

LEICESTER ROWING CLUB AGM – TUESDAY 16TH NOVEMBER 2021

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Riverside

Despite reminders, I have still to confirm dates with the Council to do work on the riverside. In the meantime, the Council have had their boats out, and the C&RT have also promised to do some work. The problem is timing as with the cutbacks, the Council are reluctant to approve overtime for their staff to work at weekends, and will not permit us to do work without their staff being present.

C&RT

Thank you to all those who reported incidents with the magnet fishers. These were followed up and due to our pressure, the Deputy City Mayor called a meeting with the EA, C&RT, Council, Police and ourselves to discuss what we, as a community, could do. Although not permitted by the C&RT, the penalties are small and almost impossible to enforce. As a result, it was agreed to pursue a 'change of culture' and signs will soon be going up making it clear magnet fishing is not allowed carrying the logos of all the agencies. These will be followed up on social media pointing out how anti-social magnet fishing is, and far from doing everyone a favour, the fishers are pursuing their own interests often to the detriment of other water users and the riverside communities.

As a result of the meeting, we were put in touch with Castle Mead Academy (the new school opposite Friars Mill) and have started a discussion to introduce rowing to their students. Liz is leading the rowing, and I continue to pursue the environmental issues around the tow path and water.

The C&RT are proposing a riverside partnership initiative for all interested parties which is being launched later this month at the Space Centre. At the moment all I know is that dredging is not included in any proposals, but there will be considerable investment in the canal to make it more attractive to all water users, and those who use the tow paths.

Liz has already referred to climate change and we need to do our bit for the riverside. Once the signs go up for the magnet fishers, the group will be turning its attention to litter and trying to make people take their litter home and not drop it wherever they feel like it. Feeding the rats and swans is also pretty high on the list, particularly given the damage done to wild birds by feeding them bread. Please support the initiatives and when you see signs around the clubhouse, remember it is down to each and every one of us to take our litter home, not to drop it around the grounds or in the water, and to clean the boats and blades after use to prevent the spread of weeds and invasive species.

Annual Dinner

The annual dinner was again postponed, and will now be held in September 2022. Rob Fox and Hazel Ward will be organising the event, and anyone interested in helping them should contact them direct.

Committee meetings

The Committee have continued to use zoom meetings throughout and will continue to do so as it has the benefit of higher attendance – and shorter meetings which has been welcomed by all!

Joe Humphries Memorial Trust – CPR and Defibrillator training

A reduced event was held in October for a session for members on CPR and defibrillator training. It was excellent, and the smaller numbers allowed for a more hands on session and greater understanding of how to recognise and respond if someone has a heart attack. It was agreed that the session should be repeated in the New Year, and it is recommended that all members, including juniors and parents, should attend. Recent events, in football in particular, have shown that a heart attack can happen to anyone at any time, and a speedy response is vital to save a life. Thanks to Steve Humphries and his colleagues for the time they spend with us on these sessions.

Also thanks to Joanne Talbot who has continued to monitor the Defibrillator by the gate to make sure it is available at all times.

Recreational Tours and Events

The recreational rowers have continued to row and their introduction to fine boats during the lockdown has increased skills along with a wider use of club boats – and we have welcomed the coaching support from Paul Shaw and Mike Watson in particular! We are again at full capacity and hope our 5 new recruits will quickly settle in.

We have greatly welcomed the 4 wheeled trolleys for the Explore boats, and pass a fervent thanks to those who organised the extra wheel on each trolley which has made getting the boats in and out of the boathouse easier and safer.

The squad has cautiously approached visits to clubs that have equally cautiously welcomed us. We have enjoyed great days out at Burton and Nottingham, and are looking forward to Santa's Challenge Row at Boston in December.

Finally I would like to thank all members for their continued support for the club, including the covid procedures and protocols. Some members have been relaxed about coming back to rowing, others less so and are still very cautious about mixing with other members. The need for tolerance and kindness to others has never been needed more, and please remember that not everyone is finding it easy to return to rowing or to using the clubhouse. Other clubs in the region are very much in the same position and none are fully open yet as our area continues to suffer such high rates of infection. A great deal of thought and care has gone into the procedures, and it is not enough just to thank those who have written them, the real thank you is making sure we observe them to keep all our members safe and well.

*Anne Hock
Secretary
6th November 2021*