



**Town Loch National Training Site
Management Committee Report
October 2022**

Over the 2022 season, the Town Loch National Training Site (NTS) Management Committee has been chaired by Waterski and Wakeboard Scotland Chief Operating Officer Calum Reid and has been comprised of Kevin Lochhead, Oliver Jessop, Kim Johnston, Stuart Baillie, Ali Brotherton, Carole Cooney, Liz Anderson, Andrew Williams, Georgina Hutchison and Chris Heron.

Please see below a summary of the 2022 season.

Staffing

The 2022 season saw some new faces starting and familiar ones returning to allow us to build on the excellent season we had in 2021. Our very own Town Loch NTS Chair and Director, Chris Heron took on the role of Head Coach for the season. This enabled us to have some consistency on the coaching and driving front due to Chris' heavy involvement alongside Simon in 2021 as a volunteer driver and coach.

Kirsty Williams returned as our very competent 2nd driver after being part of the Front of House (FoH) team last season where she took on some driving responsibilities. Kirsty is now towing many of our competitive athletes at top speeds and rope shortenings.

We also welcomed back Tegan Brady to our FoH team. Tegan led the FoH team expertly this season, taking on many additional responsibilities and providing great customer service to all. Tegan was joined by Katrina Paley who wasn't afraid to get involved in every task asked of her and during her first season managed to start mono skiing and pass her Ski Boat Driver qualification.

Our final member of full-time staff that carried out both FoH and driving duties was Archie Lochhead. In addition to these duties, Archie also created our new Beginners Experience video that you will all get to see in the 2023 season.

This staff group has worked well together allowing the team to work flexibly and proactively to accommodate any last-minute bookings, special requests, or changes extremely well.

The staff have done a fantastic job this season which has shown in continued improved customer feedback and an increase in new members signing up over the course of the season.

We would also like to thank all the volunteers who aided us throughout the season. Special thanks go out to Matt Mills for ensuring all our equipment and machinery is in working order without fail, Andrew Haslam for his bookkeeping and driving/coaching duties and Gordon Christie who aided with driving on Sundays and Mondays.

Site, Equipment & Maintenance

Our thanks again to 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. It would also not be right if we didn't recognise Alasdair Roger who has stepped up and aided us here at Town Loch with various aspects, including some fabrication jobs for our trailers and winch, aiding with the construction of our new boat lift (keep your eyes peeled in 2023) and most of all helping us ensure our Malibu got back on the water sooner than expected.

The centre itself underwent a revamp at the start of the season which saw the office being given a new, more professional and welcoming look, the upstairs area being laid out to better suit large-scale meetings, courses and/or presentations, a warm-up area for participants to use prior to getting

out on the water, a selfie spot so everyone can capture the memories and aid with us promoting Town Loch, our new and improved wetsuit and equipment room and members locker room. Not to mention our new decking and dock area which received a much-needed facelift with AstroTurf, restored bench, fencing and podium for competitions. This was the next step from all the improvements that were made last season to ensure the site is a more welcoming, happy, and comfortable place to be.

This season saw us start as we would have liked to in 2021 and as we mean to go on with a full complement of boats for our members and customers to use. Our 'flag ship' was a 2022 Nautique 200 official competition ski boat, which accompanied our Super Air Nautique 210 wakeboard/wake surf boat. Our two Nautiques being joined by our trusty Malibu Response ski school boat.

We also did a full reconciliation on our wetsuits, flotation vests, helmets, skis, wakeboards, kneeboards, and wake surfboards to ensure all were fit for purpose and ordered replacement equipment if it was required. This enabled us to provide first-class equipment to our customers/participants.

Advertising & Marketing

At the start of this season, there was a large amount of research carried out in relation to how we market and advertise Town Loch. The findings allowed us to focus on the most appropriate and effective methods to ensure that we got the Town Loch brand and the services we offer in front of wide and varying demographic across the local community and the wider country.

Like last year, there was a large focus on our social media presence. Our accounts on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook ensured that viewers were kept up to date with the daily happenings and activities around the centre as well as any special offers we were promoting.

In previous years many avenues were used at a cost in the attempt to reach a wider audience, data collated from previous years indicated that a number of these avenues were not a good use of funds and resource with them providing very little return. To that end (and after some great work by Lawrence McNamara on our website) we focused our efforts on numerous social media advertising posts with offers and promotions online which proved extremely lucrative for the site, reaching a vast number of new participants which were later converted from our 'Beginners Experiences' to 'Development Bundles' to our 'Next Steps Bundle' (membership and sets) which was great!

2022 also saw the release of our second merchandise line, which adopted the new pink and blue colours of Town Loch for our t-shirts and a new 'Scottish' design for the hoodies. These have been a massive hit with great feedback from all our customers, so much so that we only have a limited amount left in stock. This has shown that there is a want/market for our site-specific merchandise.

This season saw the first full season of our new dockside advertising campaign where local businesses pay for a board to be advertised at Town Loch and as part of the package are given reduced rates to utilise our services. We hope to see these businesses repeat their advertising in 2023 along with some new additions too.

Development, Coaching & Competitions

This year the objective was to surpass the great year that 2021 was in relation to coaching, development, competitions, and opportunities for our members to have access to the best coaches in the country and enhance their skills no matter what age they are.

