



Morecambe Bay Prawner Trust

Charity No 1205349

Annual Report and Accounts 2024

1. Introduction

This is the annual report of Morecambe Bay Prawner Trust for the period 23rd October 2023, the date of the charity's registration with Charity Commission to 31st December 2024

(For Accounts see page 8)

2. Objectives and Activities

2.1 Objectives

The purposes of the Charity as set out in our governing document is

1) To preserve and maintain for the public benefit Morecambe Bay Prawners, other boats built by Crossfields and kindred vessels (including replicas) in sailing condition or otherwise as part of the heritage of Great Britain

(2) To advance the education of the public including young people for the public benefit as to the historic, social and cultural role of Morecambe Bay Prawners, other boats built by Crossfields and kindred vessels in the seagoing heritage of Great Britain and to provide training in the practise of the traditions and skills of seamanship involved in the sailing and maintenance of Morecambe Bay Prawners, other boats by Crossfields and kindred vessels, including providing support for young people.

2.2 Activities

The Trust own Spray, a Morecambe Bay Prawner built by Crossfields in Arnside in 1896 for John Gardiner, a Morecambe fisherman.

The Trust aims is to meet its running costs via membership and sailing fees, with more major costs met by donations, gift aid, grants and fundraising.

3. Achievements during the Year

3.1 Setting up the Charity

The Trust's registration with the Charity Commission was approved in October 2023 and a bank account opened. Trustees and officers of the new Trust were elected at a general meeting in January 2024. The Trust has 17 founder members. A website, <https://morecambebayprawnertrust.org> was set up.

£8300 was raised through donations to fund the first purchase payment on the boat and initial running costs. This enabled us to claim £2075 gift aid. Further donations of £3100 were received during the year and a further £450 gift aid claimed. We are extremely grateful to everyone who donated to the Trust during the year enabling us to set up Trust, fund purchase costs, initial running costs and repairs to the hull in the bow area,

3.2 Purchase of Spray

The Trust completed the agreement to purchase Spray in February 2024 at a cost of £10,000.

We are grateful for the Middlebrook family for allowing to purchase Spray in instalments over a 5-year period. Spray was owned by Tom Middlebrook, who sadly died in 2021 for over 30 years. He restored Spray in the late 1980s ensuring her survival. Ian Middlebrook, Tom's son, was appointed as a trustee, to retain the family's involvement with Spray.



Spray leaving Liverpool

Spray was moved from Liverpool to Glasson Marina by road at the end of February, as most of our volunteers live in the Lancaster and Morecambe area and as marina fees at

Glasson are about half the price of those at Liverpool. The cost of derigging the boat at Liverpool, lifting her out of the water and transporting her to Glasson was £1871.

3.3 Maintenance and Conservation at Glasson

Whilst Spray was well maintained during Tom's ownership, she had only received limited maintenance since 2019 pre Covid and needed repainting.

Paintwork was stripped back to the wood. This enabled the hull planking to be inspected, which was generally in good condition except for area either side of the bow.



Photo showing planking repairs in progress

The planks have now been replaced. This was quite difficult to do as the planks need to be cut precisely and steamed to bend with the hull shape. The seams were caulked and made waterproof. Elsewhere on the boat seams needed to be topped with lead putty. The work was done by Matt Foot, a professional boat builder who is advising us on the project.

Undercoats have been applied both above and below the waterline. The topcoat and antifouling below the water line will need to be applied in the spring when the temperature is warm enough to paint outside. We will need to repaint the deck and outside of the cabin.



Spray in Dec 2024 showing undercoating

The mast and boom have been revarnished, requiring 8 coats of varnish. An area of rot was discovered in the bowsprit, which will need a replacement costing around £2000 before spring.

Other work that needs to be done before the boat can be sailed includes servicing the engine and electrics, checking and upgrading the safety equipment, in line with SOLAS (Safety at Sea) requirements and RYA guidance, servicing the lift raft, lifting the mast back into place, re-rigging the boat, lifting her back into the water and checking the sails.

Next winter, we will need to inspect the internal framework to see if any frames need repairing. This is a major job as it involves taking out the fit out to gain access to the frames. The bilges will also need repainting.

