Welcome to the latest issue of Waterwheels, the annual review that highlights our activities and achievements over the last twelve months

Coulam Wheelyboat V17

LAUNCHING IN the spring is the Trust’s latest model, the Coulam Wheelyboat V17. Its design is based on the hugely successful Coulam Wheelyboat V20 that was developed in 2014. The V17 will be capable of operating anywhere from pleasure boating on canals and small lakes to powerboating on inshore waters. It will be the most versatile Wheelyboat to date and is an essential step forward in the continuing development of the Trust and nationwide expansion of the important service we provide. At 17½’ long and 6½’ wide it will have an open, spacious and level cockpit. Roll-on, roll-off access will be via a watertight bow door that lowers to form a ramp. Its drive-from-wheelchair console will enable people with the severest of disabilities to drive the boat themselves and it can also be driven with a tiller outboard. Seating for ambulant people will be flexible and fixing points on the floor will secure less-independent wheelchair users in place if required. It will be a smaller version of the V20 and will accommodate six people on inshore waters and eight on inland waters. The V17 is a joint-venture with our boatbuilding partner, Jim Coulam, and it was designed by Andrew Wolstenholme, an award-winning naval architect who also designed our Mk III and V20 models. It is a direct replacement for the Mk III model, production of which came to an end in 2018, and it provides a considerable step-up in performance, capability and looks. Like the V20, the V17 will be a craft that is unique in its class.

The first V17 will be going to Wareham Boat Hire in Dorset where it will operate in Poole Harbour and provide powerboat trips, training and qualifications. Wareham Boat Hire will also be using their V17 for Powerability, the scheme introduced by the Royal Yachting Association in 2017 that provides a framework of activities, exercises and experiences to encourage disabled people to take up power and motor boating leading them step by step to Powerboat Level 1 and 2 qualifications. Some participants are expected to go on and qualify as powerboat instructors and mentor and teach other disabled people. Wareham’s V17 will be powered by a Suzuki DF60ATL reaching speeds of up to 30mph and offering some serious powerboating fun. Once qualified as powerboat skippers, disabled people will be able to take the V17 out on their own and organise their own trips with friends and family opening up a whole new world of independence and opportunity.

We are also working with North Wales Sailability at the Conway Centre on Anglesey to help them acquire one. As well as enabling members of the group to be trained and qualify as powerboat drivers and instructors, having a V17 will also mean that one of their volunteers, a wheelchair user, is able to play a full role in their activity sessions by providing safety boat cover.
Coulam Wheelyboat V20 and the work of the Trust feature on BBC’s Countryfile

ON 17 MARCH, the BBC’s flagship countryside programme, Countryfile, featured the Coulam Wheelyboat V20 on a trial run at North Wales Sailability on Anglesey where a Coulam Wheelyboat V17 will be delivered later in the year. Taking part in Countryfile has been a major objective of the Trust for some time and its PR company, Firebird PR, who have close links with the programme, secured the prime-time slot when they approached the producers with an idea for a feature. The Trust and North Wales Sailability are working together to fund a V17 for the group and a larger V24 is planned next year. Presenter, Steve Brown, deftly helmed the V20, his first time driving a powerboat, and there was some stunning footage of the V20 in action. The programme showed how a Wheelyboat would enhance the activities of the Sailability group, broaden members’ experiences on the water and make it so much easier and speedier to board and disembark via the bow door. Filming took place amid a busy Sailability session and most people attending were interviewed. Needless to say, there was much excitement about the prospect of being on the telly!

Joint-project with the Angling Trust will part-fund seven Coulam Wheelyboat 16s

APPLICATIONS ARE invited from clubs and fisheries to acquire one of seven Coulam Wheelyboat 16s, our specially-designed angling model. We have raised £35,000 from the Peter Harrison Foundation (£30,000) and Lord Barnby’s Foundation (£5,000) to part-fund the Wheelyboats, discounting each one by £5,000. There are two rounds—Spring 19 for four Wheelyboats and Autumn 19 for the remaining three. The scheme is being administered by the Angling Trust on the same lines as its Angling Improvement Fund and will enable successful applicants to provide disabled anglers, and wheelchair users in particular, with access to their waters and the fishing.

