



Fisherrow Yacht Club, 97 New Street, Musselburgh. EH21 6DG
www.fisherrowyachtclub.com

Media Release

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Fisherrow Yacht Club and the COVID-19 Lockdown

The sailing yachts parked on the hard at Fisherrow harbour make a beautiful foreground to the stunning sunsets seen throughout April; nevertheless the yachts should have been craned into the harbour at the beginning of the April if it were not for the corona virus lockdown issued on 23rd March. Likewise, the folk who pass along the promenade and beach on the Back Sands should have been able to enjoy the antics of the dinghy sailors at the start of the 2020 sailing season.

The Fisherrow Yacht Club committee had an anxious pre- season discussion trying to figure out safe ways to continue club activities as the COVID-19 health crisis started to unfold, but after the full lock down the committee have used Skype on a near weekly basis to plan how to keep the club thriving for the foreseeable and long-term future.

In the meantime former Commodore, Mark McClelland, has encouraged members to take part in an online sailing race game called "Virtual Regatta" and one member from FYC will be asked to take part in a Virtual Regatta e- championship against players from other Scottish clubs and then go onto a UK wide competition. While playing the game FYC participants also had the chance to take part in a virtual Friday Night Bar N get-together by enjoying a tippie in their own homes while being connected to the other partakers through Zoom.

One of the biggest losses to the Club programme is the start of the season event called "Discover Sailing" which was formerly known as "Push the Boat Out". The event which was scheduled for May 9th should have been an open day for non-members to try sailing and to look around the facilities in the club premises. Discover Sailing has been the most important means to recruit new members in the last few years, therefore, FYC hopes to be able to recreate something similar later in the summer while taking into account necessary hygiene requirements.

Many FYC members can sail their dinghies or yachts solo or with family members, so from that aspect sailing can resume as soon as is permitted; in addition if local members can come to the beach already dressed to go out on the water this would free up space in the changing facilities for those who travel from further away.



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Currently, the biggest challenge is figuring out a way to crew the club safety and race committee power boats without breach of the contamination guidelines, however, many resourceful solutions have been devised to protect people from contamination so FYC is hopeful that a solution for water sports can be found soon.

While not sailing the committee has been looking at research information published by the sailing umbrella body, Royal Yachting Association (RYA), which has analysed age demographics and water sport participation in general in the last few years. Using the information from RYA the club is looking forward to how its current activities and club facilities, especially club owned boats, can be differently managed to suit the needs of the next generation of sailors which includes not only the marketing Generations X Y and Z but also third age sailors as the research highlighted that sailing is well suited to older people because the physical demands are not as great as many other sports.

At this time FYC is ever mindful that the club premises are a resource, not only for the sailing club, but for other users such as the Musselburgh Athletics Club runners, the Eskmuthe Rowing Club, the Sea Cadets, the Fisherrow Harbour and Seafront Association, the Cooking Club. In addition there are one-off users such as the Musselburgh Festival Beach Ride Out guests and the British Divers Marine Life Rescue training day volunteers. All of the users have had their activities impacted and we hope that, as soon as possible, they too will be able resume.

ENDS

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