

THREE HARBOURS ASSOCIATION

2023/24 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Margaret Paterson
CHAIRPERSON 3HA

Chairpersons Annual Report

At the last AGM, in September 2023, the sitting Chair of the Board and two of the key Board trustees retired.

A new Board was elected in October 2023. The Constitution states that the Chair must be elected from the existing trustees and so it was agreed that Margaret Paterson would take the Chair on an interim arrangement. The remaining Board members were approved:

Rachel Henderson - Treasurer

Janice Hunter - Secretary

Rosie Pye

Bert Reid

Jonathan Monnickendam

It has been a very busy and demanding year which has seen many changes and so the AGM to report on activities for year ending March 31st 2024 had to be postponed until January 2025. What follows is a summary of activities undertaken between October 2023 to March 2024. The report then continues to September 2024 as the 3HA changed its year end from March to September. This report does not include the audited accounts and a separate meeting will be held to present these when they are ready. We have, however, include some financial information for information and discussion. The law requires that an AGM be scheduled within 6 months of the financial year-end. For us this is September 2024, with the cut off period for a meeting March 2025. However, we are also obliged to hold our AGM within 15 months of the last one. This should have been in December 2024. We are holding the meeting to discuss this report in January 2025. This hybrid approach will only be used this once to accommodate the year-end change.

The first action of the Board was to undertake a financial review of Three Harbours Association. This resulted in some major cost reductions, including the redundancies of two staff members in November 2023. This was a very difficult period which required significant cost consolidation and the development of a demanding short term fundraising strategy, which remained the focus until year end 31st March 2024. We had various raffles, a coffee morning, craft workshops and, in the summer 2024, the Harbour Gala. These efforts raised some very badly needed unrestricted funds. These funds were then matched by Google's Benevity charitable giving, thanks to trustee Jancie Hunter.

Sadly, Janice resigned from the Board in June 2024 as she was unable to provide the time the role required. She has continued to support 3HA for which we are very grateful.

With no support staff the trustees have had to act as the management team for the Sea School and the Harbour Building.

Cullen Sea School

A grant secured by the outgoing Chair funded the installation of solar panels in December 2023.

1. Boatbuilding Workshop

The partnership with Banff Academy was re-started and pupils returned to the workshop to complete their skiff. At the end of the summer term, they enjoyed the experience of skiff rowing in

the harbour. We continue to work with Banff Academy on three of their own craft that require completion. We have charted the progress of this activity by posting photos on our website, thanks to the volunteering support of David McCubbin, and have included some with this report.

A commission to build a Wymmes, named the Puddock, was completed in time for it to be launched in Cullen Harbour, at the 6 Harbour Row event in May 2024. See photos included with this report.

The placement of a young person through MERI funding continued until the end of the funding in March 2024

Future Work

We have been commissioned by Morayvia Kinloss to repair a WW2 Lifeboat. This is an historic craft that will then be on display.

We have been commissioned to make 8 oars.

We are developing a relationship with Buckie High School which would see pupils learning skills in the workshop and a new sport, by participating in coastal rowing.

We will continue to work with Banff Academy on developing their coastal rowing offer to pupils.

We will continue to work with Active Schools Moray and will look to develop relationships with other local primary and secondary schools.

2. Water Sports

Following the loss of the permanently employed, all year-round instructor a new, financially sustainable, short-term strategy had to be developed.

SUP

A successful partnership with Blue Coast was agreed in time for the 2023 season. This saw all Sea School bookings delivered by highly qualified staff of Blue Coast. Feedback from customers has been very positive.

Kayaking

We successfully attracted a well-qualified free-lance instructor for the 2023 season but, disappointingly, were unable to get the kit and yard up to standard in time for him to commit for the 2023 season.

Sailing

We are working with a small network, including the RYA, to raise the profile of this sport locally. We were unable to offer this activity for the 2023 season.

Coastal Rowing

This activity continues to be popular and provides the majority of our stable membership. Despite the less than favourable weather this season we have been able to get a skiff out on the water 33 times over the year. Social gatherings after rows have increased this year, helping to create a stronger rowing community. Cullen Sea School rowers participated in the Findochty Regatta and were very popular at the Harbour Gala, where 30 taster trips were given.

Future Plans

We hope to continue a partnership with Blue Coast for customers who wish to secure a robust session and we are looking at the possibility of offering a training opportunity for 1/2 local people to train as a SUP/ kayak instructor. They would then offer short taster sessions in the harbour during 2025 season.

We are currently actively seeking a freelance instructor to help us develop a sea kayaking offer.

We continue to work with RYA and are seeking funding to train a local person as a sailing instructor. Will are also actively seeking to recruit a freelance sailing instructor.

We are actively working with local schools to encourage youth coastal rowing and hope to establish a Cullen community youth rowing team.

Harbour Building

1. Kiosk

Following amicable discussions with the sitting tenant of the kiosk, it was agreed to terminate the annual contract. The Board decided to develop a strategy to operate the retail and catering outlet. This is in place for the 2025 season.

The kiosk was used very successfully to sell teas/coffees for the 6 Harbour Row and the Harbour Gala.

2. Loft

The Loft has been hired out 8 times and the room in the Sea School once. We secured funding for new folding tables, which has enhanced its rental potential.