Purpose-built angling boats, the Coulam 15 and 16 are widely used on fisheries all over the UK. They are built by Jim Coulam at his factory in Lincolnshire. The Coulam Wheelyboat 16 is identical to the standard Coulam 16 but has an in-built hydraulic platform amidships that takes the angler from gunwale height to floor level. The angler wheels up a short ramp onto the platform and a lever is pressed that gently lowers the platform. At floor level the angler then positions himself at the bow or stern. The Coulam Wheelyboat 16 can be driven from a wheelchair and, once on board, the disabled angler can operate the Wheelyboat independently. There are D-rings located on the floor to secure the angler’s wheelchair. Boarding is best undertaken from a floating pontoon or jetty but it is possible from the bank with a longer ramp. The Coulam Wheelyboat 16 has a maximum capacity of three people and maximum outboard size is 10hp. It is designed for angling on stillwaters on the drift or at anchor. Its wide beam makes it unsuitable for rowing very far, but it can be used on a river if it can be motored to the swim and anchored up. For salmon fishing, where a boatman rows and the angler fishes from the stern, then a Coulam Wheelyboat 15 is recommended (two operate on the River Tweed) and applications can be made for this model instead of the Coulam Wheelyboat 16.

The £5,000 discount will bring the cost of each Wheelyboat down to the same price as the standard, non-accessible, version of the Coulam 16. The club or fishery will fund the standard version’s price from their own resources plus outboard, seats and delivery (all of which we can provide). To register your club or fishery go to www.grants.anglingtrust.net and follow the instructions. The application is straightforward to complete and the deadline for the spring round is 30 April. Successful applicants will be notified within four weeks. Any questions at all, please contact Andy Beadsley at The Wheelyboat Trust on 01798 342222 or at info@wheelyboats.org. Best of luck!
‘Sir Bert Massie’ Launched at Liverpool Watersports Centre

COULAM WHEELYBOAT V20 ‘Sir Bert Massie’ is the first fully accessible powerboat to be launched at Liverpool Watersports Centre. Renowned as a disability rights campaigner, Sir Bert was also a long standing trustee of Local Solutions, the Liverpool-based charity that runs the centre. The V20 was launched last April by Sir Bert’s widow, Lady Maureen Massie. Local Solutions is a highly regarded charity delivering services to support individuals, families and communities with a primary focus on those experiencing disadvantage, exclusion and vulnerability.

The V20 project is part of the watersports centre’s programme of developing its facilities specifically for people with disabilities to boost well-being, self-esteem and skills. The successful fundraising campaign for the V20 by Local Solutions and the Wheelyboat Trust, with support from Sport England, has allowed the centre to enrich the lives of its learning, sensory and mobility-impaired visitors. The V20, with its roll-on, roll-off access and drive-from-wheelchair helm enables them to enjoy the excitement of watersports without the need to leave their wheelchairs. The special features of the V20 provides its users with new skillsets including achieving accredited watersports qualifications.

The V20 is also playing an important part in extending the centre’s offer to visitors to the city. Already a popular destination for tourists, the centre’s disabled visitors are now able to enjoy historical tours of the famous Liverpool Docks from the water.

Centre manager, Jon Hannaway, said “We’re committed to extending our activities and provision to make watersports accessible to everyone. Having the Wheelyboat means we can offer so much more for people with disabilities, everything from pleasure boating, tours of the docks to gaining qualifications. Taking part in watersports is so good for your physical and mental health and this is just the first part of our campaign to extend the activities we have available. The Wheelyboat gives us the perfect vessel for wheelchair users to experience independence and get involved on the water, honing both their physical skills and boosting their well-being.”

