

# East Coast Yacht Division (ECYD)

**Minutes of the 2023 AGM meeting on Saturday 18 November 2023**  
**At Littleton Sailing Club, Littleton Lane TW17 ONP**

## **Present**

At the start of the meeting: 27 members in person; another 21 who indicated they would join by Zoom and apologies from 13 members

## **Minutes of the 2022 AGM.**

As there were no questions, nor matters arising, the minutes of 2022 were approved by the meeting.  
Proposed by John Miller Seconded by David Crofts

## **Captain's Report [John Figgures]**

Last year, in the absence of any other candidate, I was elected as ECYD Captain.

Unfortunately, in common with many other Clubs and Associations, very few members had offered to join the ECYD Committee: this meant that only a few people were actually involved with managing and running you Club.

While almost all the legs for the long trip to the Baltic were filled, I was disappointing that there were so few charters before Freyja left for the Baltic and after her return. This season, Freyja has covered about 2,500 miles and visited many ports, including passage through the Kiel Canal.

We need to have lots of publicity – James Allen, at our Crew Bureau, has mentioned some difficulty in getting information onto the CSSC web-site – but we also need to find a way to publicise what we do directly to those eligible to join CSSA and ECYD.

My thanks to Vic Crawshaw for persuading Tony Pattinson to take over the role of East Coast News Editor and for the work by him,

The highlight of the year – speaking both as Captain and as Treasurer – was to receive the news that HMRC had accepted that the VAT due on the purchase of Freyja had not only been accounted for satisfactorily but also it was deemed that VAT had been paid when Freyja is in and returning to UK waters when completing Form C1331.

From early in 2023, I had advertised our need for help in CS-Sailing; as the year progressed and little help was forthcoming, I was concerned for the long-term future of ECYD. Long-standing committee members who have given years of service had indicated that they needed to stand down.

A Club is only as good as its members: to my mind, that means that the members all contribute to the success of the Club and also take opportunity to share their skills and knowledge at all levels with those people who want to learn or to develop their sailing.

We should not be relying on the same few people to provide taster sails, other courses, and sea-time to help newcomers. Nor should all aspects of ensuring that Freyja is ready for a season fall entirely on the Yacht Husband.

Over its life, from being an East Anglian based club, ECYD has welcomed CSSC and CSSA members from all over the UK not only sailing with us but also coming over during the lay-up period to help with maintenance; Of particular concern was finding a yacht husband.

But no one volunteered. Reluctantly, in the absence of a potential Yacht Husband, the Committee had to recognise that ECYD might have to close down.

Accordingly, ECYD held a Special General Meeting in September to consider an enabling motion to close ECYD if we could not find sufficient volunteers to run the Club. The motion was passed.

In the absence of a committee being formed at the AGM the club would inevitably be dissolved. However a proposed committee has come forward who will be able to take ECYD forward into 2024 and beyond and ensure that Freyja is kept in such good condition.

My thanks to them, past committee members and all those who have over the years directly supported the club in so many ways.

### **Treasurer's Report [John Figgures]**

John provided members with annual accounts for the year ending December 2022 which were approved by the meeting and are attached to these minutes.

He also provided members with a provisional Income and Expenditure account for 2023 showing the likely turn out at the end of the year. They are also attached. They make sobering reading.

The club suffered real loss of income during the two COVID years which ate into our accumulated reserves; compounded further by our not being able to take Freyja abroad because of concerns raised about her VAT status resulting in fewer charters being taken up.

Yet the charges made by contractors for labour and materials have risen significantly. As a consequence we have had to be very prudent about what work we should put out to contractors and what can be achieved by our yacht husband and a small group of members to keep Freyja in a good and more importantly safe condition. Thanks to them Freyja continues to be a pleasure in which to sail and that she continues to attract attention wherever she sails.

Next year we are likely to see significant increases in insurance and probably mooring fees. In addition we will likely need to spend about £9,000 early in the year ensuring Freyja is ready for another season. This work will likely include a 1000hr/engine service, the usual gelcoat 'repairs', clean and polish the hull and decks, replace mast head sheaves and other safety work to the heater and gas/cooker system.

Your committee will need to consider an increase in fees for 2024 to cover these increasing costs.

Mary Gandy had indicated her willingness to be the independent examiner of our 2022 accounts. This was approved by the meeting and a vote of thanks was recorded for her continued support of the club.

## **Yacht Husband's Report [Paul Dunn]**

Freyja returned home safely on 22 August 2023 and the following week was hauled out for a below waterline inspection.

Particular attention was paid to the prop and prop shaft anodes which last year had shown signs of accelerated corrosion. It may have been due to a loose earthing wire in the engine compartment and now rectified, but we should continue to check the anodes for corrosion. The prop anode was replaced and the one on the shaft left in place as it showed only light corrosion.

Efforts to find a cause for the corrosion by checking all wiring and replacing the galvanic isolator seems to have made a difference.

