

LEICESTER ROWING CLUB AGM – THURSDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2023

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Riverside and Agencies

Council

Work on the towpath and riverside has been very limited, but the Council has now confirmed **SUNDAY 26 NOVEMBER** for a council supported clean up. This time we hope to focus cutting back the overgrowth both on the riverside and towpath. The Council are allowing a team of 20 to cut back on the riverside, but we are limitless on the tow path and club side, so release your inner Edward Scissorhands and join in!

C&RT

I still have paint for the railings which was donated by the C&RT, and am waiting for better weather to organise a session. Many thanks to the volunteers who worked so hard to clean the path this year, and wielded paint brushes.

Environment Agency

It was very disappointing again that the EA did not do their usual weed clearance this year. I was told this was due to severe staff shortages and the lack of a barge, usually on loan from the C&RT, to take the weed away. However the consequent growth of pennywort in particular has now been recognised as a huge problem, and talks continue on how best to deal with it.

It should be noted that all the agencies are suffering from restricted and reduced funds, and their ability to contribute at all to keeping the riverside and tow path in good order is severely limited. Both the Council and C&RT rely on volunteers, which means a loss of skills and knowledge of the Straight, and whether they are prepared to work on the Straight rather than Aylestone Meadows or Watermead. In addition I am told insurance prevents unsupervised work on the riverside, and limits Council staff to only work in good weather over the winter months, now ending 1 March.

DMU are equally concerned about the amount of weed and silting up in the canal and basin, and are actively looking at whether they could bring in contractors to help clear the basin. Despite contacting 5 companies recommended by Boston RC and the EA, they have yet to receive a positive response, and we continue to discuss what can be done over the next few months.

Committee meetings

The Committee have continued to use zoom meetings throughout and will continue to do so.

Joe Humphries Memorial Trust – CPR and Defibrillator training

Steve Humphries and his team came in for their annual training session in October, during SADS week. They provide invaluable information on CPR and use of the defibrillator, and provided an excellent and informative session. Our thanks to Steve Humphries and his colleagues for the time they spend with us on these sessions – they too are all volunteers.

Recreational Tours and Events

The recreational tours this year have suffered from weather conditions. The Good Friday Row was most enjoyable with 12 recreational rowers taking part. However our venture to row on the Danube in Austria had to be abandoned after two days due to rain and flood conditions, and our row on the Broads was brought to an abrupt halt when a motor cruiser backed into one boat taking the rudder off, and another had a minor

collision. Unfortunately the British Rowing Tour on the Severn was also affected by torrential rain, and although our rowers kept going to the end, several other crews abandoned the row because of the cold and extremely wet conditions. We hope for better luck next year!

ENERGY COSTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Several members raised issues around the energy costs incurred by the Club, and whether there were measures to be taken to reduce them and also to improve environmentally friendly practices. This was a topic to be discussed at a General Meeting, but as that was postponed, it was never taken any further. If there is still interest, I will arrange a meeting to discuss this.

Anne Hock

Secretary

25th October 2023