Natural Breaks, a Merseyside charity that helps disabled people lead independent lives, is one of the groups regularly using the V20. Their first visit was a tremendous success. They said “it was amazing to speed along the docks at 30 miles an hour – it felt like we were flying! Anthony said he felt like James Bond and wants to be captain next time! We’ve all walked around Albert Dock but not many of us have had the chance to have a tour on the water – it was boss! A huge thank you to Liverpool Watersports Centre for a fabulous day!” For more information go to www.liverpoolwatersports.org.uk.

Website updated and more posts on Facebook

Using a template from Squarespace, it was very straightforward to set up and is a doddle to keep updated in-house. It has some excellent images of Wheelyboats in action; details of the three Wheelyboat models currently supplied; a list of all Wheelyboats currently operating, their venues and activities; and, current projects and links to their fundraising pages. It is more succinct but no less informative than its predecessor and it works well on laptops, tablets, mobile phones and other handheld devices.

We are posting on our Facebook page (@Wheelyboats) more regularly and, for example, you may have seen a running report on the progress of the V17’s development as the plug and then the mould took shape in Jim Coulam’s factory. Please ‘like’ our page and share our posts to help us reach a wider audience.

OUR BRAND new website at www.wheelyboats.org took launched in September.
Coulam Wheelyboat V20 launched after M1 sighting

A COULAM Wheelyboat V20 has been launched at the Caldecotte Xperience outdoor education centre, Milton Keynes. Funding the Wheelyboat was a joint-venture between the Trust and Action4Youth, the charity that runs the centre. The project had a most unusual start when one of the centre’s instructors spotted a V20 being towed on the M1 and realised it would be the perfect craft to fill a significant gap in provision for the centre’s mobility impaired clients. With Google’s help he came across our boatbuilder, Jim Coulam, who passed on his details. A demonstration was arranged and fundraising began, culminating in the Wheelyboat’s launch last March.

Caldecotte Xperience prides itself in being fully inclusive with a team of experienced staff who have been specially trained to work with disabled people and understand their complex needs. They endeavour to tailor every activity and course to meet the needs of each individual attending ensuring that everyone, regardless of disability, can enjoy the challenge of adventurous outdoor activities. The V20’s special features provide users with complete independence enabling them to learn to drive the boat, participating as members of the crew, acting as lookout and helping moor the boat, etc.

Jennifer Cameron, CEO of Action4Youth, said “Action4Youth is an innovative charity that looks beyond barriers to provide the best possible prospects to children, giving them the confidence and motivation to push themselves to achieve. Our new Wheelyboat is the first of its kind to be launched in the region and will enable all children and young people to have an equal opportunity to experience the excitement and adventure of water sports activities.”

www.caldecottexperience.co.uk

Papercourt Sailing Club launch final Mk III

ALUMINIUM WHEELYBOAT production came to an end last year when the final Mk III was launched at Papercourt Sailing Club near Guildford. Papercourt Sailing Club is organised with passion by the members for the members. It is an RYA Champion Club, a recognised RYA Training Centre and the club was the UK’s RYA Sailing Club of the Year as well as being a Sailability Foundation Status club. Its programmes are accessible to all abilities and ages from the vibrant youth programme, which has over 150 children participating, to the adult training programme. There are six Access dinghies, designed so that they will not capsize, and these have been complemented by the addition of the Wheelyboat offering a new form of fully accessible boat to the fleet.

John Benyon, Chair of Papercourt Sailability, said, “We are passionate about getting as many people from all backgrounds enjoying the water. Sailability is run by volunteers and therefore free of charge for those who take part and offers an opportunity for people with disabilities to experience sailing for themselves, which is so rewarding. All of our club premises are accessible for wheelchairs from the boats to the shower facilities, which makes our club particularly important. Our aim is to get everyone, regardless of age or ability, on to the water and enjoying themselves and the Wheelyboat is helping us to achieve our goals.” For more information go to www.papercourt-sc.org.uk.

