

UK National Championships AGM, Penzance SC

1. Apologies for absence

None

2. Confirmation of 2017 AGM minutes of meeting

Proposed: Nick Hirst

Seconded: Steve Goacher

3. Chairman's Report

See Chris Turner's report. Chris highlighted the following:

- SW Region's success. Thanks to Chris Thorne for getting this going with an Open series and training.
- UKFA currently has 170 members - better than it's been for a while and the Direct Debit scheme has helped this.
- UKFA didn't win the 2023 bid for the Worlds at HISC. FI wants to take the championships to more family friendly environments, e.g. Greece. Also, we hosted the World in 2015, (not that long ago in people's perception).
- We have a low number of entries at Penzance. We expected it to be low because of the popularity of Carnac, but it's lower than expected. It was the correct decision to move from Looe to Penance as we would have sustained a large loss had we gone there. Thanks were expressed to PzSC for stepping in to host our Championships.
- We will issue a survey following the Nationals (probably after Carnac) on how to take the Championships forward.
- John Piatt and Vince Horey are standing down as association committee members – thanks to them and to all the remaining members. Volunteers welcome! We are especially looking for someone to arrange the Open Meeting circuit.

Acceptance of the report:

Proposed: Andy Robinson

Seconded: Nick Hirst

4. Treasurers Report

- Membership good.
- Sponsorship has added to our finances.
- We had some income from the 2017 Europeans

Q. Steve Goacher – how many members do we have.

A. Ian Castle – As of today, 170 members (96 boats)

Q Rich Wagstaff. Suggested putting membership fees up. £30, of which £8 goes to FI for boat sticker.

A. Chris Turner – to be discussed later on at the AGM.

Acceptance of report:

Proposed: Simon Benson

Seconded: Richard Wagstaff

5. Election of Committee Members

The Chairman & Secretary's roles are coming to the end of the term. Ian Castle has agreed to stay on of another year.

The remainder of the committee (Simon Benson, Sophia Benson, Dave Hall, Nick Hirst, Steve Goacher, Derian Scott, Andy Robinson) need voting in for another year

Proposed: Graham Slater

Seconded: Chris Thorne

6. Membership classifications and attendant subscription rates

Local membership

See the proposal for a new "Local" Membership type. This was presented by Derain and a discussion invited.

Q: Russ Clark – how many might downgrade from Full to Local?

A: Chris Turner. We've had a look at the membership list. We think we'd lose a few but not that many. Most people need to be a Full member to compete in Championships. Others are loyal and feel they should be a full member. Yes, we will lose a few. Will we cover the drop in subs? We don't know and won't know till we try.

Q. Richard Wagstaff – If we try the Local membership for a few years & it doesn't work, can we revoke it?

A. Chris Turner – Yes, we can revoke it; things should be challenged if they don't appear to be working.

Q. Ian Dobson – Should eligibility to sponsor's prizes at Golden Dolphin events be withheld from Local members as a "this is what you could have won if you were a full member" incentive to upgrade?

A. Chris Turner - we've withheld the prizes this year and it's caused trouble. We'd hope that these people will upgrade. What we're trying to do is reach club members.

Suggestion from Chris Thorne – Thinks some will downgrade. How about charging £5 at the GD event per event, so say if a crew does 2 GD events the association would get £10.

Rick Spring informed us that non-affiliated athletes (e.g. cyclists) can buy temporary membership for the day – e.g. £5 - £10. Doing this in the Fireball fleet could help encourage club members that don't travel. At £5 a day it won't put you off going to another event.

Dave Hall responded that we've discussed doing this but who is going to collect it? It will either result in more admin for the hosting club or for a committee member.

Penny Clark said that the UK Global insurance discount is a good tempter. Perhaps we shouldn't offer this to the Local membership type. Ian Dobson & Richard Wagstaff agreed. Chris Turner said that non-members aren't using UK Global for insurance anyway.

Barry Smith said that paying a boat fee (2 full memberships) would suit someone like him who has multiple crews.

Chris Turner replied that because FI works on an individual basis, we therefore have to align with them for international events

Richard Wagstaff asked that if Barry bought £30 for “a crew”, could he nominate a crew – say the one he would use at the Europeans, and at the UK Nationals and other events we could just recognise that there have been 2 memberships bought for that boat.

Chris Turner replied that he doesn't agree with “floating” membership. We are trying to get more club sailors into the association.

