RYA House
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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL YACHTING ASSOCIATION HELD AT RYA HOUSE, HAMBLE AND BROADCAST ON YOUTUBE AT 11:00 HRS ON FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2025

The Notice convening the meeting printed in the Annual Strategic Report 2025 was taken as read. Sir Michael Arthur, RYA Chair confirmed the meeting as quorate and reported that members had been invited to vote online. Votes had been counted by Pin Communications (independent verifiers).

1. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 29 November, having been circulated in the *Spring 2025* issue of RYA Magazine, were taken as read and approved.

2. Sara Sutcliffe MBE, RYA Chief Executive, invited Sir Michael Arthur, RYA Chair, to report.

   Sir Michael Arthur noted that 2025 marked the RYA's 150th anniversary celebrating a century and a half of leadership, innovation and a passion for boating. A busy and varied year focused on embedding the 'Together on Water' strategy and saw the launch of a new initiative, the 'Reflections on Water' campaign. The year also marked 20 years of RYA Onboard, the flagship grassroots children's sailing programme introducing more than 1.3 million children to the benefits of being on the water and the advancement of the RYA Pathway Evolution, supporting the RYA's mission to make junior and youth racing more affordable and accessible. The Chair welcomed the UK Sport 7% increase in funding which will provide valued support to the RYA's World Class Programme. The British Sailing Team has continued with its successes taking podium places at major World and European Championships, laying the foundations for future Olympic success with attention focused on Los Angeles 2028.

   Acknowledging that meeting volunteers is one of the greatest privileges of the role of Chair, Sir Michael extended his heartfelt thanks to all volunteers who form the backbone of the Association and the boating community.

   The Chair also expressed his sincere thanks to the Board, members of committees and to the RYA staff for their hard work and commitment throughout the year and in particular to the RYA President, HRH The Princess Royal, for her continued support and guidance and for her attendance at many events on the RYA's behalf over the year.

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The Chair invited Sara Sutcliffe to give her report.

Sara Sutcliffe reflected on the RYA's 150 year heritage which has shaped a vibrant boating community, noting that the commitment and engagement of RYA members has strengthened the Association's voice and purpose. Strong relationships with Government both locally and nationally have safeguarded the boating community's freedom to navigate and cruise, protecting recreational boating from unnecessary regulation and unjustifiable costs. The External Affairs team has responded to more than 350 consultations and the RYA engaged with Government on the Terrorism Act 2025 known as Martyn's Law, which received Royal Assent. The RYA has worked closely with the Sport & Recreation Alliance to ensure legislation remains proportionate and practical, particularly for smaller clubs and venues and with the Maritime & Coastguard Agency on a new Sport & Pleasure Vessel Code of Practice.

This year the RYA Green Blue celebrated 20 years of promoting environmental sustainability. Work also continues on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, safeguarding and cyber security education within the boating community, as well as reducing environmental impact. The Association's support of the Clean Water Sports Alliance has meant working with Government ministers, water companies and policymakers to champion faster action on pollution and the Defra Minister for Water and Flooding has hailed 11 National Governing Bodies for their advocacy on driving efforts to clean up waterways; a positive example of what can be achieved through collaboration and being 'Together on Water'.

Sara Sutcliffe concluded by thanking RYA stakeholders, the RYA Board and employees and all the volunteers and credential holders for their vital work and support throughout the year, both on and off the water.

The Chair invited Dave Strain, RYA Finance Director to give his report.

Dave Strain summarised the Audit Opinion of the new auditors, Crowe LLP and reported on the Accounts ended 31 March 2025. As no direct questions were raised, the Finance Director proposed the Report & Accounts be adopted. The Chief Executive confirmed 99% of the votes received were in favour and the accounts ended 31 March 2025 were formally approved.

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3. The Chief Executive proposed that HRH The Princess Royal, having expressed her willingness to continue to serve, be elected to the office of President for the ensuing year. 97% of the votes received online were in favour and the appointment was passed with acclaim.

4. The Chief Executive confirmed that 98% of the votes received were in favour of reappointing the auditors, Crowe LLP, for the year 2025/26 with remuneration to be decided by the Board and the motion was passed.

Before moving to Item 5, the Chair took the opportunity to thank the following retiring Committee members.

- Phil Aspey – Chair, External Affairs and Cruising Committee
- Fiona Barron – Chair, RYA Tribunal
- Chris Davis – Chair, South West Region
- Misha Engineer – Senior Independent Director, RYA Board
- Judy Lambourne – Chair, Midlands Region
- Susan McKnight – Chair, RYA Northern Ireland
- Mike Samuelson – Chair, South Region
- Steven Tinsley – Chair, English Regions Forum

5. The Chair announced that, having made an exceptional commitment and valuable contribution to the work of the Board, both Duncan Rutherford and Corinne Cunningham have been re-elected for a second term with 96% of the votes in favour.

6. The Chair notified the members that the Board has appointed a new Independent Director, Cole Agbede, with effect from the AGM. Details will appear on the RYA website.

7. Any Other Business: Questions were invited in advance of the AGM and the Chair confirmed all have received a written response. Two further questions were addressed by the Chief Executive regarding the new MCA Code of Safety of Small Vessels for Commercial Use for Sport & Pleasure and the recent Reflections on Water survey.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.28 am.
A video of the RYA's 150 Anniversary was broadcast.
A recording of the AGM broadcast can be found at www.rya.org.uk/about-us/agm

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