The Mk III has been in production since 2006, 39 were built and it has served the Trust very well. It is the perfect size for a multi-purpose Wheelyboat but lacks the V20’s performance. Combining these two attributes in the new V17 that will replace it means that we will be able to provide operators with the most versatile Wheelyboat model to date. Not only will it have powerboat performance, if required, it will have stunning lines and looks too. With the rugged glass fibre lay-up of a commercial work boat, it will provide operators with years of trouble-free service.
LOCHORE MEADOWS near Cowdenbeath is Fife Sailability’s home water where they operate a fleet of specially adapted sailing boats that enable disabled people to sail alone or accompanied by a qualified instructor. Since being formed in 2012, their mission is to help change the lives of people who feel confined by their disability by making sailing and powerboating accessible to all. They work with Special Educational Needs schools and homes, residential care homes, hospices and other charity and community groups as well as disabled individuals and their families. They took delivery of their Coulam Wheelyboat V20 towards the end of 2018 to increase the on-the-water experience for their service users and help meet the growing demand for their services. The V20 has a max capacity of ten people meaning more people can take part in their sessions than in the dinghies alone. Facebook.com/lochoremeadows

Jim Coulam’s V29 landing craft with a Suzuki Ignis on board and Coulam Wheelyboat V20 behind made an eye-catching display at the 2018 Southampton Boat Show.

The Wheelyboat Trust chooses Suzuki power

SUZUKI HAS supported the work of the Trust since 2005, as part of its commitment to help make boating accessible to all. Owing to their reliability, performance, fuel efficiency, ease of use and value for money being way ahead of other manufacturers, it is no surprise that Suzuki outboards are our number one choice and have been chosen to power our Wheelyboats.

Suzuki’s outboard line-up ranges from the lightweight and portable DF2.5 (2.5hp) right up to the awesome power of the award-winning flagship DF350A (350hp). Uniquely, the engines used in its range of outboards have always been designed specifically for the rigours of marine use, which means that all Suzuki four stroke outboards are incredibly durable and fit for purpose. One of Suzuki’s leading core technologies is its unrivalled Lean Burn Fuel Control, which predicts fuel needs according to operating conditions, then delivers the optimum fuel/air mixture to the engine, resulting in greater fuel economy right across the rev range. This feature is available on all of its outboards from 9.9hp up to 350hp. All of this is a massive reassurance to commercial operators and charitable organisations. It is also a big factor in why more and more companies are choosing Suzuki to power their craft.

Suzuki GB sponsors our presence at the Southampton Boat Show and Seawork show, the two most important events in the boat show calendar, and provide influential PR and social media support.

In order to showcase its capabilities in the large horsepower bracket at the 2018 Southampton Boat Show, one of Coulam Boats’ large V29 ‘landing craft’ was powered by a twin installation of Suzuki DF200AP outboards and was on display carrying a Suzuki Ignis car! It certainly attracted a lot of attention and stood out from the crowd, generating additional publicity for Coulam Boats and the Trust.

We purchase Suzuki outboards at trade and are therefore able to pass on considerable savings to our Wheelyboat projects.

George Cheeseman, Head of Marine for Suzuki GB, said, “We are extremely proud to have built up such a long-term partnership with The Wheelyboat Trust and very much see them as ambassadors for our products. We are looking forward to continuing to work with them to commission even more Wheelyboats and enable more people to enjoy time out on the water.”

Wheelyboats ‘Powered by Suzuki’ featured in this edition of Waterwheels are: Liverpool Watersports Centre (DF90ATL); Fife Sailability (DF90ATL); Tower Wood OEC (DF90ATL); Lymington Sailability (DF90ATL); Papercourt Sailing Club (DF9.9ARL); and, Llyn Brenig (DF8AEL). Our V20 demonstrator (as seen in Countryfile) has Suzuki’s new compact DF100B outboard on the back, the lightest in its class, and Wareham Boat Hire’s V17 launching in April will be powered by a DF60ATL.

For more information on Suzuki’s range of outboard motors and all of its other products, visit www.suzuki.co.uk.

