

'I am extremely proud of what we are achieving'

A WATERSPORTS club which is bursting at the seams has outlined ambitious expansion plans as it aims to spread its reach even further.

Manvers Waterfront Boat Club already has almost 2,000 members taking part in sport on Manvers Lake.

Now the club is hoping to attract and accommodate even more and has applied to Rotherham Council for permission to add a £300,000 extension to its boathouse.

The plans drawn up by Manvers Lake Trust — which would make more room for canoes, kayaks, dragon boats, paddleboards and windsurfers — also include converting space above the boat store into a club room and more storage and installing a lift, staircase and balcony.

Club president Chris Hawkesworth said: "We are really pleased to feel able to add additional space for both our members and the public.

"We operate 365 days a year, dawn till dusk and beyond.

"Our members range from Olympic aspirants to beginners, and under our Team Manvers banner we compete in land and water events all over the world.

"However, our home base needs to be equipped to the latest modern standards for coaching, training, practice and casual participation."

Chris, who is also chair of trustees, said the club was also a training centre for emergency services members and for

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martial artists and worked with Dearne Valley College to give more youngsters access to sports facilities

"I see this as a win-win for the area and vindication of the 1990s policy of regeneration of the former mine and railway workings of Manvers Main and Wath Coking works that used to occupy the site," he said.

"I am extremely proud of what we are achieving.

"We have received over £100,000 in donations from public, private, other charities and various not for profit organisations already.

"We are backed by Sport England, the Environment Agency, South Yorkshire Sport, Dearne Valley College, Sheffield Hallam University, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue to name but a few, and I am sure we will get there with the money to enable a build later in this coming winter."

Club chair Mark Benton said: "I never thought for one moment that the club would attract so many members.

"The limited storage space is starting to restrict the activities that can take place, as we have limited space to store equipment.

"We hope that the large room above the boat store will enable the club to improve the range of training available to

Boat club goes from strength to strength and reveals plans for £300,000 extension



members throughout the year."

Technical and commercial manager Chris Wordsworth said the extra room could also be used by other community

groups and would allow the club to be more active during the winter.

You can find more information about the Trust at www.manverslaketrust.co.uk

An artist's impression of the planned extension and (inset) club president Chris Hawkesworth.

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