Dear

In these distressing times of national crisis I want to bring you up to date on the fortunes of your Club.

Grafham Water is a great venue for sailing, the members are fantastic, supported by an excellent team in the office, the Café and on the water. We want the Club to continue and survive the current pandemic.

Sadly the Club is now closed since Anglian Water shut their Water Parks down, and you cannot go sailing. We do not know when the Lake will be open again.

The impact on the Club’s finances will be severe. The time of year makes matters worse: our new membership year starts on Wednesday 1st April, and subscriptions are due by then.

For those of you who have renewed already, thank you for your confidence and support. For those of you who have yet to renew, my message is simple: the future of the Club lies with you. **We are a Members’ Club, and without member support, there will be no Club.**

We recognise though, with the Lake closed you cannot get the full benefit of your membership. We also understand that some will be facing personal financial uncertainty as a result of the current crisis. With this in mind, we are making the following adjustments to membership rates for the year about to start.

- The Club’s preferred option is that you pay at the normal sailing membership rate up front: the extra funds will help your Club through this difficult period. As an incentive, those who do this and pay in full by 17 April will be entitled to one month’s free membership, which will be applied to the 2021/2022 membership year.
- However, as an alternative, Sailing Members may elect to pay up front at the lower non-sailing membership rate. Membership for the full year will be calculated on a pro-rata basis:
  - non sailing membership for the period the Lake is closed, and
  - sailing rate for the period after it re-opens.
  - the balancing sum will be calculated and will be due at the time the Lake re-opens.
For those that pay in full (as in the first bullet point above), the excess paid will be treated as a credit against 2021/2022 membership.

- Boat dues will remain payable in full and up front, recognising that boats remain on site.
- We encourage members to make additional donations, if they feel able. Some have already done so, and if more of you feel you can that will be fantastic.

Clearly in the current situation we are taking whatever measures we can to reduce costs. But we are losing a significant part of the Club’s other income: notably from Open Meetings and from our Training programme. We will have to eat into our cash reserves to fund the measures set out above, to an extent greater than we would normally find acceptable, but these are extraordinary times.

We hope these revisions will encourage everyone to re-join. The more that do so, the better chance that Grafham Water Sailing Club will still be around when this crisis is over.

Some more detail is given in the accompanying Qs and As.

Stay well

Best wishes

John Aston
Commodore

**Qs and As**

**How will this work?**

Here is an example for an adult sailing member with a dinghy. (The figures will vary depending on type of craft).

Suppose the Lake remains shut for 3 months and re-opens on 1 July
Adult sailing membership is £265 for the year
Adult non-sailing membership is £65 for the year

Adult dinghy due is £170 for the year

Up front you pay £235 (£170 dinghy due plus £65 non-sailing membership)

Your total membership fee for the year is calculated at £215 (3 months at £65/12, 9 months at £265/12).

On 1 July you pay the balance of £150
Can I still pay by instalments?

Yes, the procedure by which you can pay by four monthly instalments remains in place. Please choose the Bank Transfer option when paying and follow the instructions on WebCollect.

How do I amend my membership?

Login to your WebCollect account. Do not click Renew All, instead please follow the instructions in the ‘How to’ document on the club website homepage, showing the detailed steps. Alternatively, you can email the Office who will advise on how to proceed.

I have already paid my membership in full, how does this affect me?

Firstly, a big thank you. You have all the entitlements described above. If you leave your payment in place then you will get the benefit of the credit against 2021/2022 fees, and the prompt payment bonus of one month’s membership. We hope you will choose to do this. If notwithstanding, you would prefer to go down to the reduced membership rate, please contact the Office by email to arrange a refund.

What measures is the Club taking to reduce costs?

We will be taking advantage of the Government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to reduce our staff costs. The Clubhouse and site is now closed so we have cut back ongoing services to the absolute minimum. We have had positive discussions with Anglian Water about managing our rental payments. We will take advantage of any Government support that is available, e.g. rates relief.

Can I access the Club Site?

Unfortunately, not at the moment. As the Government has banned all but essential travel, and Anglian Water has closed all its water parks, we have closed the site to all access. The buildings are being secured and closed and the boat park is being checked before all staff leave site. Access will not be possible until further notice. This situation will be reviewed at the end of April. In the meantime, we will do what we can within the Government’s regulations to ensure the security of the site.

Is there someone still contactable in the Club Office?
Yes but office staff will be working from home and there will not be someone available every day. They can be contacted via email (office@grafham.org) or on this mobile number: 07950 590754. Please understand if there is a delay in responding.

**How is this all being managed by the Club?**

Council is active and is holding meetings by teleconference. It will meet as often as necessary; last week it met three times. Council has agreed the formation of a smaller group, the Emergency Management Team (EMT) to lead the Club’s response to the pandemic and associated restrictions. The EMT is meeting (by teleconference) at least twice weekly.

**What will happen to the Club’s Open Meeting Programme?**

Inevitably, meetings are having to be cancelled. Most of the Summer Programme has now gone. It may be possible to reinstate some, but our Autumn calendar is pretty full already.

**Will the Club get through this?**

It is up to you. The Club belongs to you, the Members. With your support it can survive and prosper, without it, it cannot.