

# HIGHCLIFFE SAILING CLUB

SAIL - WINDSURF - PADDLE

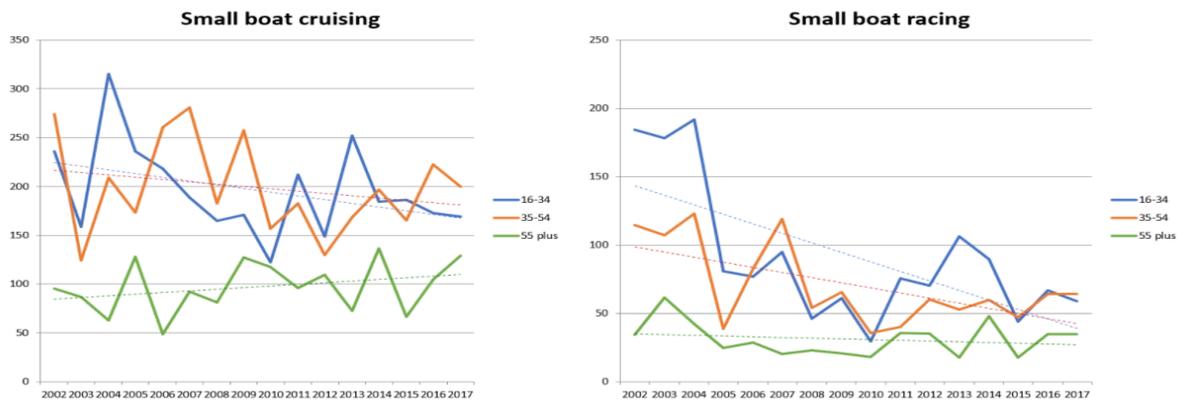
Founded 1962

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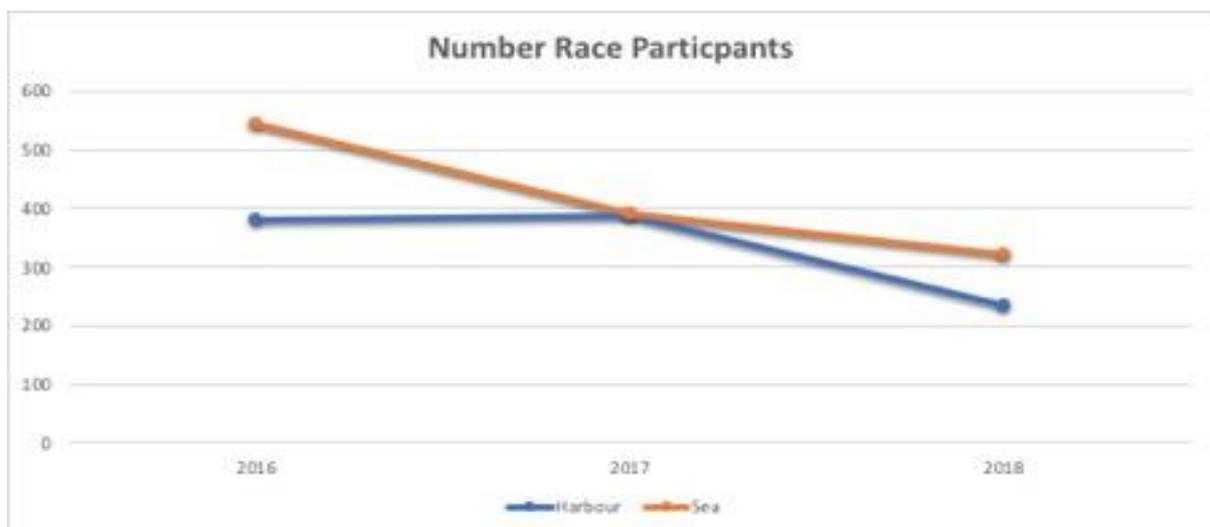
## Committee Report for HSC AGM 2018

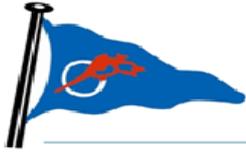
The face of local Sailing Clubs up and down the country is changing and Highcliffe SC is not immune to this shifting landscape. Participation trends show that people now undertake multiple leisure activities, juggling many different interests with busy social, work and family lives. It seems that the commitment to sailing clubs is waning as we experience an increase in a more 'casual' approach to the sport, as the majority of participants opt for less competitive and more social experiences on the water. To compound this, the RYA have found a changing demographic in the membership, it is the 55+ group which is keeping the industry ticking over for the moment, with the 16-34 and 35-54 groups worst affected by the downturn. The impact of this clear to see in sailing clubs, many of which now see reduced numbers venturing out to start lines and struggle to fill volunteer duties essential to their smooth running.