3. Toilets

The door and payment issues at the toilet block were finally resolved and the unit was up and running towards the end of 2023. The income from the entrance fee has been patchy. During the busy months the door was often propped open by users so that payment was not required, and the door mechanism required both repair and replacement, which resulted in periods when the toilets were closed. All this meant that there was insufficient income to pay for cleaners. Despite an unsuccessful appeal for volunteers, the cleaning of the toilets has rested with the trustees.

Future Plans

Plans are in place to open the kiosk as a retail, equipment hire and activities booking centre. We also intend to offer beach activities during the season while providing educational information and materials.

The Loft will continue to be available for hire. We are also in early discussions to have this space used as a community meeting venue for harbour users.

Having invested in the toilet door/payment system we will monitor its success financially while seeking community views on the usefulness and value of the toilet offer.

Membership and Volunteering

The membership model at September 2023, which offered a 50% reduction on all water sports, was not a sustainable offer going forward and so the offer was suspended on the website. We honoured the discount for existing members and continued to attract some members who were interested in coastal rowing.

We wanted to encourage membership of 3HA that supported the aims and objectives of the organisation. After some research we have restructured the membership model, based on the one used by the National Trust. This will be launched on the website at the beginning of 2025.

We reviewed our volunteering policy and approved a refreshed policy and strategy. Volunteers are the lifeblood of charities and are always in great demand. The workshop has two, very valued, volunteers and we have recently recruited a third volunteer who can offer some shore-based activities.

Future Plans

We are now creating a membership pack that will be given to all members, to keep them informed about the work of 3HA and to encourage support, engagement and volunteering.

We need to understand what volunteering opportunities appeal to the local community and so will carry out some research to secure feedback.

Launch a volunteer recruitment programme.

Funding

In September 2023 we had a restricted Mental Health & Wellbeing grant from Moray Tsi which we have continued to use to support referrals.

Between September 2023 and November 2024, we have submitted 8 funding applications. 3 have been successful and 2 are still pending.

We received a very generous unrestricted donation from a supporter who wishes to remain anonymous. This made a significant difference, enabling the Board to take a step back from active day to day management and plan strategically for the future. We have been very fortunate in being able to secure a short-term centre manager, who will work with the Board until the start of the 2025 season.

Future Plans

We will continue to research for and apply to funders who fit with our objectives and strategic plans.

We will continue to run fundraising activities, rent room space and sell water sport activities, as appropriate.

We will develop a 2025/6 breakeven budget for the Harbour Building.

We will actively seek to recruit a centre manager, according to funds available.

Statistics

Members 40

Volunteers 3

Room Hires 9

Finances April 2023 to March 2024/ September 2024

The financial position of the 3HA has improved significantly over the 2023-24 accounting period for two reasons. Firstly, a significant reduction in our operating costs that are funded mainly by unrestricted funds. This meant reviewing our fixed costs, including staff costs, and taking difficult and unpopular decisions that could no longer be postponed. Secondly, we received significant unrestricted donations for which we are grateful.

Three Harbours Association			
Cash position	Examined by Ritsons	Unaudited	Unaudited
	31/03/2023	31/03/2024	30/09/2024
Credit balances	£28,597	£14,336	£52,846
Unrestricted Funds	-£2,448	-£3,210	£37,246
Bounceback loan	£17,037	£14,785	£13,704

Cash Paid into the Current Account during the accounting period

£1,837.80	Membership Subscriptions
£11,022.69	Watersports (Sailing & Paddle)
£29,830.38	Grants. Restricted
£48,739.53	Donations
£25,319.90	Boat Building
£0.00	Online Shop
£4,240.02	Harbour Gala
£470.60	Six Harbours Walk
£25.00	Meeting Room Hire
£2,235.26	Miscellaneous
£1,000.00	Rental from Kiosk
£13.05	Donations (Cash, QR & by Text)
£2,340.84	Toilets/Miscellaneous
£127,075.07	Total Cash Paid in

Cash Paid out of the Current Account during the accounting period

£3,766.33	Boat Building
£49,448.74	Salary incl tax & NHI & NEST
£0.00	Beach Assistant Wages
£0.00	Cleaner Wages
£196.20	Trainee Boat Builder Wages
£8,736.66	Insurance / Maintenance Contrs
£0.00	Stock
£2,559.02	Audit & Prof. Fees
£21,863.31	Plant & Equipment AOC
£105.00	Watersports Refunds for bad weather
£0.00	RIB Fuel
£86.00	Marketing
£3,916.25	Bounceback Loan
£0.00	6 Harbour Walk & Gala
£2,835.76	Electricity
£1,631.93	Telephone & Wi-Fi
£3,009.06	Moray Council
£3,116.95	Misc
£0.00	Wages
£0.00	Cleaning Sundries
£0.00	Electricity
£0.00	Telephone & Wi-Fi
£0.00	Water Rates
	Miscellaneous
£101,271.21	Total Cash Paid out

We are lucky to have two wonderful modern buildings. Even after the review of our fixed costs it still costs £15k pa to keep the lights on and the building insured, add a part-time office support and the total is c£22k pa. This is primarily paid by unrestricted funds which are raised by donations and regular fund raising events.

Appendix

Banff Academy Boat Building



Banff Academy Boat Building



Banff Academy Boat Building



Banff Academy Boat Building



Banff Academy Boat Building

Coastal Rowing



Coastal Rowing



Coastal Rowing

Six Harbours Row 2024



Cullen Sea School Six Harbours Row Crew



Six Harbours Row at Cullen Harbour