Fife Sailability adds a Coulam Wheelyboat V20 to their fleet

FIFE SAIBILITY adds a Coulam Wheelyboat V20 to their fleet
Four angling Coulam Wheelyboat 16s launched

MOUNTAIN ASH Fly Fishers Association is a fly-fishing club in the Cynon Valley in South Wales. It was formed in 1958 and leases Penderyn Reservoir where it operates a day ticket water stocked with rainbow trout. In recent years it has made a concerted effort to improve the facilities there, particularly for disabled anglers, including improvements to pathways, parking and installing accessible casting platforms. The Wheelyboat project is the final element that transformed the reservoir into a fully accessible fishery for all to enjoy. Beneficiaries of the new Wheelyboat include members of the Welsh Disabled Fly Fishing Team. www.mountainashflyfishers.yolasite.com.

Last year was the 25th anniversary of the Assynt Crofters’ Trust taking ownership of the beautiful 21,300 acres of North Assynt Estate in Sutherland with its 200 lochs. As part of their week-long celebrations, the Trust launched their new Coulam Wheelyboat 16 on Loch Drumbeg. The Wheelyboat offers all the Trust’s visitors, regardless of age or ability, the opportunity to fish and watch wildlife in this stunning setting. The Trust manages many of the lochs for trout and salmon fishing and fishermen return year after year as the fish are wild and in great condition. As well as the fishing, there is the unrivalled opportunity to spot wildlife such as red deer, pine martens, golden eagles and red and black-throated divers. Wheelchair users and those who cannot walk long distances are now able to access the beautiful Loch Drumbeg, with its many tree clad islands and wild brown trout, providing some of the most appealing fishing and wildlife-watching opportunities anywhere in the UK. www.theassyntcrofters.co.uk

Llyn Brenig is Welsh Water’s jewel in the crown of fisheries in north Wales attracting anglers from all over the UK but its location is particularly well-suited to anglers from Wales and the north west. It is a stocked trout fishery renowned for its hard fighting rainbow trout that are grown on in the lake. It regularly holds national and international competitions. It is a large expanse of water with 14 miles of bank, none of which is accessible to disabled anglers who are therefore totally reliant on a Wheelyboat. Brenig has operated a Wheelyboat continuously since 1989. The first one was replaced in 2004 with a Mk II model and this has now been replaced by the Coulam Wheelyboat 16. It has joined a large fleet of standard Coulam boats to which it looks and performs identically. Its two predecessors have been aluminium craft with bow doors that lower to form a ramp and as such some disabled anglers felt self-conscious using them. Being able to use an accessible boat with identical capability and appearance to the rest of the fleet is important for the self-esteem of its users. Also, disabled anglers who fish Brenig’s competitions will now be able to do so entirely on equal terms with their able-bodied counterparts. www.llyn-brenig.co.uk

Bonnybridge Angling Club have held the lease on Drumbowie Reservoir in Falkirk since 1952. Renowned for its prolific fly hatches, it is a 35 acre water stocked with rainbow and brown trout. The fishing is members-only but membership is open to anyone wishing to apply. The club has recently finished the construction of a brand new boathouse to keep the Wheelyboat safe and secure. The Wheelyboat is named ‘Jimmy Don’ in memory of long standing club member Jim McGhee. For more information contact Campbell Doull on 01324 813750 or 07778 768117.

Club President, Alex Anderson, takes delivery from Jim Coulam, boatbuilder
What Wheelyboat users and operators tell us

AS A small charity working hard to improve disabled people’s life experiences, it really inspires us when we hear how much Wheelyboats are appreciated and the difference they make to the lives of their users. Here are just some of the comments we have had over the last 12 months....

“Our Wheelyboat adds a totally new dimension to the programmes that we are able offer.”

“The Wheelyboat is amazing and great fun out on the water.”

“The kids especially liked being able to drive the Wheelyboat. Sorry to the instructor for five kids drowning-out the sound of the engine with their screaming!”

“The Wheelyboat was well set up with good access to board. I was able to drive the boat as well.”

“As a wheelchair user, it was great to get onto the water like everybody else”.

