

Permission is granted for Thames Estuary sailors to build new £200k facilities



■ Ambitious project – Dave Caten by the existing jetty for Thames Estuary Yacht Club

Picture: ANNA LUKALA BA53652

Yacht club to impress all on the waterfront

A YACHT club on Southend seafront will be sailing into the 21st century after plans for its new clubhouse were accepted.

The Thames Estuary Yacht Club is hoping to attract more members with the building, which will cost up to £200,000.

The new clubhouse overlooking the water will replace a wooden hut and chemical toilet on the site.

By **GEORGE THORPE**

george.thorpe@nqe.com

Features inside the building are to include a lounge area measuring 30ft by 40ft, toilets, showers and a new hut for getting changed into sailing gear.

Dave Caten, the club's commodore, believes the clubhouse will become an essential part in the club's quest to recruit more sailors.

Mr Caten said: "We want to bring in more members, but people do not really want to be getting changed in an old wooden shed, so it was important for us to upgrade.

"Because we are in quite a prominent position along the seafront, we need to utilise where we are to full effect with our new clubhouse and activities to get people interested in joining."

In addition to getting permis-

sion for the new building, the club has also been officially registered to start teaching powerboating from its jetty.

Mr Caten said the club – which was formed in 1900 as Westcliff Yacht Club and now has about 150 members – needs to use the central location to its advantage.

He said: "The club is in a great position in terms of location, with plenty of car parking next to us on the road, plus

some of the best sailing waters in the country.

"But our club hasn't really got a catchment area compared to others, such as Thorpe Bay Yacht Club or Island Yacht Club in Canvey, so we need to find ways to attract people from all over the area, which hopefully will happen with the new clubhouse."

The club is hoping the building work will be completed by the end of this year.