

Welcome to Ballyholme YC

Welcome to Ballyholme Yacht Club, one of Northern Ireland's most active and successful sporting clubs. Join us and learn to love sailing and other watersports as much as we do.

In two years time BYC will celebrate our first centenary. Some of our fleet - the Waverleys - have already celebrated 110 years. Many of our members have raced around the world, competed at the Olympics and won World Championships. Our club has been represented at every Olympic Games since 1984.

Ballyholme YC is a club for everyone, for children and adults to come and discover sailing for the first time. Enjoy a Try-Sail, private lesson or one of our many RYA courses. Last year over 1000 people used our RYA Training Centre under our full-time training manager Alice Armstrong.



Our Clubhouse

In the late 19th century several attempts were made to start a second yacht club in Bangor. Royal Ulster Yacht Club had been founded in 1866, though membership was generally limited to the wealthy upper class, many of whom came from outside Bangor. Local enthusiasts set up Bangor Bay Sailing Club which led to Bangor Corinthian Sailing Club and finally, in 1900 formed Ballyholme Sailing Club (BSC) which commenced racing in 1901.

A Clubhouse was built which stands today as the Kingsland Tennis Pavilion. Sadly when World War I began and members went to serve in the war, the Club had to close and the Clubhouse and its grounds passed into the hands of the local Council.

In 1919 after a regatta in Ballyholme Bay, members of the original BSC decided to revive their club and in 1920, created Ballyholme Yacht Club (BYC) as it has been known to the present day.

A wooden clubhouse measuring 18'x5' was built consisting of a locker room and battery, expanding in 1938 to include a lounge and basic galley, the cost being £100. Membership in 1938 was approximately 170 and the subscription income £80.

World War II interrupted further development but the Club still remained active, 1940 being the only year in which no racing was held. The Club continued to flourish in the post-war years and in 1956 a new Clubhouse (now the Cadet Room) was built at a cost of £2,800 which was, for this era, a state of the art building. The old wooden Clubhouse was demolished in 1963 being replaced by the two-storey building that now includes the office, the lounge and ladies' toilets.

In 1971, after long and controversial debate, a bar was opened

for the first time, as prior to this the Club was 'dry' except for rare occasions. Membership was by now over 1000. The North Dinghy Park and North slipway was created on reclaimed land in 1974/75 while the single storey section which houses the Jubilee Room, galley, gents' changing room & showers was added in 1977. The most recent stage of development was the Rescue & Training Building which was opened in 1996 by

In 2008 Ballyholme YC was chosen by the Olympic legacy committee as the location for the Northern Ireland Elite centre for sailing. A proposed redevelopment with investment of up to £4.7 million included new breakwaters, a crane for disabled sailors, widened slipways and a new clubhouse and training centre. Unfortunately an appeal by Belfast City Council against the Olympic legacy council blocked the process and with the sudden downturn in the economy and "financial crisis", only the Bangor Aurora Olympic Swimming Pool managed to get built as a legacy elite facility. We still await news from the Lottery Commission regarding the potential redevelopment of BYC and are also looking to other potential sources of funding.

Our Racing

Initially racing took place in various keelboats under handicap. As one-design classes appeared around the UK, the members built Lake class boats and acquired the Waverleys from their original home in Whitehead. Other classes such as Seabirds and Snipes came and went. Glens, Fairies and Rivers were built in Bangor but found home elsewhere at RNIYC and SLYC. In 1938 members aspired to have their own individual one-design class which prompted the Ballyholme One-Design Class. Nine boats were built in Scotland for £80 each and seven of this class are still racing today. The class officially changed its name to the Ballyholme Bay Class in 1948.

In more recent years, BYC has been a centre for handicap rac-

ing through PY keelboats such as Sonatas and Impala's. In the 1980's a half ton IOR fleet targeted the hosting of the Half Ton Cup in Howth Yacht Club in 1984. Many will have great memories of Bangor Week which BYC and Royal Ulster joint hosted.



Throughout the 1990's and 2000's only the Sigma 33 Class has maintained its numbers at BYC club racing which also saw the rise and fall of a 16 boat Dragon fleet. More recently BYC members have been instrumental in setting up the Northern Ireland Restricted Keelboat Racing Association which looks to rebuild numbers in keelboat racing in Belfast Lough with inexpensive racing in older keelboats similar to the old IOR Quarter Ton rule.

In the second half of the 20th century, Ballyholme became one of the main centres for dinghy racing on the island of Ireland with large fleets of GP14 and Enterprise dinghies. Burton Allen and Issu Duffy won the British GP14 Nationals - possibly the greatest success by a BYC crew in a huge and very competitive class while Bill Whisker and Jimmy won the GP14 World Championship in the USA. Youths started in Cadets and developed through the Mirror class which saw Allan Bell win every provincial championship for 3-4 years but denied the National

title. Keen to say ahead of the game in the 1970's, members built their own fleet of Fireballs over the winters in the new mens changing rooms.

The arrival of the Laser class saw a shift to single-handed sailing which could be argued as Ballyholme's strength over the last 40 years. Members have competed in the "heavy-weight" single hand class - the Finn - in which Chris Boyd, Bill O'Hara, Conrad Simpson and John Driscoll have all represented Ballyholme at the Olympic Games. BYC hosted the Finn Gold Cup (World Championship) in 1992.