Ian Dobson said that he agreed with the idea of local membership, but we need to decide how to implement it.

Pat Collison – thinks asking a club to collect UKFA fees at the event is ok. At DWSC, the club set a minimum limit on the number of club boats it has when deciding whether to host an event. Having a lower membership fee would help guarantee an open at DWSC as the UKFA fee puts club members off.

Richard Wagstaff asked that if DWSC members don't want to join, would £8 or so still be too much?

Jane Collison replied that she believes that with a £5 fee, DWSC members would pay that to race at their open.

CT: In principle do we think the idea of a local membership is ok? There was a general noise of agreement.

Proposed: Graham Slater

Seconded: Russ Clark

Discussion on membership fees

Russ Clark – in 5 years on current fees with no increase is the class sustainable? Could we maintain things for a couple of years? Russ & Penny are currently members of 4 associations. The Fireball Association is the only one where both Helm & Crew have to join. However, they said the savings in insurance etc. make being a member worthwhile.

The last increase in membership fees was 2016.

Ian Dobson asked if the Direct Debit could be index linked with inflation?

Ian Castle isn't sure and will check.

Richard Wagstaff asked if we look at membership and who doesn't attend the Nationals, what percentage of the membership is attending International events or 5 opens a year? We should consider putting fees up.

Chris Thorne agreed pointing out that most gym memberships cost around £30/month!

Alice Powell asked if junior membership would need to go up if Full membership goes up?

Chris Turner said we'd consider the membership types separately.

Vote on leaving membership fees as is for Full & Junior this year and introduce the new local membership.

Local price £8

Proposed: Richard Wagstaff

Seconded: Steve Goacher

We need to advertise the Local membership widely - How about a piece in Y&Y, sell the idea at the Dinghy show.

7. Any other business

James Arnott proposed that we align the age for junior membership with the trophy that's awarded. I.e. set both at 25.

Chris Turner said that UKFA has talked about bringing down the reduced entry discount to 21 to remove the disparity between entry fees and the trophy. The Junior membership Youth would therefore be under 21.

Chris Thorne suggested we have a youth & student membership?

Sophia Benson pointed out that not everyone leaves university at 21.

Richard Wagstaff thinks 21 is a bit early to bump up the fees.

A lot of people agreed.

Chris Turner said we'd leave discussing this tonight, but discuss again later.

Russ Clark suggested we target university students. They can get a cheap fireball, reduced fees for events, discounts on insurance, etc. Get some of the people that come out of RS200s. We should aim to catch some of the people coming out of the RS fleet.

Ian Castle said that class publicity needed to get more people in. We also need to spread the load on people doing work in the class, e.g. Dave H doing write-ups at a Nationals.

Chris Turner said we're trying to get more people in – **volunteers please** 😊.

Ian Dobson said how about nominating people at the start of the week to do a write-up. E.g. Bob does Sunday, Fred on Monday, etc.

Everyone agreed this was a great idea.

Penny Clark asked if we'd consider doing a shorter Nationals when we have a North European Worlds.

Chris Turner – The 2018 Nationals were organised a long time before Carnac. Next year our dates are in May to allow for Montreal. Then we heard that the Europeans were being held in May 2019 too. Because of this confusion FI is going to introduce an event calendar. UKFA is thinking about whether we need to change the format of the Nationals. There will be a Membership survey after this event. Long term attendance trends are down – we need to stop the decline.

Russ Clark told us about the Musto skiff survey which is open to anyone. A percentage of responses comes from non-Musto sailors and the responses are published on the Musto website. A week is good to get to know people, but you can find out so much more if you speak to people outside the event and the class.!

Chris Turner said the survey would be extended to club fireball sailors. We're not sure how to go wider. Russ offered to talk to us about it with later.

Ian Dobson asked if next year's Nationals should be 7 days?

Barry Smith suggested that if we stuck at a shorter Nationals next year, Fireballs could join in a summer club week.

Simon Benson pointed out that we have to fight to get clubs to sign up to hosting events in future years. We're booked for 2020 and trying to get 2021 booked. Want 2021 for Mounts Bay – but have to wait for them to make a decision in September.

Richard Wagstaff expressed that he's not happy that international events have gone annual. There was an intention for them to be bi-annual. Next year is not good as UK boats only get a 4-day Nationals if they don't go to the Worlds.

Steve Goacher proposed a vote of thanks to Ian Castle – he keeps things running smoothly and keeps track of everything really well. Lots of noises of agreement 😊