

Annual report for year ended 5th April 2020

RHSC Sailability registered with HMRC in March 2016, was registered with the Charities Commission 3rd September 2018 (charity reg no 1179762). The charity was launched in August 2017 holding its first Sailability sail at Rye Harbour. A request to change the constitution to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), along with a name change, was agreed by the Charities Commission and the charity was recorded as Rye Harbour Sailability (RHS) registered number 1183222 on 2nd May 2019. RHSC Sailability is being dissolved and the account closed after we receive a Gift Aid payment from HMRC.

This year has once again proved to be successful and rewarding. The number of regular sailors increases steadily as we become better known to the local community and organisations. The weather was kind during the sailing season with only one day missed due to bad weather, which consisted of a dead calm day with overcast skies, even so, volunteers decided to take sailors on trips out in the RHSC rescue boat as we couldn't sail in those conditions. This gave a different experience and the feedback from the sailors was that they liked the speed of the boat.

We are still running with one sailing boat, Luey, a Sport 16 with retractable keel. After being informed of an accident at Black Water in the lake district where a sailor died when a similar boat capsized because the retractable keel wasn't secured in place, we immediately devised a safety mechanism to prevent this happening to Luey which also has a retractable keel. When sailing, the keel is held in place with a secure strap fitted between eye bolts either side of the keel housing.

The range of people with disabilities remains about the same. People with autism, mild mobility issues, cerebral palsy, learning difficulties, dementia and mental health issues all enjoy sailing at Rye Harbour. All sailors benefit from the sailing, appreciating the silence, the rhythm of the waves and the sound of the waves lapping up against the hull. It's very rewarding for the volunteers to watch the sailors smiling faces as they return from a sail. We are still puzzling how we can fit a hoist to enable us to take less-mobile people sailing. There could be a possibility of fixing a hoist to a pontoon further upriver, but, although access to the site is feasible, there are no facilities nearby on the shore. The addition of a gate to the rail on the adjacent quay to the slipway has improved access for mobile sailors in getting on and off Luey, as well as providing relief for the crew who had to raise the keel every time there was a crew changeover on the slipway. Volunteers provide a helping hand to enable sailors to step down onto the boat rather than to have to lift their legs up and over Luey's gunnel from the slipway.

In order to accommodate the increase in the numbers of sailors RHS has been keen to investigate the use of more Sailability boats. On our sailing days we have approximately 2 hours in which to sail over the tide. Six people can sail at one time made up of 2 crew, 2 carers and 2 sailors. This leaves sailors and carers waiting sometimes for over an hour for a sail. This is particularly frustrating for people with autism who can become quite irritated and frustrated by the wait. We approached The Challenger association who have agreed to lease RHS a Challenger Mk 3 Trimaran free of charge. These are stable boats providing space for a sailor and instructor. Rother Active have provided us with funding to pay for a Senior Instructor (SI) to take sailors out on the Trimaran to give them more of a one to one experience of sailing. By doing this we hope to free up a space on Luey for others to sail.

Unfortunately, the Coronavirus Covid-19 has put all these plans on hold and the Challenger Association has agreed to revisit the situation in September 2020. Active Rother have been informed and realise that all sailing and social events are cancelled for the foreseeable future. The Rye Harbour Sailing Club where we organise our sailing events is also closed

For the last two years RHS have been fundraising in earnest in order to purchase a new rescue boat for the charity. A rescue boat is essential to cover the Sailability boat when taking people with disabilities out sailing and we have been using the Rye Harbour Sailing Club's (RHSC) boat which is over 20 years old. The new rescue boat is 5 metres in length and provides additional space to make it easier for the crew should they need to deliver first aid in the boat. There is also a man overboard mat with fixings to the tubes. This may be the first step towards joint sailing with the sailing club, particularly if all specifications RHS are obliged to put in place are able to become part of the operations manual for RHSC.

The local community and businesses have been wonderful in their support of RHS. A fundraising Burns Night Dinner raised a staggering £2,000. The local co-op at Winchelsea Beach raised over £2,600 with their Community fund. Little Cheyne Court Wind Farm awarded the charity over £4,500, The William Brake Trust £3,000 and the Eric and Francis Ford Trust £1,500. Personal donations have been made and our last social event of the year in December, at Winchelsea New Hall, A Murder Mystery, raised £1,000. By the end of December 2019 enough funds had been raised, either through social events or funding applications to go ahead and order our Rescue Boat. The new rescue boat arrived on Thursday 27th February and the naming ceremony was due to take place on Saturday 14th March 2020. We prepared for the event having asked some 60 people to attend, but at the last minute due to the vulnerability of some of our guests and the virus threat the event was cancelled. After holding a competition to involve the local community in the naming of the boat, the name 'Sea Rush' was agreed.

This year a funding application has been made to the Lottery Postcode Trust Fund as we are fund raising in earnest again, this time for a second Sailability Boat. RHS has been successful in the first stage of the Lottery Postcode Trust funding process. We have asked for an award of £19,500 in order to purchase a Drascombe Lugger. The hull shape of this boat provides good stability making it a safe Sailability boat that will hold 6 persons. It has a loose footed gunter yawl rig which is easy to manage and avoids the dangers of a boom. The Drascombe Lugger is certified to carry 6 persons. We look forward to hearing whether RHS has been successful in the second stage of the funding process in May 2020.

We have acquired the services of a web designer who has agreed to design a website for RHS during the next financial year. We have a sponsor to provide some money towards this cost and are looking for either, another sponsor or a funding body to whom we can apply for an award to cover the remaining cost.

Volunteers are still thin on the ground regarding the running of the administration of the charity which means a small core of dedicated volunteers are tasked with various roles, e.g. Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary, Social Secretary, Fund Raiser, PR and Advertising not to mention the additional work needed for the Data Protection Manager role and DBS checks. We have been luckier with more volunteers stepping forward to help on the riverside with helming or crewing on Luey. Our Sailability sailing events are covered by 15 volunteers who at each session, give their time for inshore and riverside activities, but it

is the back end running of the charity that is dependent on a few stoic volunteers. We have created a Q and A leaflet asking for people to step forward and volunteer to make a difference for various roles. RHS shall be attending volunteering events later in the year. Apart from our wonderful volunteers, who have stood strong and firm in their commitment to the charity, we are very aware how important it is to have a good relationship with the local community. By holding events in surrounding village halls, we have made ourselves known to the wider community, which has increased the support we receive, either by way of funding or by getting more local people to come and support RHS at our sailing events.

We have a hard-working core of volunteers who promote Sailability, ensuring funds are raised to support the running costs of each sailing event, which cost in excess of £200. We constantly, review and plan for the future, to ensure that we have adequate funds to keep running.