

East Coast Yacht Division of the Civil Service Sailing Association. Club Secretary Report 2023-2024 - Laura Barber (CSSA ref: 12790).

When co-opted on to the ECYD committee in November 2023 I was keen to use my civil service professional background to further the aims of the club. I did this by making a prompt start in identifying the need to expand ECYD membership to ensure the future of the division. My plan was to make full use of the Civil Service Sports Council (CSSC) and its platforms to contact hard to reach potential members.

From March 2024 I had meetings with CSSC, notably its events' manager to discuss recruitment opportunities and open days. I also met with the CSSC's membership manager to identify suitable civil service and public service hubs where I could place leaflets and put up advertising notices. I also discussed setting up and running an ECYD stall in large offices and workplaces.

This work forms a basis for the future; any incoming ECYD committee now has the building blocks needed to expand the division. This requires collaborative working. It is disappointing that a cohesive approach to recruitment and membership has not been in evidence this year but could be activated in 2024-2025.

On 8 March 2024 I took the initiative and attended the AGM of the Suffolk and North Essex (SNE) branch of CSSC. The meeting was held in Bury St. Edmunds. I was surprised to learn that many attendees at the SNE AGM believed the only sailing opportunities in the eastern region of England were at Rutland Water (keelboat sailing).

I spoke up for ECYD and told the meeting about Freyja and how she was berthed at Ipswich. I promoted the club yacht and, as a result, there are many at CSSC SNE who have expressed an interest in sailing on Freyja in 2025.

Subsequently I have completed the Nuticket training, enabling me to sell berths and events on Freyja via the CSSC platform.

In April 2024, and after becoming a Facebook administrator for ECYD, I was able to advertise taster sails on Freyja. Whilst there was some interest in them, these events were cancelled due to lack of firm bookings. I was keen to organise introductions to Freyja in the absence of a published 2024 summer programme.

I was pleased to be able to take part in Freyja's "shakedown cruise" in April 2024 and this was linked to the work that I had done, along with others, to build sailing relationships in East Anglia. This included attending social events with 'East Coast Cruising' based in Ipswich. This led to ECYD being invited to events in Bradwell, Walton-on-Naze and the Chatham Airshow. Regrettably, these events seemed to cut across booked and "pencilled-in" charters. However, the links and friendships have been forged and could easily be maintained.

From February 2024 to May 2024, inclusive, I organised meetings of the ECYD committee. I had stated when taking on the role of Club Secretary that I would like to see committee meetings taking place each month. The rhythm of committee meetings depended upon the availability of key club officers. It is unfortunate that a lack of availability, of club officers, led to a lack of collaborative working and decision making. ***Prepared and issued by Laura Barber.***

(One page only).