



LOWRY BAY YACHT CLUB

Commodore's Report 2025-26

Kia ora members,

I am pleased to present my report for the 2025-26 year.

Lowry Bay Yacht Club is a great boating club with a strong racing programme, an active social calendar and a welcoming community. None of that happens by accident. It takes a huge effort from volunteers, committee members, race officers, sponsors, staff and members. Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time and energy over the past year.

This year the Executive Committee focused on the priorities set out in our Annual Plan: delivering great yacht racing in Wellington, strengthening our club community and building a sustainable club with good governance.

A Vibrant Club Community

One of our goals this year was to strengthen connections between members and make it easier for people to engage with the club. We continued to improve our communications through What's On, Facebook, WhatsApp and our website. Feedback suggests these channels are helping members stay informed about racing, social events and club activities.

We welcomed a number of new members during the year and it's great to see fresh faces getting involved in club life both on and off the water.

The House and Cruising programme again provided a range of social activities that brought members together throughout the year. While participation varies from event to event, these activities remain an important part of what makes LBYC a community rather than simply a place to race boats. The House Committee needs to hear from members about what kind of events you want. Please get in touch with Rear Commodore John Lord and share your thoughts.

Sailing and Racing

The Sailing Committee and race volunteers once again delivered a full season of racing and special events. It has been encouraging to see good participation across many of our races and continued support from volunteers who make racing possible.

One of the highlights of the year was the Long Harbour Series, which attracted a fleet of 21 boats, including competitors from our sister clubs across the harbour. It was fantastic to see strong participation and growing connections across the wider Wellington sailing community. Building on that success, we will be looking at opportunities for more inter-club racing and activities in the coming season.

Another standout success was our two-handed racing series, attracting a fleet of 16 boats. It was great to see some boats come out of hibernation to take part.

As always, we are grateful to our race sponsors, volunteers, race officers, safety boat crews and everyone who contributes their time and expertise to delivering another successful season. Their efforts are what make sailing at LBYC possible.

Staff

While we often describe LBYC as a volunteer-run club, we are also fortunate to have a fantastic team of staff who keep things running smoothly week in and week out.

This year, DebbieAnne accepted a new teaching role. Congratulations, DebbieAnne, on this exciting opportunity. While she has stepped back to a part-time role at the club, we are pleased she will still be part of the LBYC team and supporting the club.

We also welcomed Margie to our bar team. Margie has joined us to help cover Sundays and has quickly become a valued member of the crew.

A special thank you goes to Lynn Porter. Lynn manages club hires, coordinates racing administration, supports committees and volunteers, maintains relationships with hirers and suppliers and somehow still finds time to deal with the countless jobs that arise in the day-to-day running of the club. She also contributes a lot of volunteer hours to the club over and above her paid work. Quite simply, Lynn is at the centre of many of the things that make LBYC work so well and we are incredibly fortunate to have her.

Thank you also to Cole, whose work behind the scenes keeps our clubrooms clean, tidy and welcoming for members, guests and hirers throughout the year.

Together, our staff make an enormous contribution to the success of the club and on behalf of all members I would like to thank them for their professionalism and commitment to the club.

Club Facilities and Maintenance

This year we completed the replacement of the front access ramp. Thanks to grants from Pub Charity and Hutt Mana Charitable Trust, along with significant support from members and contractors, we now have a safer, more attractive and more accessible entrance to the club. The positive feedback from members and hirers has confirmed the value of this investment.

We have also continued planning for future improvements to the Lowry Room, including upgrades to the kitchen and toilet facilities. While these projects are still in the planning stage, they form an important part of maintaining our clubrooms and ensuring they remain fit for purpose. At the same time, we are looking at a more complete maintenance plan so that we can properly budget for foreseeable repairs.

Governance and Sustainability

The Executive Committee has continued to focus on making sure the club is well run and remains sustainable for the future. During the year, we reviewed our long-term direction with input from members, including a strategy workshop held in May.

The refreshed strategy confirmed what members value most about LBYC: great sailing, a strong club community and a welcoming, accessible environment for everyone.

The review also highlighted some challenges we need to plan for. Like many clubs, we are dealing with rising costs, increasing compliance requirements and the ongoing upkeep of an ageing clubhouse. While the club remains in a relatively sound financial position, we cannot take that for granted. We also cannot continue to run deficits year on year. We need to ensure the club generates enough income not only to meet day-to-day expenses, but also to maintain and improve our facilities over time. At the same time, we need to attract new members and explore opportunities to grow membership.

As a result, the Executive has spent considerable time looking at the club's long-term financial position. This work has helped shape the proposed subscription increase that members will consider at this AGM. The aim is not to change the character of the club or build up large cash reserves. Instead, it is about making sure we can continue to provide the facilities, programmes and club experience that members value, while planning responsibly for future maintenance and renewal costs.

Thank You

A club like LBYC depends on volunteers. Whether you served on a committee, ran a race, helped with maintenance, organised an event, secured sponsorship, welcomed new members, or simply turned up and supported club activities, thank you.

I would also like to acknowledge the Executive Committee, the Sailing Committee and the House Committee for their commitment and hard work throughout the year. The club benefits greatly from the experience, judgement and passion that committee members bring to their roles.

LBYC remains in good stead, as long as we keep our hand on the tiller and an eye on the weather. I look forward to working with you all as we continue to strengthen the club and secure its future.

Ingrid Harder
Commodore

