

**MINUTES OF LIGHTNING 368 CLASS ASSOCIATION AGM
HELD AT NORTHAMPTON SAILING CLUB
SATURDAY 18 AUGUST 2012**

Present:

Caroline Key, Emma Dodd, Wayne Jenner, David Hume, Paul White, Chris Abela, Lee Bratley, Penny Yarwood, Simon Hopkins, Matt Hopkins, Alex Shaw, Tony Jacks, Hugh Spencer, David Simmons, Bryan Westley, Adam Styles, Simon Styles, Mike Ince, Louis Saunders, Brian Bostock and Sue Thomas.

Apologies for Absence:

Rupert Whelan

Minutes of Last Meeting:

Minutes of the previous AGM held on 20 August 2011 were circulated. These were accepted as a true account of that meeting and duly signed by the Chairman Wayne Jenner.

Matters Arising:

No matters arising from previous meeting

Chairman's Report:

Wayne welcomed everyone to the meeting after another enjoyable days sailing at Northampton. The Chairman advised the meeting that attendances had been slightly lower at open events this year, which had been attributed to the current economic climate and weather, which had not been kind to the Class this year, the Sea Championships at Weston SC had suffered particularly badly with storm force winds throughout the weekend.

Once again we kept Open events close to the Class' home bases in and around the Oxford / M40 corridor. In recent years clubs further afield had struggled to generate the participation we had hoped for, which had been attributed to the costs of travel and other economic factors.

The Chairman thanked John Claridge for arranging the recent boat test in Yachts and Yachting, but new boat sales had declined in the previous 12 months. The second hand boat market on the other hand is going extremely well, with one boat being sold within 2 hours of it being advertised. Our website has been extremely popular, with a consequent need to extend our bandwidth limits twice during the summer.

Secretary's Report:

The Dinghy Show at the beginning of the season was again well attended. Thanks to Wayne and Sue who helped me set up on the Friday and Sue for the loan of her boat. Thanks also for those who helped out over the weekend by manning the stand. Yet again there appears to be a lot of interest in our class. Wayne, Sue and myself also took the opportunity on Sunday to look at the construction of the competitor stands, for a few ideas on a revamp of ours in 2013. More about that later.

Early on in the season, Haversham put on a training day which had a good turnout of enthusiastic people, all itching to get out after the winter. Thanks to Robin Stubbs and the team. Up River are also to hold a

training day on the Saturday before their open next month. Open meetings themselves have been a bit hit and miss, what with bad weather and the Golden Jubilee affecting the turnouts. Three new clubs were visited this year, a revisit to Fishers Green after an absence of ten years, Broxbourne and the first weekend of North West Norfolk S A Week at Hunstanton. Seven Lightnings took place over the weekend, with four of us doing the whole week. Varying wind conditions led to some very close racing during the week.

Due to the torrential downpours we experienced in July, with high river levels and strong currents, unfortunately Cookham had to postpone the Southern's, but this has now been rescheduled for September.

Lee continues his sterling job with his regular contributions in Yachts and Yachting and a recent review was conducted down at Lymington between the full and SR rigs, which was published in July.

Our Chairman Wayne not only keeps us all in order, but continues his excellent job maintaining the website and issuing regular FlashBytes. Thanks also must go to Rupert, who is standing down as editor this time, for his production of Flash and the Year Book.

Finally I would like to thank Daryl at Banks Sails for the donation of a top cover for this event. This will be raffled over the weekend.

Treasurer's Report:

Sue handed out copies of the previous year's accounts. Income is slightly down this year £2014.45, 2011 £2188.25. Outgoings slightly reduced £2165.58, 2011 £2213.55. Sue advised that there was a small deficit this year, but we hold £3980.06 in the bank balance. The treasurer was not unduly worried about this deficit as the subs were mainly used to pay for Dinghy Show and trophies. Deficit 2011 £25.29, this year 2012 £151.13. The accounts were approved with no questions from the floor.

Election of Chairman and Officers:

Wayne advised the meeting that he would be willing to stand for a further year, but then it would be time for somebody else to take over the helm. Proposed by Emma Dodd and seconded by John Claridge.

With the exception of Rupert Whelan – Flash Editor who is standing down due to other commitments and difficulties of putting anything together for Flash all other members were proposed on block by John Claridge and seconded by Paul White. So the committee for 2012/13 is as follows:-

Chairman	Wayne Jenner
Vice Chairman & Publicity Officer	Lee Bratley
Secretary	Caroline Key
Treasurer	Sue Thomas
Sailing Co-Ordinator & Open Meeting Results	Chris Abela
Technical Officer	Simon Hopkins
SW Representative	Simon Styles
SE Representative	Penny Yarwood
North Representative	No one currently

Subscriptions:

Currently £16 full membership and £6 associate.

