

Intro

The Eyot Centre is a registered charity, number 1093261.

It's home to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Section, the Henley Canoe Club and Henley Dragon Boat Club all of which serve their members in accordance with the aims of the Charity.

Membership of the Eyot Centre is open to anyone.

Objectives and activities of the Eyot Centre

(an extract from the Constitution)

The objectives of the Charity are to help people develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities through leisure time activities and to provide a centre for meetings, lectures, classes and other leisure pursuits.

We place an emphasis on the development of young people and are actively seeking to grow membership, especially for younger people though that's not exclusively.

Achievements and performance of the Eyot Centre.

The Duke of Edinburgh Section has a fully subscribed membership of 90 for the current year and provides courses at all three levels; Bronze, Silver and Gold.

The participants followed a full programme of activities including expeditions and contributed just over 1,700 hours of voluntary community activity.

Last year we had our first over-seas expedition when one of our Gold groups went canoeing in Sweden.

All staff are appropriately qualified Volunteers, offering their expertise free of charge. The Centre also runs training courses to enable it's staff to lead expeditions.

20 youngsters have now achieved their Gold award and visited Buckingham Palace to receive them.

Henley Canoe Club offers a full programme of events throughout the year.

The junior section is divided into a beginner's group, all 19 of whom earned their British Canoeing "Start" award and the improvers group of 16 members all of whom finished the season with the "Discover" award. The Youth group comprises 16 members who continue to develop their paddling skills but also enjoyed activities such as a pumpkin carving competition at Halloween, a pancake race on Shrove Tuesday and frequent post-paddling BBQs on the warm summer evenings of 2018.

The club has 42 adult members enjoyed a variety of trips during the years as well as the regular Tuesday evening local paddles. The club hosted a successful marathon race in the autumn with over 230 competitors participating and provided staff and equipment for Phyllis Court Regatta for the Disabled.

The Dragon Boat Club competes successfully in the National League Premier Division. In 2019, Henley Dragons came fifth in the Premier league, and also won the National Championship in Nottingham in September. The Eyot Centre under which the Henley Dragons fall is all about youth and their development. These young individuals gave a great account of themselves in each racing event. Henley Dragons competed in the 21.6mile race across London, The Great River Race. It was a superb effort by Henley Dragons, achieving the award for the third fastest boat overall, coming 48th out of 314 boats, and were the first dragon boat across the line out of ten. Henley beat the next fastest dragon boat from Germany by 9 whole minutes. Henley finished it in a time of 2:18:37.

Three adults and two junior members represented GB at the World Championships in Thailand last year. Despite the great heat and humidity, Team GB Youth paddled away with a bronze medal! The club hosts the Henley Winter Series which comprises of four events during the winter months where up to 18 crews enter each one. Due to the unpredictable weather, heightened river levels and flow, Henley have only been able to host one race this season, the others have had to be cancelled for safety reasons. Henley Dragons also run the successful Pangbourne Regatta on behalf of the Rotary Club of Pangbourne.

Henley Dragons have been working hard to raise the Centre's profile and as a club, we take our role in the community very seriously. We assisted in the Regatta for the Disabled and promoted a school competition, where the winner for designing a poster supporting our Winter Series would have been visited by our award-winning youth members, who won the Bronze medals in Thailand.

We will be working with other organisations this year to give back to the community, including Thames Valley Adventure Playground in Maidenhead. We enjoyed hosting Tim's Big Duck on the river banks at the Eyot Centre. We also exhibited at Paul Badger's event The Little Welly in Henley which was a really enjoyable event that our members actively engaged in and used as an opportunity to promote paddlesports at the Eyot Centre.

We have welcomed a number of new members to the club over the latter part of last year and actively look towards boosting this number in the coming months. We'd especially like to get the youth of Henley and the surrounding areas involved as the Eyot Centre as a whole offers a whole raft of canoeing & paddling opportunities. We're now gearing up to compete in our league races which kick off in April.

Eyot Centre Management

The Trustees of Thamesfield Youth Association continue to support the Eyot Centre.

In August 2018 the Eyot Centre was awarded a Capital Grant from SODC of nearly £53,000 for the redevelopment of its waterfront. The loan agreement was complex and was not concluded until January this year. It suffered a long delay within OCC's legal department and we have to thank Stef Gawrysiak for removing the obstacle.

Preliminary work on our waterfront is about to start, followed by the contractor Ian Cook who will begin once Henley's regattas and riparian festivals are over. Further improvements in the pipeline include replacing and upgrading the boat storage sheds.

The facilities of the Eyot Centre are used by many local community groups, including other D of E groups, Sea Cadets, Scout groups and schools who hire the equipment, the Coaches or sometimes camp there

The Centre has been hired for corporate team building days, private taster sessions, wedding receptions, parties and formal meetings or functions.

End of Report.

Richard Parham

Secretary. The Eyot Centre