

LEEDS ROWING CLUB

AGM Minutes



Date: 14th of October 2023

Time: 10am

Location: The Stourton Boathouse

Apologies

Mike Webb

Danielle Markendale

Camilla Key

Attendees

David Saul (DS) – Chairman and Head of Rowing

David Cottrell (DC) – Membership Secretary

Gavin Coates (GC) – Development Director

Jessica Brush (JB) - Treasurer

Naomi Assame (NA) – Secretary

Sophie Low

Chloe Griffith

Laura Farquhar

Taryn Birkett

Amy Wilson

Georgina Ashley

Phillipa Donnelly

Lucy Conn

Tom Roe

Lewis Windeatt

Fraser Moxon

Finn Gamble

Phoebe Keates

Kate O'Connell

Mike Barker

Jonathan McCann

Oliver Lumley

Libby Morrell

Euan Gillespie

Jenny Hughes

Ella Murphy

Mimi Patterson

Henrietta Donnelly

Matthew Bertola

Anita Holender

Oliver Moxon

Finn Broderick

Gwendal Keller

Julia Birtwell

Annie Aspinall

Chris Russell

Miguel Lopez

Jess Foster

Jack Turnham

Welcome

David Saul welcomed everyone to this year's AGM.

1. Chairman's Statement

David Saul provided an overview of his report below:

The last year has been a good one for the Club with a lot of stability but also some good changes.

The senior racing squad expanded with more people than ever joining in the squad training and preparing for the main races of the winter and summer. We were therefore able to field two competitive Women's crews at WeHARR, the 1st crew finishing in the highest position ever, and two men's crews in the HARR. The squad then produced our first ever Women's 8 for Henley Women's regatta, which qualified for the knockout stage of the regatta. We also produced two very competitive Women's 4's so this is the first year that we have raced 3 women's club crews at Henley Women's regatta. The senior men qualified for the knockout stage of the Thames Cup at Henley Royal for the 5th time.

The appointment of our first full time Junior coach has had a great impact on the junior squad. The 2022/23 Junior squad is full of enthusiasm, and this showed through in their racing results where they were the most successful squad in the club with 12 Head and Regatta wins. We sent a large team to the British Junior Championships and standout results were 4th in J14 boys 2x and 7th in WJ15 1x but, for a first entry to these championships, the whole team enjoyed the experience and their performances showed that. With the new September intake, the squad has now expanded to around 60.

In addition to the racing squads, we have been developing a thriving recreational squad at Waterloo lake with around 30 members. We have also based a fledgling Development Squad at Waterloo lake for the last year but have now redefined the pathways within the Club and moved the development athletes to Thwaites Mill for 2023/24.

With the increase in junior and senior racers, the Club has been investing in the fleet of boats and has bought an additional Eight, Quad and double for the racing squads and a single for Waterloo Lake. We have also purchased some new and second-hand sculls, mainly to keep up with the expansion of the junior squad. We keep the fleet under review continuously and, bearing in mind boat usage, we have sold one of the lightweight coxed 4's this year one of the stable quads at Waterloo lake.

As reported in the Membership and Treasurers reports, the Club is thriving. Our membership is broadly stable with leavers being balanced by newcomers to the Club and the club finances remain healthy. Our treasurer will explain this further but, whereas the club's bank balance has improved over the last year, a lot of this is due to the funding that we have received to pay the Lead Junior Coach and the timing of that funding being received, ie. in advance of the expenditure. Our treasurer keeps a firm grip on the accounts and will report that the Club is able to pay all of our ongoing facility and maintenance expenses.

Finally, a big thank you to Kate Riley, after working for so many years in the background and mainly unnoticed, has stood down as Club Welfare Officer. The Club could not continue

without a Welfare Officer and I thank Kate for all of her work over the years. Kate has been replaced by Linda Lodge who is one of our Junior parents. I thank Linda for volunteering to take over from Kate and have put her details on the noticeboard.

No questions were posed by the membership to the Chairman.

2. Treasurers Report

Jessica Brush provided an overview of the Treasurers commentary and the clubs statement of accounts and the which can be seen below. This is the second year the treasurer has been in post.