Attention was drawn to a future keel survey. In 2021 superficial rust on 3 of the 10 nuts holding the keel to the hull was noticed, cleaned and treated. The likely cause was water being allowed to stand in this part of the bilge. Only the manual bilge pump will clear the well, the electric pump drawing at a higher level. Departing crews should pump the bilge dry. Bearing in mind the age of Freyja it would be prudent planning to drop the keel again to confirm that the keel bolts are sound and if they might need replacing at some time in the future.

The yacht husband's detailed written report to members is attached to these minutes.

Otherwise, Freyja is in excellent condition with only a few minor issues identified during the year.

Freyja will be winterised and cleared; with some items being sent away for cleaning, checking or placed into an Ipswich dry store. A schedule is available showing the likely usual maintenance work required over the winter to enable re-commissioning in the spring.

Paul expressed his thanks to all those who had helped him with maintenance in the past. The need for members to help with maintenance was as acute as ever, especially early in the year before Freyja is commissioned for the season ahead. Paul hoped that the new yacht husband would receive more support to help keep Freyja in excellent condition and offered to provide some help and advice if necessary.

## **Yacht Secretary's Report [Mary Reed].**

Sea trials in April confirmed that there were no more than the usual snagging issues once Freyja was back in the water.

Take up of the initial programme of Boat Handling, Taster Sails and Radar familiarisation was poor and most of the courses had to be amalgamated or worse, cancelled.

Likewise the take up of charter slots in the Baltic were fewer than anticipated. Some skippers who had expressed an interest found that they were unable to form a crew and had to cancel their booking. Another had to withdraw as a consequence of ill-health.

This caused the bureau some difficulties in filling the available slots for an already shortened Baltic programme, but we were able to fill one slot where Freyja was used as a non-sailing 'hotel' booking. In the end 10 slots were filled, with just one left unfilled.

In the autumn, in spite of a price reduction there was little interest in sailing Freyja with only two short charters.

## **Crew Bureau's Report [James Allen]**

We have found it almost impossible to gain support from CSSC advertising the activities of ECYD, nor have we found it possible to utilise their Nuticket booking system.

Nevertheless we have built up the number of members on the club's Facebook page from less than 100 to over 140.

A few skippers, a very few, posted photographs and comments on our Facebook and WhatsApp pages. Our thanks to them as they undoubtedly help promote the club to current and prospective members. We should in future encourage all skippers to do so.

We received over 30 enquiries for berths on summer cruises to the Baltic but there were few requests from skippers for additional crew. As a consequence, we were only able to place six members on the sea time cruises organised by the club in the Baltic.

The planned early season courses – boat handling and skipper development - had a poor take-up, in spite of members previously indicating that they would like them.

Our reducing prices for charters and events in September also failed to draw takers for them.

My sincere thanks to those skippers who offered to run courses and events.

## **Election of Officers**

There being no other nominations made at the meeting those who had agreed to stand for two years and properly nominated were duly elected. Proposed by David Crofts Seconded by James Savage

Captain	Jeff Herschel
Treasurer	John Figgures
Club Secretary	Laura Barber
Yacht Secretary	Brian Barnes
Yacht Husband	Stuart Newlands
Crew Bureau	James Allen
Membership Secretary	Jeff Herschel
Member	John Miller
Member	Steve McGarry
Member	Richard Maxwell
Webmaster	Martin Hugo

The Meeting agreed the Reports submitted by the Captain, Treasurer, Yacht Sec, and Crew Bureau Secretary. In closing the AGM, John Figgures as Retiring Captain, thanked all present and past ECYD committees for providing such an enjoyable yacht to sail.

He expressed pleasure that ECYD would continue under a new committee.

There being no further business the AGM ended at 12.10pm.

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AC24

There was now a suggestion that ECYD should partner with the AC24 group and make Freyja available for a two-year period. In 2024 sail her to Barcelona and then over-winter her in the Mediterranean. Possibly in Gibraltar where she could be used for RYA Accredited Training Courses managed by the AC24 group. Then in 2025 return her to the UK either by reversing the route out or by taking the mast down [a usual and unexceptional event] and bring Freyja back through France's canals and rivers.

There had been no formal proposal put forward by the AC24 group for consideration by ECYD. There was an active discussion and issues raised included whether or not CSSA would stand as guarantor behind the project; what guarantees were being offered to ensure Freyja was returned in the same condition as at the outset; who would fund the reported proposals to fit-out Freyja to make her suitable for use in the Mediterranean; what guarantees were being offered for the costs of maintenance and who might be responsible for any repairs, minor and major; what charter income was being offered to ECYD by the AC24 group for the use of Freyja.

It became clear in the meeting that while wishing the AC24 group success with their project but bearing in mind the issues being raised, there was a strong disinclination to let the AC24 group have Freyja.

There followed a discussion as to where Freyja should be taken during the long trip charter season in 2024.

It was acknowledged that it had been some time since ECYD had sailed along the south coast of England and French waters. That said the Baltic had in the past strongly attracted interest. The previous VAT issue – but now resolved - had meant Freyja had been limited to GB waters and that had seriously impacted the club's income.

It was agreed we should return to the Baltic in 2024.

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