We would like to thank all volunteers who helped on the boat, in particular Alan Novell, Marianne Lueking, Tim Chittenden, Jeremy Lambert and Jeff Simpkin. We are fortunate in having Matt Foot of Bay Boat Works, a professional ship wright and boat conservator, advising us on conserving and maintaining the boat. We like to record our thanks to him.

Plans for the Future

Our aim is to sail Spray on a regular basis so that more people can enjoy sailing her or seeing out on the water.

We are looking at mooring Spray in Morecambe over the summer. Spray was built in 1896 for John Gardiner, a Morecambe fisherman and was owned in early 1920s by James Baxter whose firm still produces potted Morecambe Bay shrimps. In the 1900s there was a fleet of around 100 Prawners at Morecambe. A Morecambe Prawn features in the town's coat of arms. The Morecambe Bay Prawn Heritage links well with the Eden Centre proposals in Morecambe.

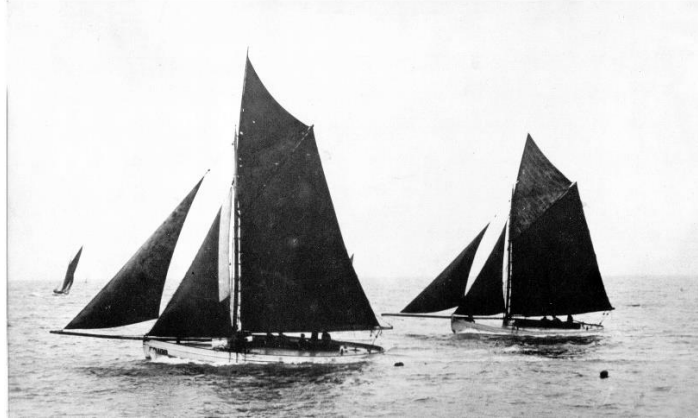
At the same time, we need to keep on top of her maintenance, aiming to improve her condition, to avoid major repair bills in the future.

We envisage running a programme of short half day sails at high tide at Morecambe over the summer with longer voyages to places such as the Isle of Man, to boat festivals such as those at Peel and Barrow and places round the Irish Sea with links to the boat.

3.5 Publicising the Morecambe Bay Prawn Heritage and educating the public

A press release was issued to local media following the purchase of Spray in March. The Lancaster Guardian ran the story.

Nationally coverage of Spray and the Morecambe Bay Prawn Heritage has been achieved with articles in Classic Boat, Practical Boat Owner, Gaffers Log, Yachting Monthly and Country Life.



Morecambe Bay Prawners racing at Morecambe Regatta 1921 which Spray took part in.

A website has been set up. We would like to thank Matt Corns of Dentedale Designs for designing the website for us.

A group of children being educated at home visited the boat in June 2024.

Keeping the boat at Morecambe would enable us to tell more people about Spray and the Morecambe Bay Prawn heritage including residents, visitors and nationally, encouraging more people to visit to the town.



Heysham Ferry in Morecambe Bay (with Morecambe Bay Prawners) Norman Wilkinson Artwork for Railway Poster. Image credit: National Railway Museum/ Science and Society Picture Library

4. Financial Review

Income was £14273 made up of £11529 donations, £2525 gift aid and £219 membership fees. We are grateful for everyone who has donated to the Trust over the year. This is a further £387.50 gift aid to claim.

Expenditure was £10461. Principal costs were first purchase payment of £3000, moving the boat to Glasson £1871, insurance £1276, marina fees £2442, painting and maintenance £911 and bow planking repairs £1141.

Bank balances at the end of the year were £3622. There is a further £2985 to pay for bow repairs, which were substantially complete at the end of the year but not paid for.

There are a further estimated costs of around £13000 to come through before we put the boat back on the water in the spring. These include marina fees of £625, the second purchase payment for Spray £2000, new bowsprit £16000, insurance £1300, paint and varnish £600, laying a mooring £1500 and servicing of equipment £800.