Since the Laser became an Olympic class in 1996, Russell McGovern missed out narrowly on qualification while more recently James Espey represented BYC at London 2012 and has already qualified Ireland for Rio 2016. Ballyholme have has great success at the Irish Laser National Championships - Gareth Flannigan (Flipper) won it at the tender age of 17 amongst his many other National titles. In 2004, BYC hosted the Laser Radial European Championships.

Our other recent Olympic representaion at London 2012 was in the 49er skiff with Ryan Seaton and Matt McGovern. Ryan and

Matt have had great success on the ISAF World circuit with podium finishes at Hyeres and Weymouth and have also qualified Ireland for Rio 2016. Jackie Patton has also represented BYC at the Olympic trial event but narrowly missed out on qualification.

In 2014, Ballyholme YC hosted the F18 World Championships - a rich reward for the strong Dart and Hurricane multihull fleets that dominated a lot of sailing at BYC in the 2000's when we also hosted the Hurricane European Championships twice. The F18 Worlds saw 16 countries represented with many visiting professional sailors including multi world champion and America's Cup ETNZ crew Glenn Ashby.

This summer Ballyholme will host the Laser Masters, Multihull Northerns, Optimist Ulster and RS400 National Championships and Eurocup (alongside RS200/RS Feva Northerns). BYC has a fast growing RS400 and RS200 fleet and the club recently purchased 3 RS Feva's to help grow double handed sailing focusing on girls and ladies.

Next year, BYC will host the Topper World Championships with 200 youth sailors expected to compete in the major UK youth single-handed pathway dinghy. In 2013, Ballyholme celebrated our latest World Champion in Liam Glynn who won the Topper World Championships in France. Liam has moved on to the Laser Radial class where he has already excelled and won this years French Eurocup.

Ballyholme YC's main strength is our active club racing with regular Tuesday evening and Sunday afternoon sailing throughout the summer for dinghies and keelboats. In the autumn/winter we also host our Icebreaker Series which saw 136 dinghies entered last year across all fleets. The number of fleets change from year to year between Laser, Multihull, Large PY (normally doublehanded) and small PY (normally Topper) dinghies. This year looks to see a great mix across all fleets with a resurgent youth section training for next years Topper World Championships.

We also have many RYA dinghy instructors and coaches who are very willing to help out on Friday evenings, Saturday and Sunday sessions to help coach the skills of our youth and adult members - at beginner and more advanced levels. Many of our members have been involved in the RYANI youth squads which are frequently hosted at Ballyholme.

If you would like to join in our club racing, please talk to our Rear Commodore Sailing Aidan Pounder who can put you in touch with the relevant Class Captain. We have crew lists on our website for people wanting to crew on dinghies and keelboats, and for boats who want crew. You must be a full member to take part in our Club racing series.



Our Training Centre

Ballyholme YC has been a RYA training centre for over 30 years. In 2011 we appointed a full time instructor to oversee the development of our training centre and help with the huge numbers of cadets coming through our Dolphin and Sharks program.

We have a large training fleet with Laser Pico's, Laser Stratos and Bahias, and RS Fevas with 2 Toppers who are hired out to developing youth sailors on an annual basis.

In addition to the RYA Youth summer courses, we also offer Adult and Youth courses throughout the rest of the year. We also host many powerboat Level 2 courses, shore based navigation and marine radio courses, RYA first aid courses and Dinghy Instructor courses amongst others. You can also book Private Lessons for you and/or your family with an Instructor. This summer will see our first RYA keelboat courses and a number of Try-sails for people to come and try sailing for the first time.

Please check our website for the extensive Training Centre Course calendar where you can also enrol on-line.



Membership

Ballyholme YC welcomes new members to come and join our club. Full membership allows you to:

- full use of our clubhouse including lounge bar, changing rooms, slipways, dinghy parks and other sporting facilities
- join in our very active social calendar
- free club racing in our Tuesday night and Sunday afternoon series, Belfast Lough Regattas and many other club events throughout the year
- free Dolphins and Sharks sailing sessions for cadet members age 8 to 16, cadet social and sailing events
- free adult sailing on Friday nights from July to September
- access to Ballyholme's Sub Aqua (BSAC) Club (supplementary membership charge)
- discounted rates for hire of the Jubilee room and marquee for social and corporate events.
- discounted RYA training courses to improve your skills both afloat and ashore in dinghies and keelboats.
- family and cadet cruising sessions
- discounted rates at many local shops, fitness gyms and other services

You will also meet many new friends to enjoy the many social events and on-water activities. If you don't want to race yourself, we have members who just like to sail their dinghies and keelboats and help organise cruises around Belfast Lough or beyond to Scotland, Ireland or Europe. Other members do powerboating, kayaking or diving. Many love to join in the buzz of the many sailing championships that we host every year - either as rescue crew, on committee boats or helping ashore to look after our guests.

All members are asked to volunteer and help in one or more of the various parts of the club.

Our Club

Ballyholme YC is run by an Executive Committee and many sub-committees including Sailing, Shore, Training, Cadet, Diving and Social. Committee members are elected annually at our AGM. Current Executive Committee members include:

Commodore - Mark Mackey	Captain/ Social - Jo Rennie
Hon. Sec. - Pete McDowell	Member - Paul Prentice
Treasurer - Russell Rowley	Diving - Jim Norman
Rear Commodore Sailing - Aidan Pounder	Rear Commodore Shore - Tom Bell

How to join Ballyholme Yacht Club

Please complete a membership application form - these are available in the club foyer or online at ballyhome.com.

You will have to be proposed by one of our members and meet one of our Executive Committee.