



# Newsletter Winter 2013

## Diary Dates

08 December, Christmas Cringle, sure to be fun, mince pies, spiced juice etc (bring a Santa Hat?)

01 January, New Years Day fun racing (AKA, the Topper 'Bash')

05 February, AGM, Comrades Club, Ellesmere

25 February, provisional date for racing rules evening

## People

10 new instructors! Yes it's true, following a great course run by John Ridgers (our chief dinghy instructor), the following heroes can add 'ADI' after their names.



Ian Atkinson, Tom Beever, India Edwards, Chris Cater, David Coull, Sam Coull, Mark Nye, Mel Page, Rachel Thurlow and Dave Wright (the problem with being 'Mr (W)right' is that you are always last in an alphabetical list). If you are wondering why Chris Cater is wearing obscured goggles, it's because (claims Dave Wright) it's safer than when he is not wearing them ... and contrary to the impression given by the photo bottom right, we don't usually teach standy-up sailing .

## Training in 2014

Are you interested in training in 2014? Is it a formal RYA course or something a bit more informal? Whatever it is, John James, our Training Principal ([training@shropshiresailingclub.co.uk](mailto:training@shropshiresailingclub.co.uk)) would like to hear from you. If you are a younger member and not at all sure, why not talk to Sharna Edwards, our youth squad Captain?

## Club Dinghies



These are all club dinghies and there is something for everyone: Topper, Tera/Tera Pro, Pico/Pico Sport, Laser 2000, GP14 and a Laser 1 with both Standard and (smaller) Radial rigs. When not being used for training, these are available to you for a down-to-earth rental fee starting at just £5 for a whole afternoon.

## Power Boats

In the last newsletter we spoke about rewiring the safety boat radios such that they turned off when the engine is switched off - avoiding a flat battery for the next user. That's completed .... but some members have pointed out that if they turn off the ignition whilst still on the water (anchoring, dozing etc), the radio is effectively off and they can't be contacted (or woken up). The sailing committee have thought about this and decided to get some stickers made to remind users that off is off - and so is the radio. If you do want to turn off the engine but still be in contact, why not 'kill the engine' by pushing the button on the end of the kill cord switch - so the engine is **off** but ignition and the radio is **on**?

Right now, all our safety boats are working OK though it is fair to say that the two dory's whilst great work boats with modern engines are operating well beyond their sell-by dates - the Dell Quay dory was born in 1972 (which probably makes it older than most club members!) and I don't suppose the Orkney is very much younger. The 'unsinkable' Dell Quay has been around since the 1960's - as here <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/this-boat-cant-sink>.

## New Clubhouse - what's been happening? Chris Endacott reveals all

As most of you will be aware we have, for several years, been seeking a lease from the Grosvenor Estate in order that we have some security of tenure and can, with confidence, invest the considerable sums needed to improve our facilities. That might be the refurbishment of the current clubhouse, changing rooms and toilets or the construction of an entirely new build in the adjacent field. The cost of either is remarkably similar not least because we have been advised that a major refurbishment would require us to meet current building regulation standards, environmental standards and disability access regulations. Anything we do will be closely scrutinised by Natural England, the Wildlife Trust and a host of other interested bodies.

It is also the case that without a lease we cannot access any of the major grant funds from Sport England (SE) the smallest of which (up to £50,000) requires a seven year lease term and the largest (up to £500,000) a 21-25 year term. In the past four years we have missed two large funds targeted directly at the type of build we are planning: The Rural Development Fund and The Exemplary Environmental Build Fund, both offered a grant (not a loan) of up to £500,000 on a 1:3 basis (for every £1 the club puts up in cash or in kind SE would provide £3). Hopefully more opportunities will come along – SE had £47m of lottery money to spend on major grants between 2012 and 2017.

In March/April we finally reached agreement with the estate over Heads of Terms although there were some reservations on our part. It was offered to us on a “take it or leave it” basis with no further negotiation possible. The terms were not ideal but they were tolerable. Since then our solicitor and the estate’s solicitor have been wrestling with the fine print of the lease.

The new lease will include the field we currently use - with the permission of the tenant and the cooperation of the donkey’s owner - for camping and as an occasional car park. However it is covered by an Agricultural Tenancy and the estate is not yet in a position to offer it to us as an unencumbered lease. Whatever we do with the clubhouse this field is important as it will allow us to move car parking and boat storage out from under the trees and expand the boat park. By holding the lease on it we will also be able to offer camping to a wider range of groups and be certain that we will be able to use it to support our annual events in the future. The club has been advised by our solicitor not to take on the field with a tenant and so we await the Estate on this point.

