

## ***Minutes for SS-SGM at HISC at 11am on Friday April 11<sup>th</sup> 2025***

*The SS-Captain welcomed approx 50 members present.*

*Apologies for Absence were received from: Blakes, Dodgsons and David and Julia Archer.*

Gary explained that the SGM was generally regarded as the junior partner to the AGM where decisions were made. The main business of the SGM had previously been to confirm the summer programme and confirm dates for the winter lunches up to the end of the calendar year.

This year the meeting was more about the handing over of the Captaincy so that these future events could be organised.

### **1. Where we are now and where we are aiming to be. Gary**

Gary repeated his remarks of last year, saying that he hoped he had judged correctly that thanks to a very strong Team our activities are going well.

At last the problematic operation of the Ferry Service was about to be improved with the reinstallation of the pontoon and delivery of the ferry boat.

The captain had requested and received several comments and messages from members which he had discussed with Delia who had responded in her report.

**The rebranding** suggested by LwL, and now passed on to their new leader Rosy Raines was the most radical item and would be considered after the Team reports. Gary said that it would not be up to him to make any decision regarding rebranding but thought it needed to be resolved quickly. In anticipation of what was to follow he reiterated that what distinguished SS from other groupings was its **robust structure**, which had stood the test of time. It has an **annual subscription** which defines membership: this also means that it **has a Treasurer** and funds when needed. It also has recorded meetings which are a means of holding decision makers to account.

### **2 Updates from the SS-Team (*in agenda order rather than as presented*) Solent**

**Sailing** (*David was absent so Gary read the report*)

Report from Solent Sailors April 2025

The 2024 rallies went well with a good turn-out of boats at the three main rallies.

For 2025 the new ferry should be in operation from the end of April.

The pontoon should also be back in operation very shortly (the gantry was being put back in place earlier this week).

The 2025 programme for Solent /Social Sailing is now organised as follows:-

**Bembridge and Cowes 9 th to 12 th May**

**Haslar and Yarmouth 8 th to 10 th July**

**Folly and Lymington 6 th to 8 th September**

Booking for the first rally is underway, so far we have about 12 SS boats signed up.

**Closing date for Bembridge is 18th April.**

We would have liked to have organised some further events such as one day visits with lunch ashore to various Solent venues but we need more volunteers if this is to happen in the future.

Thanks to the other rally organisers Tony Button and David Archer

### **b) Treasurer and SS- Membership Jane Blaydes**

We have £1185.40 in the bank

Income = £530 - from subs

Expenses = £129.63 - LWL speakers, cards and Beaulieu invoice from last year.

We have 103 members with a few resignations and several new members with boats, and several not paid up yet!

**c) One-Day Outside Events. *Terry McMahon***

Terry spoke as always on behalf of Candice and others who help organise these events which continue to have a variable but enthusiastic following.

As always new suggestions are welcomed, as is participation from a wider range of our members.

The outstanding Tulip Festival at Arundel Castle was recommended for immediate visiting.

**d) HISC Membership. *Steve Bannister***

Steve gave a detailed update on HISC membership which varied throughout the season around the 3000 mark.

Gary thanked Steve for some helpful exchanges on; attempts by new older members to get involved in club sailing and via SS in particular, “club buddies” to help with “getting involved”, better awareness of SS activities at introduction sessions, and an explanation of the drive to expand certain activities through the Club membership committee.

SS members then engaged with Steve over a range of membership and welcoming issues.

**e) Dining Review. *Delia Clarke***

Again I say thank you to all of you for your help.

It is often difficult deciding your choice for lunch at least a week ahead! For another year the system of pre-ordering, which has many benefits for caterers, has worked well, as you have replied to my emails on time!

Looking ahead to future events we have to consider some issues that have caused problems in the past year.

**Firstly**, and urgently, there needs to be some planning for social events on shore this summer. As you know I only try to plan for winter months and possibly an occasional summer event. Your suggestion and offers to organise for SS are essential to keep a programme alive.

**Secondly**, we may have to reconsider the planning for monthly winter lunches at HISC for next year. The base line is that the club is not generally open on Friday lunchtimes – our Bookings are ‘a special event’ and the club now want a minimum of 40 diners.

Looking at just SS support for these events we have achieved very good support in the autumn -**October 52 , November 49**, but then more variable - **December 32, January 37 , February 25 and March 29**

Some of these events would not be viable without the support of LWL. Please put the dates ahead in your diary and support these events if you possibly can – without good numbers we may not be able to function.

For the past 3 years these events have been shared with LWL. I know this has caused some frustration and difficulties for both LWL and SS. But the truth is, without this co-operation LWL would not have survived, despite the vigorous endeavours of Angie and Gusti with advertising and emails. LWL have not attracted sufficient supporters for an independent booking, averaging only 12 including guests; the exception being the Fundraising event for Air Ambulance in February.

