



**Town Loch National Training Site  
Management Committee Report  
October 2021**

Over the 2021 season the Town Loch National Training Site Management Committee has been chaired by Chris Heron and has comprised of Kevin Lochhead, Oliver Jessop, Kim Johnston, Stuart Baillie, Ali Brotherton, Carole Cooney, Liz Anderson, Hugh McLean, Nancy Orr, Andrew Williams, Georgina Hutchison, Simon Fairbank, Louise Gillespie and Calum Reid.

A summary of the 2021 season:

Staffing

This season has seen fresh new faces ensuring the smooth running of Town Loch on a daily basis. It's been great for all the members, other club affiliates and first timers that we have now got a 3-event Head Coach Simon Fairbank, competent 2<sup>nd</sup> driver Ross Kennedy and 2 FOH staff Kirsty Williams and Tegan Brady, who during the season have also both managed to get their SBD2 boat licenses. This staff compliment has worked well together allowing us to operate on both lochs and accommodate last minute bookings and special requests a lot better than in previous years.

The staff have done an amazing job this season which has shown in terms of vastly improved customer experiences and feedback as well as the monetary income that they have managed to generate. The centre itself is now a more welcoming, happy, and comfortable place with the addition of some couches to the new lounge area, old retro ski's decorating the walls and halls.

We would also like to thank Matt Mills, Andrew Haslam, Gordon Christie, Chris Heron and the rest of volunteers and helpers over the season.

Equipment & Maintenance

Again, we would like to thank Matt Mills for his hard work in keeping the centre and boats in good condition and passing on some valuable lessons to some of us along the way. Also, Hugh McLean for attending to the woodwork on the decking area.

We were very fortunate to start off the season with the addition of a Super Air Nautique wakeboard boat which replaced one of the later sold Malibu's. This addition has also allowed us to expand our target market to wake surfing and as well as the addition of 'boat parties' and bigger group bookings. This has brought in a much-needed revenue stream.

Nautique Scotland were kind enough to lend us a top of the range Ski Nautique competition boat for a couple months, which allowed skiers to get some practice behind one of the latest official competition boats.

## Advertising & Marketing

This was carried out in various forms over the summer with great success. Town Loch staff have been very active on our various social media platforms keeping everyone up to date with the daily happenings and activities around the centre as well as any special offers.

Various adverts in the newspapers, flyers and a partnership with the National Lottery brought in many new faces with many of these people purchasing development bundles, ski/wake sessions and the addition of some new members.

We have recently partnered with SPRA, who are one of the largest sports and recreation associations in the UK, and the only official and authorised organisation who promote and support sports and recreational activities, within Police Scotland.

New signage has also gone up along the building, which has received positive feedback, much of this being that now people walking past are now aware of what is happening here and has also attracted people to come into the centre and book some activities with us. Suggestions for a bit more signage in town was also brought up to make the public even more aware we are operating in the area.

## Development

We had a couple different development programs running in various forms.

In July we hosted a 2-day coaching camp with Nick McGarry and Arron Davies. We had 4 kids who attended the camp, all with varying levels of skiing, from 2 ski's, dropping a ski to going through the mini course for the first time. A great time was had by all the participants and each and every one improved greatly and learnt some new invaluable lessons along the way.

For the final three weeks of the school holidays the Town Loch Team organised a kids club. This was on every Wednesday for three weeks and was divided into two age categories: 11–13 year olds and 14-16 year olds. We capped each category at 4 participants to maximise the time and coaching each child received in their two daily sessions. We had a successful turnout which was fantastic to see. This was a great social event which we should definitely organise again next season. The kids progressed so much due to having the double sessions. We had some kids go from learning to start on two skis to dropping a ski!

Have a Go Nights in July and August which were aimed at getting new people together to give a new water sport activity a try. Instead of the usual 15min session in a single activity, participants were offered the chance to try a couple different activities with a bit longer session time.

A 1-day Wake 2 Wake wakeboard coaching camp was held in August with Ali Brotherton for all the budding wakeboarders to sharpen their skills, learn some new trick or perfect their riding technique. This was a great success despite the terrible weather and last-minute boat issues. Many of these riders returned multiple times to practise what they had learnt.

Through these programs and day to day coaching we have seen some really great improvements from many members and non-members alike.

## Difficulties

The season wasn't without its troubles, mainly led by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and the various restrictions that have thankfully eased as the season has progressed. The team has worked extremely well around this and kept closely to guidelines that were in place. This I feel definitely played a role in the slow start to the season, with people still very worried about the pandemic.

Boats, as mentioned in the previous year's report, have provided us with a headache or two and many a grey hair. With the one remaining Malibu now being over 11 years old and with many 1000's of hours. Various breakdowns occurred which resulted in numerous days of running at reduced capacity or causing cancellation. Thankfully on a couple of occasions one of our members was kind enough to lend us his boat whilst ours was repaired.

## Going forward

We can look forward to a new Ski Nautique 200 which should be arriving in the next few weeks and will be a welcomed addition to the water ready for next season. There is also potentially a newer Malibu Response that is in discussion to accompany the current Malibu as the day-to-day boat, this has come about due to the various issues that we have had during the season. The current Malibu will be kept at the club and act as a backup boat not only for Town Loch, but for any of the other clubs to ensure that they can stay operative should they run into boat problems.

On the staff side of things, it looks very likely that that core team from Town Loch this season are all keen returning next season to continue on their successes and build on the hard work that they have put in.

We intend on continuing with the various kid's clubs, coaching clinics, and plan on offering more of these earlier in the season aimed at encouraging people to participate in all 3 water-skiing events, as well as wake boarding. We also are developing and planning on putting together more boat driving courses for beginners looking to get into boating as well as advanced driving courses for those already competent drivers who would like to improve their skill even more.

Starting earlier in the season, we will be looking at hosting a couple backyard competitions and hopefully a proper 3-event competition later in the season.

With the negotiation of the lease still active, we are looking at hopefully being able to add some additional income generating activities to the centre, in the form of kayaks, SUP boarding, open water swimming, an aqua park or a combination of these as water-based activities, these are however on the outcome of negotiations.