The meeting discussed various ways of paying for subscriptions in the future, traditionally due January. Hugh Spencer suggested that people pay cash from now, PayPal was discussed, but costs 70p per transaction and was disregarded, people could also set up a bank transfer, or standing order from their own bank account. It was decided to leave subscription levels as they are and that the Association bank account details would be added to the renewal membership forms, so that members have a choice of either paying by cheque/cash as previously or send a payment direct to the account, quoting their name as a reference.

Hugh asked how much commission did we receive from Noble Marine each year for members taking out their insurance. We receive 5% for each sale and typically receive about £200 per year back to the Association.

Flash – do we continue?

Rupert has decided to step down as Flash Editor as mentioned earlier in the meeting. No Flash has been produced for a while, due to Rupert not receiving any fresh content, as most things like race reports go straight on to the website and also FlashBytes is produced and emailed out to all every five to six weeks. Only a couple of people receive a printed copy, the remainder have theirs emailed. The cost of production each year is around £700, money which Chris Abela said could be better used to support the cost of Dinghy Show or other advertising. Simon Hopkins also was in agreement that there was very limited benefits in producing Flash in the future. The meeting were unanimous in its cancellation.

Dinghy Show – do we continue?

Wayne advised the meeting that he is a little worried about the cost (£630 2012) against any possible income/gain of membership the Dinghy Show gains. It also usually falls to the same 2 or 3 people each year to set up, attend each day and do the final breakdown which takes a considerable effort. Hugh Spencer suggested that we not attend one year and use the money to advertise the class elsewhere. Tony Jacks was also of the same opinion that people who attend the show already own boats and the money should be used to do some different kind of advertising in magazines, flyers to clubs, etc. Lee Bratley advised the meeting that by attending the show we get better discounts with our articles and advertisements in Yachts and Yachting. Simon Hopkins and Chris were in agreement that it would be a mistake not to attend, we would be missed for one thing, it's an ideal time to meet up with all those fellow Lightning sailors around the country and if we did not go it could be detrimental to the class. Also, attending generates a good feel factor within the Class. Various discussions took place, about the slowing sales of new boats and the fact that there is a shortage of second hand boats in the market. There was some discussion on the production of new boats 'on-spec' rather than 'to-order' which John will consider.

Wayne also mentioned that the stand itself is getting a little outdated and tatty. It is constructed with makeshift tent poles which are heavy, time consuming and awkward to erect. The stand has been in use for many years and has suffered considerable damage and degradation. Simon H advised that he has some pop up display units which could be used but would require new image skins with Lightning information and would look much better than what we currently have. The cost of this would be about £1,000.

Louis Saunders suggested that the stand should have the latest boat on display, which it usually does, have some decent graphics and show more youth in the class to encourage new younger members. It was also suggested that a plasma screen also be displayed showing video footage and photos of events for the previous year. Simon also has a 42 inch screen he could lend the Association. Simon has also been doing some investigating and almost 200 Lightnings are "missing in action", so it was suggested another "Re Charge your Lightning" campaign be done again to get a list of second hand boats available.

Action Plan:

1. **Still attend Dinghy Show** - not going would send out wrong message
2. **Obtain some new skins for the pop up displays**
3. **Spread the load, more people to set up/break down**

Nationals and Events for 2013

There was some discussion about the busy calendar this year. Suggestions for other venues for the Nationals in 2013 have been Rutland and Burghfield. The reason for a possible change in venue is due to Northampton imposing possible camping fees in the future which has upset many members. Caroline pointed out that not many other venues give money back to the association and Northampton earns the Association a little income. Chris also advised the meeting that the Lightnings had been invited to Keyhaven which is a little further down the coast from Lymington, where there is a Lightning sailor.

It was felt by the meeting that we should go to clubs where there are other Lightning sailors and where we are made to feel welcome. If we attended other clubs further afield, we need to ensure local boats in those areas attend. It was also decided to reduce the number of events from 14 this year to 12. Wayne advised the meeting that we should give the Sailing Co-Ordinator, Chris Abela the authority to arrange the programme, which is always a difficult task and not possible to satisfy everyone's particular requirements, with a mixture of sea, large and small inland events. Chris also asked if the results of the Nationals were to be included in the Travellers series. It was re-confirmed that a competitor's best 3 results would count towards this.

Any Other Business

John Claridge advised the meeting that he would be at the Southampton Boat Show in September and if anyone from the Association wished to attend, he had some passes available. People to contact John if interested.

Wayne suggested to the meeting that the Rum and Mince Pie held in November should be the actual season finale, rather than the first of the new season. With Sail Wave technology it would be quick and easy to work out the final results of the travellers series. Chris disagreed, wishing it to be the first of the season preferring a start before Christmas. This was proposed by Wayne Jenner and seconded by Simon Hopkins. So in 2012, two Rum and Mince Pie results would feature in the results. John Claridge suggested it could be a double points event, Chris said he would consider this.

Wayne thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 7.30 pm.