

East Coast Area Secretary's Report 2021

While normality has by no means yet returned, at least this year has been a step in the right direction. After a winter programme of virtual pub meets, which were generally well attended, we did manage some events on the water this year. For small boats we had Tollesbury, Swallows & Amazon's, Slaughden, & a new addition in the Norfolk Broads weekend, organised thanks to Joe Farrow. Swallows & Amazons also hosted the official launch of the first of the East Coast Gaffling dinghies, for which we owe Pete Thomas a huge thanks for his skill & efforts in achieving this. Pete was very grateful to EC Members who volunteered their time to assist with the build, but like so many other things, Covid put a stop to this activity. Pete continued to work alone on the Gaffling during Lockdown and has produced a splendid dinghy. We are also very grateful to Teamac paints for their very generous sponsorship of the Gafflings.

At the beginning of July, the bigger boats assembled at Stone Sailing Club for our East Coast Race. The number of entries was lower than usual, probably as a consequence of the ongoing covid situation, but despite a clash with England's Euros football match the event went well. We owe a big thank you to Stone Sailing Club for making us so welcome & to Orsted for their continued sponsorship. At the end of the month, the alternative flexible Summer Cruise week was rendered fairly inflexible thanks to the weather. Our sincere thanks are due to Walton & Frinton Yacht Club for providing the fleet with refuge & also to Ipswich Haven Marina, who at short notice, cleared their visitors area to accommodate us for our final night. Thanks also to Mighty Oak Brewery for their continued support for the event.

Rounding off the season, Pin Mill SC Regatta, incorporating the President's Race was a little disappointing due to lack of entries. Thanks must go to Rick Graham for maintaining a gaff presence there!

Hopefully we'll enjoy a more normal season next summer & plans are underway for next year's sailing programme including a return to Stone for the East Coast Race.

Speaking of events which we want to be a real success, planning is now underway for the OGA 60 gathering on the Orwell in 2023. As this is going to involve our area in a considerable amount of work in both organising & setting up the event, I am pleased to report that several East Coast Members have already come forward to offer their kind assistance with the event. We have been holding regular OGA60 Committee Meetings to formulate our plans and ideas, and hope to 'put more meat on the bones' over this coming next few months.

We do have a range of events planned for 2022 and hope that we are in a position to proceed with them.

Robert & I regret that we will not be attending the AC Meeting & the AGM in person, despite having been looking forward greatly to visiting Newcastle and seeing everyone, but we will be attending via Zoom.

Lorna Hill