### Small boat cruising & racing – age profile



HSC has not avoided being impacted by this change in society, most notably seen by the drop-in numbers committed to racing. Whereas HSC has still laid on a fairly constant number of races, both at sea and in the harbour throughout the racing calendar, we have most definitely experienced a downward trend in those taking to the water to compete.



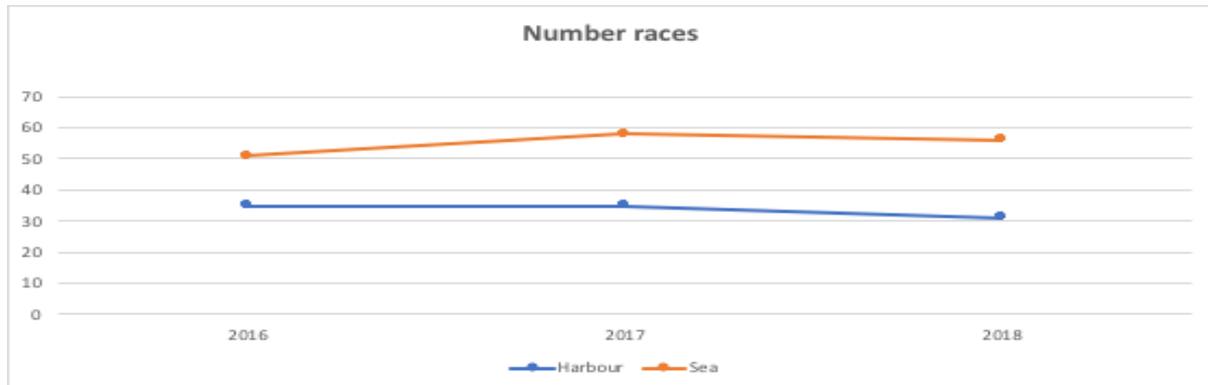


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However, after thriving for 56 years already, HSC is here to stay. By presenting a multi-faceted and enterprising front to the on-going changes, we believe that where one door starts to close (a bit), several more open. HSC will continue to be a racing club and will run a full and varied racing programme, with Open Meetings and National Championships. We remain steadfastly dedicated to encouraging and enjoying racing as a sport, this does not mean however that we are reluctant to change, and we embrace whole heartedly the explosion we have experienced in Social Water Sports.

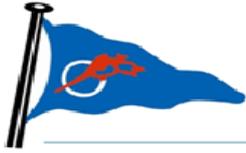
This year has seen the launch of Thursday Social Sailing Evenings designed for and attended by those looking to improve their sailing skills and gain some confidence, hopefully with a view to joining in with the racing at some point. These harbour sessions were often run alongside Thursday evening sea racing, bringing social sailors and racing sailors down to the club at the same time to meet up and share experiences. We hope those who took part in these evenings got something from them, we intend to run them again all throughout 2019.

We have also seen some extremely well attended Wednesday morning Social Sails, which in the height of the season, frequently had double figure attendance and undertook some lovely jaunts up to the Captain's Club and back and some exceptional sorties out to sea. This small group has welcomed many new members over the last few years and is in very fine health thanks to the hard work and boundless enthusiasm of Ian Pike.

2018 has also seen the formation and growth of The Paddlers, a group of dedicated kayakers and paddleboarders, ready to launch at the drop of a WhatsApp and which was in no part boosted by the building of a kayak rack (already full) and complimented by the mighty fine weather we were treated to all summer long. The group has gone from strength to strength over the year and now boasts 18 members.

We have managed the Pier Race once more, 2018 being far less eventful than its predecessor and very much enjoyed by the Aero sailors, its already in the calendar for 2019.

Picking up on an event that used to be run by HSC, this year, on a perfect July morning, several lucky members also went out in the Club RIBs to the Needles and up and down the Solent soaking up the spectacular sight of the Round the Island Race floating in and around 1,500 yachts. The day was a total joy and is another initiative we intend to take up again in 2019. Get your names down quickly though, space is limited on this one.



