



# HEBE HAVEN SAILABILITY TRUST

(Marketed as 'Sailability Hong Kong')

## Chairman's Report 2017





## **Introduction**

Welcome to our first Chairman's report of Hebe Haven Sailability Trust (HHST).

As Chairman and together with my wife (Kay) the founders of the Charity, we need to start this annual report by saying that were it not for the generosity of Hebe Haven Yacht Club, it's staff, members and our volunteers, we would not have achieved what we have over the last 8 years. It is to them we say a huge thank you for supporting us each year and helping us continue to grow in terms of numbers, activity levels and achievements.

## **Our Aims & Objectives:**

Our principle aim and objective remains broadly that which we established in 2009, to provide the opportunity for those with a disability (whether physical or intellectual) to have a water based experience and/or if they so desire, to have the opportunity to learn to sail.

It is our belief that sailing enhances skill levels, develops independence, enhances self-esteem and improves individual confidence levels.

What has changed in the last 2 years is that we now additionally provide the opportunity for those having a major illness or having had a life changing injury the same opportunities to sail as part of their rehabilitation program. Another plus is that we found it possible within our limited budget to offer sailing opportunities to the underprivileged within the community. We hope this trend continues.

Our motto remains: 'Making Sailing Accessible to Everyone'.

## **Our Achievements:**

Although originally established with English speaking influences in 2009, we have since become very much a 'local' charity benefiting the local community. 97% of those who sail with us are Hong Kong nationals and over 90% of our volunteers and instructors are now Cantonese &/or Mandarin speakers. Our sailing activities can therefore be delivered on a tri-lingual basis.



Save for a downturn due to weather during 2017, our activity levels have increased each year. From our beginnings in 2009 when we had 4 Intellectually disabled sailors (2 of whom continue to sail with us) we have since had over 1,400 different people with a disability sail with us. Many of these come back consistently and some have progressed to represent their Country and even gain world sailing rankings.

We now have 2 sailing teams which represent Hong Kong. Our Physically disabled sailors have represented Hong Kong since 2014 winning 2 Bronze medals. Similarly, our Intellectual Disabled (ID) Sailors started racing in 2015 and a year later won a Gold and a Bronze in Australia.

It is perhaps inappropriate to single out particular events or individuals in this annual report. My view is that the achievements of all those who have and still sail with us continue to exceed expectations and everyone concerned is to be congratulated on their commitment and progress.

## **2017 Activities**

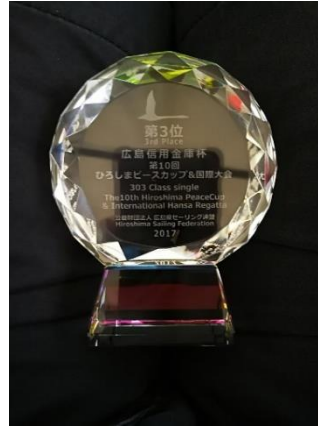
During the year, we increased the number of SEN schools who sail with us as part of their curriculum. Some of these individuals have severe and/or multiple disabilities. This activity increase resulted in us sailing 6 or even 7 days a week for 3 months with the inevitable resultant strain on instructors and our volunteering team. All are to be commended for their support. As this trend is set to continue into 2018, it is inevitable we will need to increase our Instructor team, at least in school term time.

On the downside and for the first time we had to turn some people away during the latter part of the year. We are now developing alternative strategies to minimize the chances of this happening, but demand continues to outstrip supply and space is needed for further growth.

For our racing teams, these have included international championships and several local regattas organized by HHYC; RHKYC; ABC & HKSF. In Japan we won our 2<sup>nd</sup> Bronze and in the Para Worlds in Germany we gained a 9<sup>th</sup> place finish in a Hansa 303. One of the highlights of the year was the achievement of one of our sailors who uses a wheelchair. Not only did he complete the 2017 RHKYC Around the Island Yacht Race in a 2.4mR, he achieved 7<sup>th</sup> place out of 230 boat entries.