What are the point of accounts?

My main purpose is to give you confidence that you can see that we continue to have a healthy balance, and that all payments are evidenced and justifiable, in line with our Constitution, our duty as Trustees, and as per regulation. Using these statements to make financial and strategic decisions about the club, without any of their context, comes with the risk that numbers are misinterpreted. So if club members wish to do this, we advise them to talk to the Treasurer in the first instance.

How the club earns its money

The primary source of income is through membership fees from all members and coaching fees paid by junior members. Income from these sources has increased as membership numbers have grown and rebates given during the pandemic curtailed.

Learn To Row (L2R) income has been lower than in previous periods reflecting capacity issues. We have had a successful year in obtaining grant income with the majority of grants relating to our projects to support junior rowing. We have also increased our income from sponsorship and events and thanks go to all club members who have supported with this. We are also kindly supported through a number of past and present members who regularly donate to the club.

Other income relates to insurance claims in relation to boat damage and equipment sales. Over the year the club has sold a trailer and coxed four that were no longer required.

How the club spends its money

The majority of our expenditure goes towards the purchase and maintenance of boats for the club. We have continued purchasing equipment to supplement the fleet including second-hand 8+, 4x+, 2x and 1x and additional riggers and blades. We continue to review the fleet to ensure we invest appropriately. Our maintenance and upkeep spend has been significant over the past year, reflecting our larger fleet and investment in refurbishment. There were also incidences of boat damage, which whilst the majority was recovered through insurance, claims are subject to an excess. "Coaching investment" is primarily our outlay for junior coaching. This has increased this year due to the employment of a full-time junior coach.

Leases and rental include payments for use of the Leeds Boathouse and ty Council costs for the use of Waterloo Lake. These have increased this year reflecting the cessation of pandemic rebates. Other key costs for the charity include fuel for the launches, cleaning supplies, CaRT licences, BR affiliation fees, and miscellaneous expenditure, all of which is receipted and verified by the treasurer.

Our financial performance

As a club we are solvent (we have plenty of money in reserves), we are liquid (we can make payments as and when we need to), and we have made sure that fixed costs for the next 12 months are affordable and don't impact our solvency or liquidity.

Our reserves have increased due to the timing of receipt of grant income from Sports Aid/British Rowing in relation to our junior programme - with funding received in advance of costs being incurred.

Please note our balance sheet just counts our financial assets - we do not value our fixed assets like boats in our year end accounts (although we do for insurance purposes). When we purchase a boat we recognise this as a loss making activity with an immediate reduction in reserves.

What do we do to manage the club's finances?

- 1) Robust banking controls, including "levels of delegated authority" codified in our Constitution so major transactions can only be made with the whole committee's collective approval. We do not own a club credit card, or a club debit card, so money can't be spent without our explicit knowledge and pre-approval.
- 2) These statements - prepared annually - that are examined by an "Independent Examiner" and recorded on the Charity Commission website.
- 3) Membership status and payments are monitored by the Membership Secretary
- 4) Race fee payments and provisions are monitored by the Director of Rowing
- 5) The chairman's re-imbursement account is independently reviewed by the Treasurer
- 6) The Director of Rowing maintains, with the support of the Treasurer, a financial forecast for the next 12 months. These plans are collectively reviewed to make sure key expenditure is in line with our strategy and we remain solvent.

Treasurer recommendations for the next twelve months

Based on the club's finances, I make the following recommendations:

- 1) Ensure boats and equipment are looked after. Although expenditure on maintenance is expected and unavoidable, remedying loss or accidental damage to equipment is a significant expense.
- 2) Continue to ensure that membership provides good value for money and the club is a great place to be. Membership is a key source of income and we want to ensure we retain and reward our members.
- 3) Check with your employer whether they offer a volunteering grant for charities or consider whether there is anything you could do from a volunteering perspective to support the club.

Matthew Bertola sought clarification on approaches to costing specifically whether these were separated out into squads i.e. senior squad and junior squad where usage of equipment may be greater for one squad rather than another. David Saul advised that costs were considered as a whole club as all squads use the club's equipment. The importance of looking after equipment was reiterated and it was emphasised that all squads were equally responsible for doing this.

