



# HENLEY TOWN & VISITORS' REGATTA

**President: Guin Batten**

PRESS RELEASE

## **Olympic silver medallist elected President of Town & Visitors' Regatta**

In opening the Annual General Meeting, the outgoing President Dr Noel Snell commented that it was a about thirty years since he had last sat in the Council Chamber Chairing a meeting as Mayor! It is all change with a new Chairman, Martin Levy, and a challenging year ahead as many of the Committee will be away on duty at the European Rowing Championships in Glasgow which is to be held at the same time as this year's Regatta. There are also changes to the British Rowing points ranking system and the full impact this will have on the format of the races and events offered remains to be seen.

Guin Batten was elected President of Henley Town & Visitors' Regatta at the Annual General Meeting, held on Thursday March 15<sup>th</sup>. In proposing Guin Batten, the outgoing Regatta President Dr Noel Snell highlighted that there is an unwritten tradition that the Presidency alternates between town-connected and rowing-connected candidates. Guin is a well-known member of both the local and rowing communities, a Steward of Henley Royal Regatta, an Olympic silver medallist as well as running the Women's Head of the River race and many other rowing related administrative positions.

The Honorary General Secretary, Ian Mills, reported a near-record entry of 282 crews from local and visiting clubs competed in 148 races over 10½ hours at the 2017 Regatta. The fair weather in the morning attracted good crowds, many of whom stayed to enjoy some fine racing in worsening afternoon conditions. With races taking place at four-minute intervals from 08:45 until 18:55, those attending saw a full day's racing. The Peter Sutherland Challenge Cup for the most successful club at the Regatta was closely contested by three local clubs: Upper Thames RC won the day on 12 points, with Henley RC second on 9 and Star & Arrow Club on 8, all three clubs winning four events apiece. The closest race of the day was the final of Intermediate Coxless fours, won by Wallingford RC who beat Maidenhead RC by just one foot

He also thanked the Regatta's many supporters, including the Stewards and Secretary of Henley Royal Regatta for the use of their land and particularly their cooperation in 2017. Thanks, were also given to the Henley Town Council, Henley Rowing Club and Dr and Mrs Walter Scott.

Honorary Treasurer Peter Knowles reported that as noted previously in 2016 and 2017 the world of rowing is still going through significant changes particularly with the competition review and the structure of racing at a domestic level. There is perhaps now more clarity on this and the current objective is that the new competition structure will go live on 1st April 2018. Many regattas go from

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profit to loss without any clear reason. The 2017 regatta was no exception and following the financial loss of 2016, last year showed slight improvement in turning a small loss of just under £1000 to a surplus of just over £500. As has been said on several occasions, the T&V Regatta is not here to generate money but is to provide a great regatta for the competitors and hopefully cover its costs. Any profit is useful for reinvestment in the regatta to protect ourselves in the future if we meet unexpected needs. So, this year even following a small surplus, we still have to watch our costs in the future and take action to maintain our balance. Peter advised that overall the regatta income increased by 25%, primarily driven by a significant 33% increase in entry revenue, and a 80% increase in the catering and bar income offset by a 10% decrease in subscriptions and donations. Two social events, the President's River Cruise in June and particularly the Annual Dinner in November had been popular and also made important contributions to Regatta's finances. The President's Quiz, which wasn't held in 2017, is being groomed for a reappearance in the near future.

Other appointments made at the Annual General Meeting were as follows: -

Vice-Presidents – all existing were re-appointed with the addition of former President Dr Noel Snell

President – Ms Guin Batten.

Deputy President – Rod Murray

Chairman – Martin Levy.

Honorary General Secretary – Ian Mills.

Honorary Treasurer – Peter Knowles.

Members of the Committee - Mrs A Bushnell, MKC Davies Mrs ME Denham, MJ Duff, KP Fisher, Mrs E Hodgkin, A Gordon, Mrs J Hope-Brown, Mrs HM Knowles, JP Lee, QA Knowlson, L Spatcher, R Spatcher, JCB Sutherland, Mrs H Turnell, P Turnell, MD Williams and the Captain of Henley Rowing Club.

Honorary Auditor - Dr C Thompson.

Honorary Trustees - John Luker and Tony Hobbs.

The 2018 Regatta will be held on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August. The full range of events will cater for crews of all abilities, from novice to elite. The dress code is casual and refreshments, including a licensed bar, will be available in the spectators' enclosure.

Henley Town & Visitors' Regatta is organised by and supported by people and businesses closely associated with Henley and its surroundings. It's an opportunity for local families to come and relax on the wonderful riverside lawns, thanks to the generosity of the Stewards of the Royal Regatta in allowing us to hold our event there. We are very much looking forward to holding this year's regatta and to seeing close races and a good crowd of spectators enjoying themselves in the sunshine beside one of the world's most famous stretches of river.

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