Japan 2017 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place plus a special sailing award



Other achievements included winning the HHYC 24 Hour Charity Dingy Race for the second time and also gaining 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> places for our 2 other team entries. Given this race is open to all, it is pleasing to note that disabled sailors can win and that sailing provides an almost level playing field for competition. As 'icing on the cake', 2 of our Volunteers were voted as winners of the '24 Hour Charity Dinghy Race Volunteers' Trophy



Winners – 2017 24 Hour Charity Dinghy Race



Volunteer Trophy Winners



Another major event for us during the year was the Bart's Bash Race. This annual event raises money for disabled sailing worldwide and this year we were one of 599 clubs taking part worldwide. 56 HHYC & Sailability boats took part with 111 sailors participating. From the many clubs taking part, we were the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest fund raiser. Not only that – we finished well up the Sailability leader board in terms of sailing achievements.



The weather was most unkind to us during the year. We lost some 3 months sailing during the summer and then shortly thereafter were badly hit by Typhoon Hato which swept our land-based storage facility containing sails, masts and booms out to sea in the 3 metre tidal surge. The resultant damage was HK\$100,000. Without the help of Hansa, who pulled out all stops to send us replacement parts and new sails, we would have had a very restricted sailing calendar!

A major milestone for us during the year was the achievement of Accreditation by the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) of the UK (it was they who provided the advice and guidance for us to start and who have audited our activities since). We are very proud of this achievement as we are now the only accredited centre for Sailability in Asia. Additionally, World Sailing have also informed us that we are the largest and most active 'Sailability' centre in the same region.





## **Fund Raising:**

2017 was our most difficult year to date. In summary, our donations were a little over 40% down on the previous year and it is very likely we will make our first annual loss. This was exacerbated even further as our repair bills grew substantially during the year, particularly for Safety Boats.

For those of you who may not be aware, we receive no funding support from the Government, the Sports Institute or HKSF, our MNA. All our fund raising is undertaken by appeals; events, sale of donated items, school and NGO programs, other charities and members of the public. We do, however, need to thank a number of loyal corporate organizations who continue to provide financial support to each year, these including HFW who sponsored a BBQ and the prizes for the Bart's Bash Race.

Similarly, the sailing community of Hong Kong within HHYC; RHKYC; ABC & the Hong Kong Optimists Association continue to provide help and assistance without which we would really have struggled during the year. Lastly in this category, we must include Dragon Marine who repair our more severely damaged boats on a most reasonable and helpful cost basis!

On the plus side, the year saw 4 more boat sponsors come forward to fund the replacement of our older boats (now some 7 - 8 years old and somewhat damaged and weather beaten). This is most important to us as without good seaworthy boats, we simply cannot operate.

## **The Future:**

We remain optimistic about the future. There is clearly a demand for our expertise and the services we provide as has been proven by our capacity growth year on year.

We recognize that it is not a time for complacency and the Directors have established key objectives for 2018; these being:

- 1) Increase our fundraising activities and achievement levels.
- 2) Form a Hansa Class Association in Hong Kong. We now have 17 of these boats and this is the next logical step to optimize price and spares advantages.
- 3) Continue to pursue a lease for the 'Shell Land' (adjacent to HHYC), so as to provide more boat storage and other improved facilities.



- 4) Obtain Charity status for 'Sailability Hong Kong Limited' a company formed in 2015 so as to take over the running of the Trust.
- 5) Increase our Sailing Instructor levels.
- 6) Find sponsors for the International events we plan for the coming year.

The principle objective for us all is to improve our fund-raising achievement level. What would also help is for us to find a Patron from within the local community and thereby raise our profile.

Last but certainly not least, I am mindful that it is our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary during 2019.

I will close by thanking all our supporters, whether they be from within the sailing community, members of the public or our various sponsors. Between us, we continue to make a difference to people's lives.

Mike A Rawbone  
Chairman