Income statement for the period ending 31 Aug 2023

Income type	Aug 2023	Aug 2022	Aug 2021
Memberships & Racking	40,947	35,537	33,687
Coaching fees	8,198	5,797	0
Grants	37,700	34,908	9,518
Sponsorships & Donations	8,383	3,000	1,800
Events & Corporate Sponsorship	3,901	2,421	638
Learn to Row	885	1,885	3,310
Race Fees & Transport	14,289	8,436	5,323
Bank interest	567	13	2
Other income	14,497	2,191	1,754
Pass through income	2,900	0	2,695
TOTAL INCOME	132,247	94,167	58,727
Expenditure type	Aug 2023	Aug 2022	Aug 2021
Regatta Fees & Transportation	13,357	9,231	4,814
Events	2,507	1,616	0
Boat & Equipment Purchases	28,136	20,685	27,277
Boat & Equipment Maintenance	12,554	5,346	5,357
Boat & Equipment Insurance	8,513	7,366	7,832
British Rowing Affiliation	1,084	1,119	963
Boathouse Investment	0	1,000	181
Leases & Rental	10,800	2,600	5,300
Coaching investment	32,961	9,020	3,661
Licences	894	609	1,038
Fuel	1,021	615	648
Other expenditure	651	1,254	373
Pass through expenditure	2,900	0	2,695
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	115,378	60,462	60,139
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	16,869	33,705	(1,413)

Balance sheet for the period ending 31 Aug 2023

Assets	Aug 2023	Aug 2022	Aug 2021
Cash at bank	70,334	52,175	19,374
Debtors	945	787	2,628
Prepayments	0	3,225	2,200
Total assets	71,279	56,188	24,200
Liabilities	Aug 2023	Aug 2022	Aug 2021
Other liabilities	(1,068)	(1,102)	(2,326)
Memberships deferred + creditors	0	(1,744)	(2,237)
Total liabilities	(1,068)	(2,846)	(4,563)
NET ASSETS	70,211	53,342	19,637
Reserves	Aug 2023	Aug 2022	Aug 2021
Brought forward reserves	53,342	19,637	21,050
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	16,869	33,705	(1,413)
CLUB RESERVES	70,211	53,343	19,637

3. Membership Report

David Cottrell provided an overview of his report below.

Membership

Club membership has remained broadly stable during the year. We have about 10% fewer adult members than this time last year with those leaving mostly doing so because of changing jobs, having babies, moving out of the area, etc. Feedback from departing members is nearly always positive.

It is worth noting that about 20 of the adult members are rowing as part of the recreational squad at the lake in Roundhay Park.

Junior membership has doubled in the last year. This has only been possible because of the appointment of our first paid coach, Rob McKenzie, and the team of assistant coaches that work with him. This enables us to provide safe supervision for the increased numbers.

As of October 1st, we have 95 adult squad members and 63 junior academy squad members, with another 15-20 adults who have just started rowing with us but have not yet been invited to join.

Adult L2R continues, leading to new members, and we continue to get a steady stream of rowers who move to the area and want to continue rowing with us.

Parents Group

The Junior Academy parent's group continues to support the club and have brought in sponsorship as well as funds raised directly from refreshment sales at club events. The recent 'ergathon' organised by the juniors and their families raised around £5000.

Waiting Lists

Enquiries from juniors and adults continue to come in via the web site. All juniors now have an assessment and are only admitted to the club if we believe they have the potential to be good rowers. As a result, there is no waiting list as such, all get an assessment.

Currently we have about 25 on the adult wait list, a drop from about 40 a year ago. However, as we can only take 5-6 at a time on L2R courses, this still represents a 6-8 month wait.

Safeguarding & Safety

After several years as Club Welfare Officer, Kate Riley has stood down. I would like to thank her on behalf of the club for all her work. Our new CWO is Linda Lodge who has already started in the role.