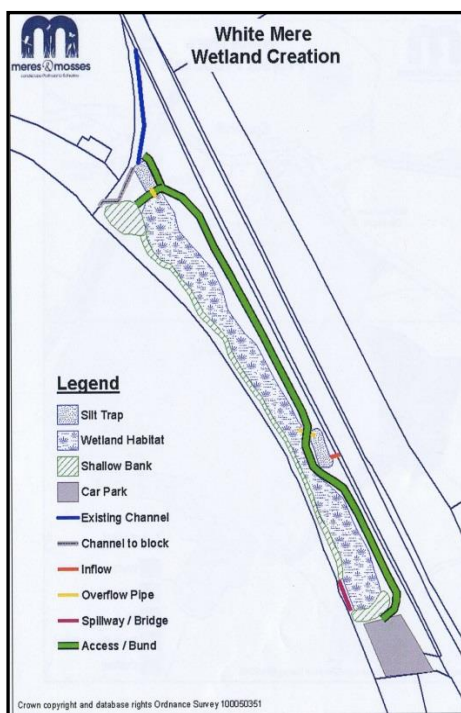
Since agreeing the Heads of Terms the Estate have introduced a second rent review and we are struggling to understand the full financial impact of this and the risk it presents to the club in the future. We do not want to sign anything that a future General Committee will view as foolish! It seems like our next step will be to commission advice from a valuation surveyor regarding the likely impact of the dual rent review system (any members out there with this skill?).

Our licence expires at the end of 2014. We had hoped to have the lease in place way before then. As it is we are creeping towards a document that we can sign, hopefully before December 2014!

## Our Special Landscape

Chris Endacott brings us up to date on what's happening in, on and around the mere.

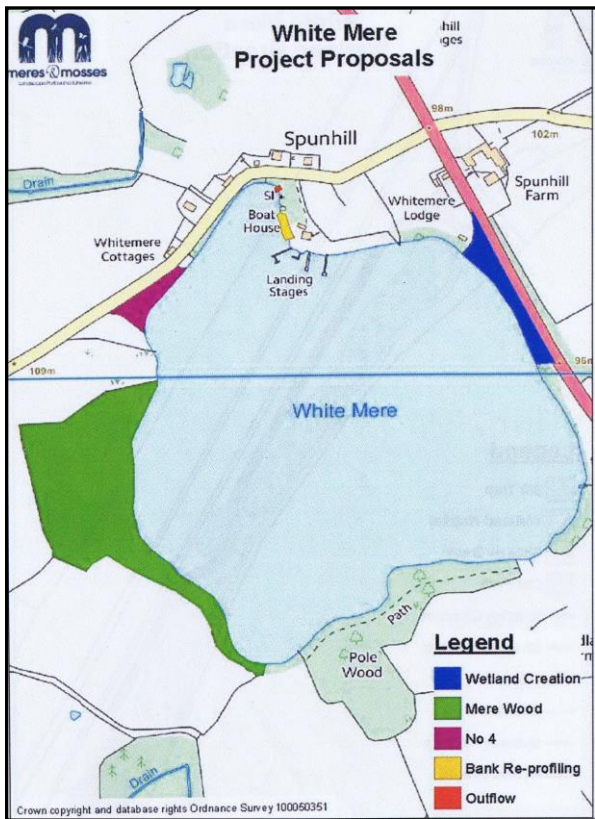
Shropshire’s Meres and Mosses have [Ramsar](#) Wetland designation (an international status named after the town of Ramsar in Iran) and our own mere has three areas designated as SSSI, (Site of Special Scientific Interest). However our mere is also rated as “degraded” and its improvement is a focus of the £1.5 million Meres and Mosses project. As a result Natural England (NE) and the Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) are now regular visitors to the mere and water level monitoring has been in place for 18 months. Their aim is to restore the marginal habitat of the shore in the hope that greater plant diversity will return.



Following clearance of the trees on the eastern side work has now started on the creation of the Whitemere wetland in area next to the main road. The bank has been raised and behind it a wetland habitat has been dug out. A silt trap will be created and all the road drains intercepted (at least nine) and directed into the trap. This will then drain into the wetland. The wetland itself will drain over a spillway situated near to the fisherman’s car park.

There is also a lot going on elsewhere around the mere. A map from the 1830s identifies one of the fields on the west side of the mere as a “Moss”. There is also other evidence that the average water level of the mere has been much higher than the current level and some of the woodland was an alder carr. So the decision has been taken by NE to raise the water level of the mere by re-engineering the outflow. The work has already gone to contract and will start soon.

One consequence of this change in water level is that the boat house and the jetties will be much closer to water level and discussions with Natural England are planned to look at how this can be addressed.



Over the winter more felling of trees is planned. The trees at the West of the mere will be felled with clearance on the edge of Mere Wood and clear felling of all the trees on the edge of the field in the South West. This will open up that corner of the mere and have an impact on the wind which tends to come from that direction.

We can expect to see more changes later in 2014 and the area to the south east of the mere is now subject to a survey and more tree felling may follow.

### And finally ...



Using Masthead Buoyancy is a good idea but they should be lowered and stored when not in use

Are any of these bits below yours? None are labelled and they seem to have been in the nissen hut for years. We need them labelled or cleared away by end February at the latest please.





If you plan to leave your boat at the club over the winter, do please tie it down securely - it's not just your dinghy that's at risk, it's your neighbours too if your boat gets blown onto them.