We have applied for a grant of £5000 from Morecambe Town Council and £500 from a local charity. Membership fees are likely to bring around £600. However, there is likely to be a need for further donations and fundraising before the Trust becomes self-funding. Gift Aid will also help us make up any shortfall,

The basic running costs of the Trust are around £4000 a year which we need to meet via membership and sailing fees. In addition, we need to pay purchase fees of £7000 in instalments over the next 4 years, raise money for future repairs and conservation and build up a reserve.

It is proposed to retain membership fees at £35 couple / family, £30 individual, £25 low income and set sailing fees at £15 for ½ day, £50 per day for longer overnight cruises, which is likely to bring in an income from sailing fees of between £1500 and £2000 a year

4.1 Reserves Policy

As a new charity we have not had the chance to build up reserves yet. However, we recognise the need to build up reserves of at least £10,000 to cover a year's running costs and unforeseen major repairs.

5.Risks

a) Owning a historic boat, the Trust is subject to the risk of unforeseen major repair costs. We are aiming to mitigate this risk by keeping the boat in condition, building up a reserve, inspecting the boat on a regular basis, planning maintenance in advance and carrying out repairs before we have need to.

b) The Trust at risk of membership and sailing fees being less than anticipated. For example, sailing fees could be low due to poor summer weather. We will aim to mitigate this by monitoring income on a regular basis, fund raising and by building up a reserve,

c) The Trust is subject to risks in sailing and operating a historic boat. We seek to reduce risk from our activities by holding public liability and employer insurance (that also covers volunteers), having qualified skippers and crew on board and by having a safety management system. In 2025 before Spray enters the water, we will need to conduct risk assessments, check and upgrade safety and navigational equipment and write operating procedures. Passage planning will be necessary for voyages. Weather

forecasts and tides will be checked before any voyages. The boat carries a VHF radio and life raft and has an engine, Procedures with need to be revised over the year in the light of experience.

d) The Trust may from time to time take out to young people and vulnerable adults on Spray. We will reduce safeguarding risks by having a policy in place requiring a guardian or responsible person to accompany young people or vulnerable adults. We will follow RYA best practise and carry out DBS checks on volunteers as necessary.

e) The Trust is subject to the risk of key members moving on. We will mitigate the risk of this by sharing the workload, encouraging new volunteers to come forward and develop their knowledge so that there are people who can take over in the future.

6. Structure, governance and management

The Trust is a charitable incorporated institution with voting members who elect the trustees on a yearly basis.

The Trust is run by a management committee of trustees with other members contributing to different areas of the Trust's operations. The Trustees aim to meet on a quarterly basis.

Trustees in 2024 were

Alasdair Simpson	Chair
Jeremy Lambert	Treasurer
Chris Englefield	Secretary
Robin Ashcroft	
Kevin Goulding	
Ian Middlebrook	

Marianne Lueking is our Welfare Officer.

The Trust is advised by Matthew Foot of Bay Boat Works, a professional shipwright and boat conservator on the maintenance and conservation of the boat.

The Trust has no paid employees with everyone donating the time on a voluntary basis.

7. Volunteers

The Trust is dependent on its volunteers. The Trustees would like to thank all volunteers for their input during the year.

8. Statement of Trustees Responsibilities

The Trustees confirm that throughout the year they have acted in regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of accounts in accordance with Charity law, The Trustees are satisfied that the accounts and report give a fair and true view of the Club in 2023-24.

Morecambe Bay Prawner Trust Accounts

Income and Expenditure 23 Oct 2023 – 31 Dec 2024

Income	
Donations	£11529
Gift Aid	£2525
Membership Fees	£219
Total	£14273

Expenditure	
Boat Purchase first payment	£3000
Transporting boat to Glasson	£1871
Insurance	£1276
Marina Fees	£2442
Routine maintenance	£911
Bow planking repairs	£1141
Total	£10641

Surplus for Year **£3632**

Bank Balances 31st Dec 2024

Current Account	£3613
Savings Account	£19
	£3632

The Trust had short term liabilities of £2985 for bow planking repairs and long-term liabilities of £7000 for boat purchase

Audited by Caroline Milne