We believe we managed to achieve this and then some in 2022 and have detailed some of the major events below that contributed to a very successful year in relation to development and coaching.

In May we started our 'What Is...' campaign on social media which set out to explain each different discipline there is within our sport on social media to generate conversation, get people interested and clear up some jargon and common misunderstandings.

There were combined 'Wake 2 Wake' and 'Slalom' clinics arranged on Friday evenings whereby participants received a slightly longer set behind one of our state-of-the-art boats with some 1-2-1

coaching from our experienced coaches. This was then continued by our Head Coach going on the road and offering coaching clinics at other affiliated clubs.

We were also cognisant of the feedback we received in 2021 regarding a potential 'Kids Club' or 'Summer Camp'. We planned, advertised heavily, and got a fantastic sign-up. Sessions took place on Tuesdays & Thursdays in two blocks during the school holidays with participants divided into three age categories: 8-10, 11-14 and 15-17-year-olds. We capped each category at 4 participants to maximise the time and coaching each child received during their two sessions each week. This was a great social event which we should 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!

This led us to a promotion we did in conjunction with the Aberdour Festival at the start of August which saw children from the local area come and try waterskiing and wakeboarding for the first time. It was a great day and lots of fun was had by all. So much so that we have now gained two new junior members of Town Loch.

After some rearranging, we welcomed Glenn Campbell to Town Loch at the start of September where he and Chris delivered a coaching clinic to our members. This enabled our members to have a more focused one-on-one coaching experience to help dial in their technique, equipment, and mindset. Feedback from the members who took part was extremely complimentary and positive and we are looking to do something similar next year.

The following day we then hosted a Friends of Tournament Development Day with Glenn and Dusko Lukic. We had a capacity group of eight U18s participating in the event which is designed to give each participant four sets over the course of the day, to be coached by a British Waterski Coach and introduce them to the other disciplines of the sport. Each of the participants improved greatly, some running the slalom course for the first time, some learning how to trick ski or putting on jump skis for the first time. We also provide extracurricular activities for our U18s (and parents) to ensure the day was fun-filled and exciting. This included a Nintendo switch, French bowls and board games. In 2023 we hope to have another FoT day and send our Head Coach to deliver one at another site.

Town Loch also hosted two stops of the Scotland Nautique Backyard Slalom Series, one in June and one in September. Both events went extremely well, taking on the feedback from 2021 and attempting to improve the experience in 2022. Our first stop had a good turnout, some great competition on the day and a fun day had by all. We didn't think it could get better until our second stop and the final stop on the calendar. We were delighted to have the largest number of participants at a Scottish competition for many years. The day had everything from competition drivers to British Team Members to freshly made focaccia...an extra special day and a great way to finish off the Scottish competition calendar with a rainy awards ceremony.

Finally, it would be wrong not to mention the fantastic performances of our NTS members Georgie Hutchison, Ollie Jessop, Kevin Lochhead and Chris Heron at the British National Championships where a large medal haul occurred. This then led to three of these individuals being included in the 16-person British squad that competed in the IWWF 35+ World Waterski Championships in France where Ollie, Kevin and Chris skied exceptionally well. Well done all!

Difficulties

The season wasn't without its troubles, we had the unfortunately normal issues when it came to boats. Whether it be a damaged prop, some unique objects being found in the water that caused some damage to our boats or mechanical and electrical issues. However, thankfully due to the proactive and quick responsiveness of our staff and volunteer team, they ensured that these issues did not go on longer than they needed to.

It is also important to thank our SGB colleagues for the use of the Community Boat, a Ski Nautique 196 when our Malibu had an issue with its ZeroOff unit. Without this, we would have been out of operation for a large part of the season.

Speaking of boats, the one remaining Malibu now being over 11 years old and with many 1000 hours on it. There is now an even larger likelihood of this boat to breakdown and/or needing more replacement parts. We are fortunate that we have Matt, the communal boat and members who are kind enough to lend us their boat whilst ours is repaired. However, we believe it may be time to discuss the next steps in relation to our boats moving forward.

Off-Season and 2023

Town Loch will be open over the winter to our members with Chris managing the site, driving and coaching to allow you all to continue your skiing with consistent and effective coaching on and off the water (watch this space). We can also look forward to a new Nautique 200 which should be arriving at the start of the 2023 season and will replace our current Nautique 200. This will keep Town Loch up to date with the latest boat and technologies that go along with it.

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

We intend to continue with and improve upon the various clubs, summer camps, coaching clinics, FoT days and competitions. We are also developing and planning on putting together more boat driving lesson formats, 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 skills even more.

Calum and Chris have also started work on a Development Plan for Town Loch up until 2025 and will be continuing to refine this over the coming months and start to put in place the first steps toward achieving the objectives.

With the negotiation of the lease at Town Loch 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, or a combination of these. Once these negotiations have concluded we will inform the NTS Management Committee and arrange for the next steps to take place.

Overall, we believe that this year has been a fantastic year for NTS and the sport in general in Scotland. We would like to take this opportunity again to thank all our staff, volunteers, members and customers for a great year! Roll on 2023...