



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 25 October 2017, Room T Portcullis House

Meeting commenced 1800

In attendance

Members: Dr Matthew Offord MP (in the Chair)

Honorary Members: Isobel Pollock-Hulf; Alan Foster

Organisational Associate Members: Meghann Jackson, Berman Pradera (Fulham Reach BC); Richard Ellis, Stephen Mitchelson, Lucy Stackpool-Moore, Max Beverton-Palmer (Lea Rowing Club); Hannah Shears (London Youth Rowing)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Stephen Feeney; Matthew Gordon; Jon Neale; Ray Cassidy

Secretariat: Jack Baker

Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and in particular new:

- Members: Faisal Rashid MP
- Individual Associate Members: Nicholas Hubble; Philip Foster

Apologies

Members: Lord Thomas of Gresford; Lord Robathan; Sir Edward Leigh MP

Organisational Associate Members: Annamarie Phelps, Kenny Baillie (British Rowing); Catherine Bishop, Bruce Perry, Pat Marsh (Cambridge University Boat Clubs); Peter Darlington, William Darlington (Deal Rowing Club); Jock McKerrell (Vesta Rowing Club); Steve O'Connor (Fulham Reach Boat Club); Mike Baldwin (London Rowing Club); Helena Smith (Barnes Bridge Ladies Rowing Club)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Sally Pettipher; Trevor Comber; Ali Love; Jim Pettipher; Will Pettipher; Daniel Walker; Tim Koch; Nick Hubble; Ivan Pratt

Minutes of previous meeting

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

Matters arising

- The Group would write to Catherine Grainger, inviting her to speak at a future meeting.
- The Secretariat is investigating Group blazers.

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Correspondence

- Co-Chairs Matthew Offord MP and Lord Thomas wrote to Annamarie Phelps, British Rowing Chair, passing on the Group's thanks for everything she had done for the sport following the news that she would be stepping down from the role.
- An email was received regarding a project led by GB rower Adam Freeman-Pask to teach rowing to street children attending an orphanage in Kolkata, India. It was suggested that this might be an appropriate topic for a future meeting. **Action: Secretariat to investigate.**
- A note was received regarding a possible future presentation on rowing and nature conservation.
- An email was received regarding some difficulties facing Alban Academy Boat Club, the only state school rowing club in Bedfordshire. The Secretariat was liaising with British Rowing to take forward.
- Information on a Memorial Service for Dame Di Ellis was received from British Rowing and circulated to Members.
- Co-Chair Lord Thomas of Gresford wrote to a number of companies regarding support for the Group and the Parliamentary Charity Regatta. None had responded positively at the time of the meeting.

Group activity report

Parliamentary

There were no mentions of rowing in Parliament since the Group was reformed.

Public

The Secretariat met with British Rowing to discuss future Group activities.

The Secretariat attended a London Youth Rowing reception.

The Group sent out a press release on the Group's reconstitution in the new Parliament.

The Group had an updated website, www.parliamentaryrowing.org.

The Chair noted that he had met two individuals who had planned to row the Atlantic and suggested this might be a topic for a future meeting. **Action: Secretariat to liaise with Chair to organise.**

At the time of the meeting, the Group had 316 followers on Twitter. The Group's twitter name: @ParliamentRow.

AOB

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

Main business concluded: 1811

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Presentation: Lea Rowing Club

The Chair welcomed representative from Lea Rowing Club. A short video was shown, outlining the work of the club.

A presentation was made, which briefly discussed the history of the club, and some of the successes that had been achieved, including six juniors representing Great Britain.

Challenges that the club had experienced were discussed, most notably a project to renovate the clubhouse, for which the club raised £1.3 million. The project had now been completed, and the club was secure.

The impact of London moving east was raised, and it was noted that this had a huge impact on the local area, and the river in particular, with far more people living on boats. An increase in boat usage and movement was also discussed, along with the implications of congestion on the river for the club.

Changes to the club's activities were discussed, including more gym focused training and alterations to training times, as well as access to a new stretch of water through the Olympic Park.

The Canal and River Trust's London Mooring Strategy was discussed, including some specific areas affecting rowers. Lea emphasised that many of the proposals in the strategy were positive. A proposal to transfer responsibility for certain rivers from the Environment Agency to the Canal and River Trust was raised, and it was noted that more clubs might have to engage with the Canal and River Trust moving forward.

The Chair suggested that he should meet with the Canal and River Trust, and also invite them to speak at a meeting. **Action: Secretariat to draft a letter.**

Opening to questions, the impact of taxes on clubs was raised, specifically for clubs who let properties.

On increased membership, Lea had been making a big push to develop recreational rowing, especially as these individuals tended to be able to go out at any time of the week, and so avoid congestion.

In terms of juniors, Lea had six schools who attended the club for sessions.

On fundraising for renovations to the clubhouse, Lea had used talent and expertise within the club which had been very useful.

A book on John McIlroy was discussed as an example of what rowing can do for people.

Bann Rowing Club in Coleraine was discussed, and it was suggested that they be invited to come along to the Group. **Action: Secretariat to investigate.**

Meeting closed at 1901

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