David Coverdale has agreed to continue as Club Safety advisor. David does a fantastic job, largely in the background and unnoticed, but without him the club could not function.

David recently completed one of his regular inspections of boats and equipment and has asked me to highlight several key safety messages:

- ☐ Come to the club prepared for all weathers
- ☐ Check the boat - bow balls, heel straps, hatch covers and life preservers before all outings

- ☐ Report any damage immediately – if you don't we can't repair it
- ☐ Maintain good look out and steering at all times, follow the circulation pattern and respect other users of the water
- ☐ Ensure any incidents are reported on Rowsafe
- ☐ Keep away from the club if suffering from viral symptoms (eg Covid)
- ☐ READ the Safety Noticboard!

Thanks

None of the above would be possible without regular volunteering from club members. Without their input the club itself could not function. We should all be grateful to:

Kate Riley, and now Linda Lodge, and David Coverdale for taking on Welfare Officer and Safety Advisor respectively.

Dani Markendale for regularly coaching L2R and the Novice squad.

Nathan Maude and Jenny Hughes for co-ordinating the development squad sessions.

And a whole bunch of people who volunteer to help coaching novices and L2R at the lake on an ad hoc basis: Helen, Atkins, Matthew Bertola, Jessica Brush, Lucy Conn, Paul Doherty, Niamh Forde, Ruth Mullins, Emily Oaten. Ellie Kent, Helena Rose, Lynn Smith

My sincere apologies if I have missed anyone from this list.

If anyone in the club would like to help at the lake by assisting at the occasional adult L2R or novice session please let me know, we are always looking for more help.

Questions were posed by the membership to the membership secretary concerned fundraising and included under the suggestions made following delivery of the club development report.

4. Club Development Report

Gavin Coates summarised his report below:

In addition to coaching, my work as Development Director this year has been split between the development of the club and funding.

Funding

This year, we have applied for a Sport England Grant for £15,000 to be used to purchase a new launch for the club, this is needed due to the expansion of the Junior squad.

We continue to target smaller grant applications and have been awarded a grant of £2000 from Enfinium which has enabled us to purchase such as sculls for the junior squad. Two further grants being provided by Drax and Virgin has been applied for.

Going forwards, we need to be more creative in finding funding and large grants are increasingly rare. There needs to be a focus on generating income through events and sponsorship is required and all members are requested to support this. A suggested way is approaching employers and asking about corporate sponsorship and asking about policies

and donating monies to organisations where employees volunteer. If anyone has ideas or wants to help plan or coordinate fundraising activities, just let me know.

Club Development

Leeds Rowing club is a priority club for British Rowing and the boathouse has been set up as one of the regional performance Hubs. The current British Rowing Chairman used Leeds development strategy as part of his presentation on the recent review of the Olympic Pathways.

The number of performance centres have been reduced from ten to five and Leeds Rowing Club is the Yorkshire hub. There are two coaches attached to the performance group. British Rowing are currently focussing on sculling and the club has sent a J16 squad member to represent the club at a recent performance camp.

To continue this success, increased assistance with coaching and coxing is required and those interested are invited to approach myself or David Saul to discuss further.

No specific questions were posed to the Development Director but suggestions around generating income included running sculling camps and corporate rowing days.

Niamh Forde highlighted the expertise across the club in applying for funding grants and encouraged the committee to utilise this. Assistance was welcomed by Gavin Coates and David Saul.

5. Election of Executive Committee

David Saul advised attendees that the current committee were each happy to stand again for their positions and that these positions had not been contested.

6. AOB

No motions were brought in advance of the AGM.

The suggestion of the club appointing a race secretary was discussed. Roles and responsibilities for such a position would centre on the operationalising race day i.e. arranging trailering including towing vehicle and trailer plans. Bonnie Coughlan put herself forwards to assist – thank you Bonnie.

The importance of members ensuring their availability was confirmed in a timely manner and ensuring that their race licenses are current were cited as actions members could take to ensure that preparations for race days go as smoothly as possible.

Matthew Bertola highlighted members responsibilities in maintaining the Boathouse environment.

David Saul thanked everyone for attending and closed the AGM at 11:22am.