“The boat was easily accessible for my husband’s wheelchair. Once on board he then had the opportunity to drive the boat himself!”

“We thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We could not track down anywhere else in the area where we could get a wheelchair on a boat.”

“Our 10-year old (who has a learning ability of 28 months) helmed and crewed with support and had a fantastic session in the Wheelyboat.”

“From blind people to wheelchair users, everyone gets the same sense of achievement when at the helm and it is a great teaching and learning tool”.

“The Wheelyboat is completely brilliant and everyone who has been on it would agree.”

“The Wheelyboat has been an incredible addition to our fleet of boats supporting people with additional needs.”

“Quite simply, without our Wheelyboat, our mobility impaired visitors would not be able to feel the freedom of being out on the water.”

“It has been incredible to see the progress and confidence of participants who have been on board the Wheelyboat, some have even gone on to take part in the RYA Powerability scheme and complete their log books.”

“The value in giving others the opportunity to be ‘captain’, especially children, and to see the pleasure this gives them first hand, shouldn’t be underestimated.”

HRH The Princess Royal launches ‘Susan Mary’

AS REPORTED in last year’s edition of Waterwheels, Lymington Sailability took delivery of their Coulam Wheelyboat V20 at the Southampton Boat Show. In May last year, HRH Princess Anne formally launched ‘Susan Mary’ at the Pebble Beach Restaurant, Barton on Sea. The occasion also celebrated Lymington Sailability’s 25th anniversary. The restaurant is a regular supporter of the Sailability group including helping to fund the V20. With the Needles in the distance as a backdrop, it made the perfect venue.

Our friends at C&J Marine

C&J MARINE is one of the largest producers of quality marine products, covers and upholstery in the UK offering a complete service for sailing yachts, power boats and motor boats. C&J supply us with first class made-to-measure storage and bimini covers. Contact Wayne Strickland on 01243 785485 or www.cjmarine.co.uk.
LANCASHIRE COUNTY Council’s Tower Wood OEC launched the first Coulam Wheelyboat V20 in the Lake District to provide inclusive access to the water-based activities laid on at the residential outdoor education centre. The 107-bed centre has specially adapted rooms in its Windermere Lodge, catering for people with the severest of disabilities. It offers a wide range of land and water-based activities and ensuring disabled people play a full part during their stay is fundamental to its ethos. Good weather might not be guaranteed but a warm welcome most certainly is!
www.lancashire.gov.uk/outdooreducation/our-centres/tower-wood

Your privacy is important to us

GENERAL DATA Protection Regulations require us to obtain your consent to process (e.g. collect, store, retrieve) your personal data. You have a right to withdraw your consent at any time unless processing your data is necessary in the performance of a contract (1) or there is a legal obligation that requires us to process it (2). All you have to do is email Andy Beadslie, our Director, at info@wheelyboats.org and inform us that your consent has been withdrawn. If conditions (1) and (2) do not apply to your data then we will remove all of it from our records. For a full explanation of how we process your personal data please go to www.wheelyboats.org/privacy.

Special insurance policy for Wheelyboat operators

IRCM OFFERS Wheelyboat operators a bespoke insurance policy. It is very important that operators of Wheelyboats have the support of a broker who fully understands the role Wheelyboats play, that they are purpose-built for the job and that being mobility impaired should not be a barrier to participating in waterborne activities. Not only are IRCM’s policies tailored to fit the needs of Wheelyboat operators but they are also very competitive. We are very pleased to be able to recommend a policy we have absolute confidence in regarding its price and the cover provided. For more information contact Mark Elcocks at markelcocks@ircmsc.co.uk or on 01902 796793.

Please donate—it’s very easy....

Our work is entirely reliant on income from donations, we receive no statutory funding. Donations can be made online via the Current Projects button on the home page of our website, www.wheelyboats.org. We welcome legacies, so please remember us when writing your will (more info and a codicil form can be downloaded at the bottom of our website’s Current Projects page). Members of clubs/societies/fisheries—do please nominate us as your charity to support.

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