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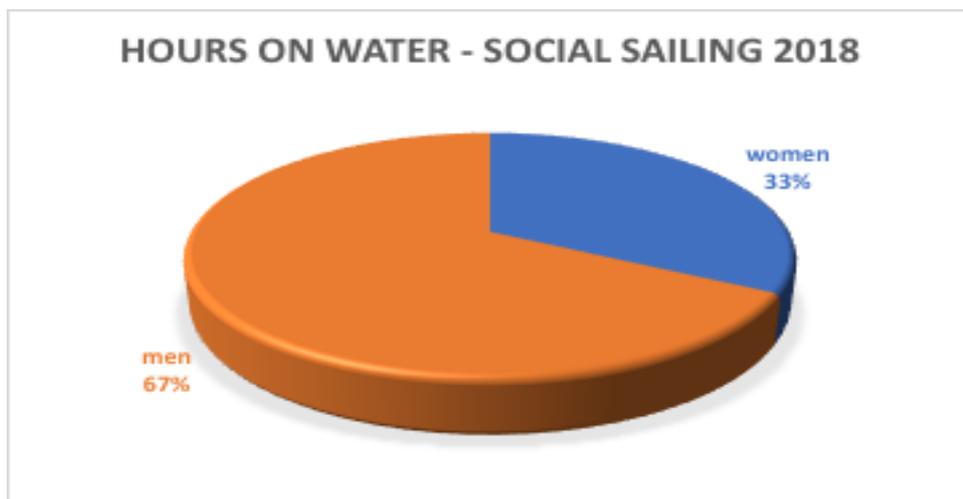
For the first time in a while, HSC were proud competitors in the RNLI Fun Day Raft Race. With a brilliant build by Jim and Phil, the raft comprised of several plastic barrels and multiple wrappings of heavy-duty cellophane, was launched by 8 members under clear blue skies and set off up the run (against the tide) to battle it out against 20 other rafts. The rules out there were a little lax and the start line positively un-monitored but after 2 wet and pushy heats, HSC were very happy to end the competition with a 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall.

Great paddling everyone, and thanks for the raft boys. Pretty sure that this will end up as a 'must do' on next year's calendar as well.

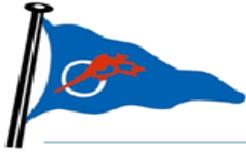
We have also been really pleased by the continued success of the Ladies That Launch group, now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, which once more was a delight in both its social and sailing aspect and is already inked in to the sailing calendar again for next year. With all the new members and a very clear increase in women taking up the sport at HSC, 2019 is shaping up to be well attended once more.

At the beginning of the year, the signing out/in book was reinstated in the entrance of the Club House and has painted a hugely impressive and wonderfully optimistic picture of just how much HSC is used and enjoyed. Since April, and these are just the members who remembered to write in the book, HSC members have put in a massive 923 social sailing hours out on the water. This figure represents 70 different members, using 35 different dinghy types averaging 2hours 15 minutes on the water for each session.

To put this into perspective, the racing programme which runs, (if you include our fabulous Icicle Open series), from January to December, accounts for, to date, 558 different launches; the social sorties over the last 6 months make up virtually  $\frac{3}{4}$  of that number. This is the changing face of our club and most interestingly provides evidence of the swing toward an increase in female participation.



April - October 2018		
	hours on water	total outings
total	923	398
women	304	133
men	619	265



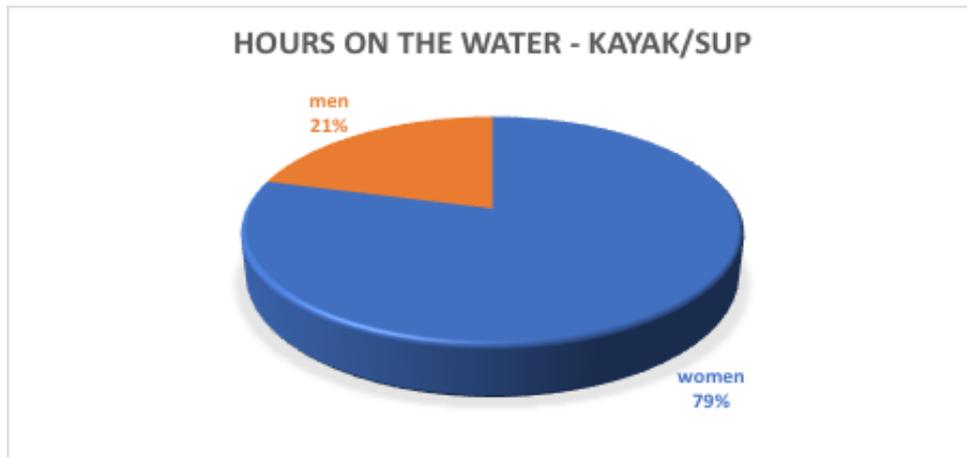
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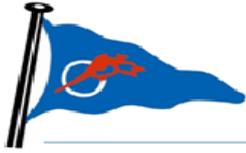
The kayakers and paddleboarders have also not been missing out on the action either, they have managed to clock up an impressive 168 water sports hours over 80 outings and most interestingly have a participation demographic of 79% women.



