod Mackay helping (£1000 will be paid each week.)

Start of the boat house build, April 1995.

Piles and girders were on the island ready to be put in place. (paid for by the EA).

June 1st & 2nd Timber and building materials will arrive at Kingston Wharf

A workboat and outboard engine was purchased for



£975 to transport building materials.

June 26th approx £13,500

has been spent on boat house rebuilding.

There was

£7500-£8000 in hand to complete the project.

At about 14 weeks there was still a lot of work to be done and the builders were asking for more money. We agreed on a sum, but after a fortnight they asked for more or they would leave. We let them go on September 6th and hoped that some of the members could do the work, which they did.

Approximately £730 still had to be paid out for other materials.



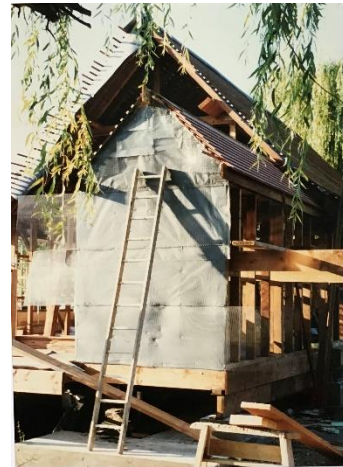
During this time the winter and some of the summer functions plus committee meetings were held at the

Leander Sea Scouts Hall.

During the rebuild of the new clubhouse we were able to keep the morale of the members

high by holding many functions, and each function was run by different groups of members. This also helped to raise money with Raffles, fun days with lots of games, boat jumble sales and our annual barbecue which has always been popular and our main profit-making function.

Gerry Taylor.



Please send articles, notices & photos for future Newsletters to:
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