There was a lot of support for this event – totally 72 diners – from club members and many invited guests. The fundraising raised a grand total £2500.00 plus ... a phenomenal event. Thank you to SS who supported this event, and to those who were not able to support on this occasion, I hope that you find other ways to support this very essential service.

At the combined SS and LWL winter lunch events, there has always been a table reserved for LWL to maintain the ethos of this group. Latterly several menfolk have also joined this group. In view of these changes, LWL are proposing a rebrand, and Rosy Raines is now organising this group, I look forward to working with her to provide an interesting program throughout the winter months. I am not proposing that SS is rebranded. Social Sailing is a well established fleet, with web site, bank account, and formal admin structure of Captain, Treasurer etc which is recognised by Cruising Committee, General Committee, General Manager and HISC crew.

The group operates throughout the year with activities planned for boaters in the Solent, Chi harbour and on shore activities for those who no longer sail. However - it would be very advantageous for the proposed newly rebranded LWL and SS to join together as one group for winter lunches at the club. It would make advertising and co-ordinating these events a great deal easier and we would all benefit by meeting more HISC members and by planning events with a wide range of speakers.

As you know all SS offer at the moment is a free lunch from SS funds. I have asked Nick and Henry if the cost of speakers lunches can be absorbed by the club – afraid the answer is – ‘the additional cost would be reflected in the increased cost of your meal’.

So for now – the cost of speakers’ meals that SS have organised has come from SS funds. Perhaps we need to also account for cost of small gift and offer of travelling expenses?

Please let us know of your suggestions for future events as soon as possible – particularly for suggestions and offers to organise summer events and for contact with speakers, so we can plan a varied programme for next winter.

Thank you all for your help. Delia

## **Discussion of comments from members about joint Third Friday Lunches and Talks**

Gary prefaced this discussion by saying that a member of both SS and LwL had requested that the suggestion/proposal made by Angie D should be progressed. Since it was a verbal request rather than a written motion he had decided that discussion was the correct option to deal with this rather than making a decision. Gary said facts and opinion need to be separated so, (fact!) the message from

Angie to her successor Rosy says *"I still feel SS & LwL should try and rebrand and several friends said this (the same) to me.... One friend even suggested that it was called "Winter lunch group" especially as so many of the original sailors are dead now!"*

*Anyway, food for thought for you when I hand over the reigns on Friday to you" Angie and Gusti (who I later discovered was LwL treasurer) resigned on the Friday.*

As put to me there is supporting verbal and recorded comment to support the case for rebranding which is threefold.

1. The Friday lunches part of SS is very similar to LwL in that LwL membership is now open to all Hisc members and they collect money by a single annual £5 payment. LwL also do outside day events such as a film show. Both groups advertise similarly recently.
2. SS has collapsed having lost Solent Sailing, no longer has a summer programme...see their website, so only winter lunches plus speakers remain.
3. HISC has asked for ideas to expand membership through the HISC Membership Committee and LwL has been deemed to be a good channel through which to expand due to their WI contacts. (Steve B says there is some misunderstanding on this one)

(I hope members of SS can see my difficulties since the suggestion is based on a view of SS that, during my tenure as Captain SS, has collapsed, so i wasn't the right person to chair any discussion. Apologies to all members for my rant! The counter arguments about the huge remaining differences between the two groups are well covered by Delia and I ought to have ended with the proposer saying her piece and leave matters at that. So I have listed her argument in the 3 points above. The outcome was gratifying for your captain in that he had defended SS to the last!)

The rebranding proposal rests with Rosy, Norman and Delia now I assume.

## **AoB**

Viv Williams advertised the Kids on the Water programme once again and asked for help from cruiser owners

Barry Blades described the new initiative through HISC to get less able people on the water in Ventures or cruisers and asked for help.

The meeting had finished and the outgoing Captain was about to hand over to

Norman Payne the Incoming Captain **when Jane started to thank Gary for his Captaincy and produced multiple presents for him together with a thank-you card signed by members.**

For once Gary was rendered speechless by the generosity of members.

Rosemary was given some beautiful flowers chosen by Jane.

Rosemary has supported me at all times.

I was particularly moved by Trevor thanking me for keeping SS going on behalf of those in the later eighties and beyond.

The meeting had gone beyond the hour mark when I officially handed over to Norman having to explain that large SS-Flag of the Class Captain was still on one of our boats but would be with him well in time for the first outing to Bembridge.

**Norman introduced himself** to his members and spoke briefly about his leadership of walking groups. He described some of his plans for attracting new boat owners. He is planning to meet the outgoing Team in order to start work on developing the programme for the months ahead. I am sure we all wish him well.

*Ended 12-15ish*

#### **AMMENDMENTS**

1. SS and LWL will remain separate entities but will still work together during the winter
2. Solent Sailors are, very definitely, still part of SS