With digital communications changing how people organise themselves, the introduction of WhatsApp groups and other technologies to spread the word has seen a boom in impromptu outings and social gatherings. The interconnectivity and immediacy of these communications has revolutionised member participation at sailing clubs and HSC is no exception. Our harbour side location with its west facing balcony offers unparalleled views offers some breath-taking sunsets and it was this asset that triggered the Social Team's decision to fire up the BBQ as often as possible this year. By making use of WhatsApp, emails and Facebook posts, impromptu get-togethers with Jim 'n' Phil on the grill abounded, encouraging countless members down to the club and bringing Friday evenings alive and the bar Prosecco reserves taking a hit. These lovely social events managed to bring many people together over a sausage and a glass that would not have ordinarily ventured down. It has been a great and popular initiative, and definitely one to carry over into 2019!

The Social Team have also run some very well attended Social Events over the year, starting with the Progressive Supper for all our New Members, through to Fish & Chip suppers and Quiz Nights and most recently the massively successful fireworks and spuds night at the beginning of this month, which managed to feed over 40 members and fill the club with 70 plus attendees. With the hugely popular Christmas lunch to come, the Social Team will be able to end their Social Calendar for 2018 with a club full of happy members. Thank you to everyone who made the effort to attend and joined in with such good spirits and camaraderie. And thank you to the hard work and patience of the organisers, fixer and sorters, The Social Team.

Highcliffe SC also joined in with the RNLI fun day once more this year and not just with our raft. Peter Emerson and Ian Pike ran the HSC Open Day in association with the event, setting up a little dinghy display area in the boat park. They kindly spent an entire afternoon fielding questions and handing out membership forms and were blown away by the response received.



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With a busy balcony, plentiful on and off the water activity and some time well spent chatting to locals and passers-by, HSC has managed to buck the national trend in declining membership at sailing clubs and has actually increased the number of people joining the club. This year alone we have welcomed 82 members, which when you factor in the number of leavers, we are still left with a net increase in our membership numbers from 2017. Most interestingly the most part of our newcomers joined up after the Club Open Day and after witnessing the buzz going on around the club all summer.

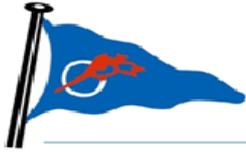


2019, we hope to build on the success of this year. The Committee are deep in discussion over the sailing programme with plans to include some more 'fun' water sports activities like a Pico regatta, or kayak relay racing or perhaps presenting the opportunity to the more adventurous amongst us to 'Thread The Needles'.

We are also keen to recognise the increased interest being shown by our ladies and will have a Ladies Open Meeting at the club, inviting Ladies from the 4 clubs nearest to us – LTSC, KYC, CSC and MSC. There is also the possibility of 2 Open Meetings in the pipeline which will bring much needed revenue to the club but will mean encouraging a bevy of volunteers from the club to get involved, so please keep your eyes and ears open.

Simon Mussell and Gary Langdown have continued their participation in major Contender class events and our Aero fleet ventured down to Weymouth for the Aero World Championships. The Aero team have also attended an Open meeting in Bristol and a training session with Lymington Town SC. These experiences improve the standard of racing and build on our relationship with class associations and other clubs, hopefully encouraging them to hold events in our lovely bay. At the same time, Ken Fowler has found another sailing odyssey sailing around the Islands of the UK for charity with his Aero, Yoda.

We hope, also, to be able to spend a bit of money on the Ladies changing room which is beginning to look rather unloved and perhaps see if we can't improve upon the BBQ and outside space available to us on the balcony. This will build on the enhancement made to the hall with new table tops, chairs and sofas making the area cosy and uncluttered.



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The Social Team will be running another full and fun programme next year and are always open to ideas and suggestions for events, as well as making sure that all of the old favourites are on the Events line up.

HSC participated in the nationwide "Membership Satisfaction Survey" and our participation percentage and response was excellent. The survey uncovered certain issues which are out of our control like parking and the effect of high rent and rates and there were also conflicting opinions to balance. However, in common with other clubs, our members want a welcoming and approachable club and that is what we are dedicated to achieving and maintaining.

Finally, we would like to thank the outgoing members of the HSC Committee, Chris Perry, our Rear Commodore Sailing and Paul Anderson, our Sailing Secretary, who gave their time over 3 years and whose assistance and hard work was invaluable to the smooth running of the sailing.

And as always, this is your club, for you to enjoy and make the most of. The Committee is working hard to make this a great place for your water sports, for your social gatherings and most of all for your enjoyment and together we can keep HSC buzzing for many more years to come. Last but not least, we would like to thank ALL the volunteers, on the water, in the galley and behind the bar without whom there wouldn't be a club. Thank you.

