

MARTIN BROOM MEMORIAL TROPHY

The Martin Broom Trophy in 2017 was awarded to Waveney Sailability. The charity, which is organised and run solely by volunteers, has introduced hundreds of disabled people to sailing over the last twelve years. It has 31 RYA qualified sailing instructor and 20 RYA level 2 qualified safety boat drivers, and has provided opportunities and facilities to enable people with almost any disability to enjoy the sport of sailing on the Broads.

Participants in Waveney Sailability sail each Tuesday from around Easter to the end of October. The volunteers arrive in time to uncover boats, rig them and sail them round to the nearby Waveney and Oulton Broad YC (WOBYC) pontoons. Waveney Sailability started with one hoist and 2 sockets in the pontoon to accommodate it according to wind direction. There are now 3 hoists, and 4 sockets. The Waveney Sailability fleet currently consists of 11 boats specially designed for disabled people: 9 Hansa 303s (double seaters) and 2 Hansa Sports (single seaters with self-tacking jibs), as well as an RS Venture Keel, 2 Squibs and a Waveney OD all adapted to enable disabled people and their carers to sail. They have a RIB and a Ridgiflex to provide safety cover.

All ages and abilities take part in the race series. Most compete independently; a few with assistance from instructors. The competition is equal to that of any sailing club. They start each session with a race for instructors and the sailors who have reached RYA Gold and Platinum level standard. Four members travelled to Rutland Water

this year to compete in the RYA Sailability Multiclass Championship. Each year they organise an Up River Race to Burgh St Peter, take part in Push the Boat Out week, compete in Bart's Bash and race in their own class race in Oulton Week Regatta. This year the Pursuit race was won by a Waveney Sailability volunteer in a Hansa dinghy. They compete in the Ramuz Trophy most years and in 2011 it was held at WOBYC in Hansa dinghies.

As membership increased it became obvious that the facilities at WOBYC for disabled people were sadly lacking with no way of getting to the first floor clubhouse/bar and no accessible toilet. Wheelchairs had to be pushed across the park to a nearby café. Waveney Sailability applied for a Lottery grant and were awarded £48,000 to provide a lift and accessible toilet and shower. It did not cover the whole cost and they had to dig deep into their reserves to match fund the extra cost. It was shared equally with WOBYC. The Princess Royal officially opened the new extension in July 2014.

Total membership (including volunteers) is now around 120 people each year. The volunteers relish the opportunity to improve the lives of members, knowing that the time spent with them is often the highlight of their week. Each Tuesday they average 40 sailing sessions. They have introduced 100s of people to the joys of sailing, taught many of them to sail and race independently, and provided the opportunity to those who are not able to achieve that a chance to experience the joy of being on the water. Racing or not, wheelchairs and walking aids are left on the shore while individuals enjoy the independence of making their own way around the Broad. Members, volunteers, families and carers all appreciate the opportunity to be outdoors and active in such beautiful surroundings. Most importantly, they have had fun on the water (see page 92).

Martin Broom Trophy awarded to:

- 2014 – Nancy Oldfield Trust
- 2015 – Broadsbeat
- 2016 – Bryan Reed
- 2017 – Waveney Sailability



L to R Jonathan Blankley, Jackie Soards, Richard Morling, Mrs Broome and front, Patricia Morling