



# All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

## Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 24 April 2017, Committee Room Thirteen

Meeting commenced 1800

### In attendance

**Members:** Lord Thomas of Gresford (in the Chair); Lord Addington

**Honorary Members:** Isobel Pollock-Hulf

**Organisational Associate Members:** Kenny Baillie, Paul Lorenzato (British Rowing)

**Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation):** Jon Neale; Stephen Feeney; Matthew Gordon; Tim Koch; Trevor Comber

**Secretariat:** Jack Baker, Mark Ramsdale

**Other:** Jodh Dhesi (Parkside Community College)

### Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and noted that Parliament was winding down in preparation for the general election. He welcomed in particular new:

- Organisational Associate Members: Thames Rowing Club; London Rowing Club
- Individual Associate Members: Richard Sinnott; Trevor Comber

### Apologies

**Members:** Dr Matthew Offord MP; Sir Peter Bottomley MP; Jim Fitzpatrick MP

**Honorary Members:** Dr Haruhisa Handa; Alan Foster

**Organisational Associate Members:** Annamarie Phelps, Andy Parkinson (British Rowing); Mike Sweeney Catherine Bishop, Dr Pat Marsh, Bruce Perry (Cambridge University Boat Clubs); Jo Harris (Thames Rowing Club); Steve O'Connor (Fulham Reach Boat Club)

**Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation):** Ali Love; Ivan Pratt; Jim Pettipher; Sally Pettipher; Will Pettipher; Malcolm Knight; Mike Baldwin

### Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Group meeting were considered an accurate account.

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### Matters arising

- The Group has been liaising with British Rowing regarding changes to the AASE programme, and will look to take this up again with the Department for Education in the next Parliament.
- The Secretariat was organising Group ties and scarves. Samples were presented and agreed.

### Correspondence

- The Chair wrote to the Canal and River Trust regarding issues around safety and conflicts with boating and moorings raised by Lea Rowing Club. The Chief Executive of the Trust wrote back, outlining the steps that are being taken to improve conditions for rowing, and particularly to improve mutual understanding of the needs of rowing and boating, as well as the development of a London Mooring Strategy.
- The Chair wrote the PLA regarding an issue related to boats with inboard motors on the Thames. The PLA Chief Executive responded, offering to meet. That meeting was scheduled for last week, but has been postponed following the announcement of the general election.
- A number of requests for information and offers of help for the 2017 Parliamentary Charity Regatta were received.
- The Group wrote to British Rowing, thanking them for their ongoing support and providing an update on its work over the past year. British Rowing wrote back to the Group, thanking it for its continued work to support the sport.
- A number of requests to present to the Group were received. The Secretariat will look to take these forward in the next Parliament.

The Parliamentary Charity Regatta was discussed, and the Chair noted some difficulties presented by the general election.

### Group activity report

#### Parliamentary

In a debate on International Women's Day, Baroness Massey of Darwen raised the fantastic performances by Great Britain's female rowers at the 2016 Olympic Games.

#### Public

The Group sent press releases on:

- The renaming of the Parliamentary Boat Race as the Parliamentary Charity Regatta;
- The 2016 Parliamentary Charity Regatta's appearance in a BBC Two documentary.

At the time of the meeting, the Group had 275 followers on Twitter. The Group's twitter name is @ParliamentRow.

### AOB

Opportunities in the new Parliament were discussed.

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Some recent market research into indoor rowing, conducted by British Rowing, was discussed. The headline figures were that in the last three months, 1.5million people used a rowing machine for 30 minutes or more. The opportunities for the sport around this were discussed, particularly with reference to the potential health benefits for the population.

British Rowing's efforts to establish a charitable foundation were discussed.

National Lottery funding was raised, and it was agreed that this was an area that the Group should monitor.

It was suggested that the Group write to Catherine Grainger, inviting her to speak to the Group. **Action: Secretariat to draft a letter following the general election.**

There being no other business, the Chair brought the main business of the meeting to a close.

Main business concluded: 1837

### **Presentation: Jodh Dhesi, Parkside Community College Cambridge**

The Chair welcomed Jodh Dhesi, Headteacher at Parkside Community College Cambridge.

Dhesi made a presentation on the Parkside Rowing Challenge, where a number of pupils rowed the full length of the Thames.

After providing some background on the challenge, preparations for and execution of the challenge were discussed. The benefits to those taking part were also outlined, as was the potential to replicate the project at Parkside, and at other schools.

The link between the school and university was highlighted, as were opportunities for students to visit Cambridge.

It was noted that Fulham Reach Boat Club run a similar Thames 100 challenge, and that working together with them might make things easier in the future.

The opportunity to build the boat for future challenges was discussed.

Challenges to getting pupils to continue rowing in clubs after the challenge were raised, and the importance of buy-in from local clubs was discussed.

The potential for a template for a standard challenge in a set format for schools was raised. It was noted that the majority of schools were close to rivers that would provide opportunities for a challenge.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking Dhesi for his presentation, and to all in attendance for their continued support. **Meeting closed at 1909**

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