



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 6 December 2017, Committee Room 17

Meeting commenced 1800

In attendance

Members: Dr Matthew Offord MP (in the Chair); Lord Addington; Lord Thomas of Gresford

Honorary Members: Jess Eddie

Organisational Associate Members: Paul Lorenzato (British Rowing); Richard Ellis (Lea Rowing Club); Michael Baldwin (London Rowing Club); Peter Darlington, William Darlington (Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown Amateur Rowing Club)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Philip Foster; Jon Neale; Sally Pettipher

Secretariat: Jack Baker

Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and in particular the Group's inaugural Honorary President, Jess Eddie.

Apologies

Members: Jim Fitzpatrick MP

Honorary Members: Alan Foster; Isobel Pollock-Hulf

Organisational Associate Members: Kenny Baillie (British Rowing); Steve O'Connor (Fulham Reach Boat Club); Catherine Bishop (Cambridge Universities Boat Club); Jo Harris (Thames Rowing Club)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Ray Cassidy; Malcolm Knight; Matthew Gordon; Tim Koch; Ali Love; Stephen Feeney; Nick Hubble

Minutes of previous meeting

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

Matters arising

- The Secretariat was looking to organise future presentations on the GB Rowing Team, a project to develop rowing in Kolkata led by former GB rower Adam Freeman-Pask, and on Rowing and Nature Conservation.

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Correspondence

- Co-Chair Matthew Offord MP wrote to Chair of UK Sport, Katherine Grainger, inviting her to present to a future meeting of the Group.
- Co-Chair Matthew Offord MP wrote to the CEO of the Canal and River Trust, Richard Parry, offering to meet to discuss the London Mooring Strategy and proposed extension of the trust's responsibilities. A meeting was scheduled for 12 December.
- Co-Chair Lord Thomas of Gresford wrote to a number of individuals and organisations regarding support for the Parliamentary Charity Regatta.
- An email was received regarding HMRC approved mileage allowances for private vehicles. At present, there was no additional allowance for those towing heavy boat trailers to and from competitions. **Action: Secretariat to liaise with Co-Chairs to see if the Group can support.**
- The Group wrote to Jess Eddie, welcoming her as its inaugural Honorary President.
- The Honorary President would write to all clubs, encouraging them to join the Group and get involved.
- An invitation was received for any members who would like to attend the British Rowing Indoor Championships this weekend (Saturday) at Lee Valley VeloPark.

Group activity report

Parliamentary

There were no mentions of rowing in Parliament since the last meeting.

Public

The Group sent out press releases on:

- The last meeting with Lea Rowing Club;
- Jess Eddie's appointment as Honorary President of the Group.

At the time of the meeting, the Group had 351 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

Presentation: Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown Rowing Club

The Chair welcomed William and Peter Darlington from Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown Rowing Club.

Opening the presentation, the differences between river and coastal rowing were discussed, and a brief history of coastal rowing was given. The coastal rowing season was also outlined.

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The history of Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown Rowing club was discussed, and it was noted that membership was fairly young, with an average age of 18-19. Membership fees were raised, and are amongst the cheapest in the UK.

Events at the club were also discussed, and it was emphasised that the atmosphere could be very different to river rowing, with a good deal of encouragement from the crowd, and supporters running along the beach to support rowers.

Opening to questions, the link between river and pilot gig clubs was discussed, and it was noted that exchange with the river rowing world could be very productive.

Schools rowing was raised, and it was noted that whilst no individual schools were running clubs, engagement was developing.

The differences between coastal rowing across the UK were outlined, and it was noted that whilst there were different forms of fixed seat boats, nowhere else in the UK used sliding seats for coast rowing.

The cost of boats was raised. The club's bar covered operating costs, with the annual regatta also bringing in a great deal of revenue. Sport England small grants had been used in the past to finance boats, or top up existing funds to finance equipment.

A number of individuals had gone on to river rowing from coastal rowing. The exhilarating nature of rowing on the waves was emphasised.

On working with other sports and other forms of rowing, the club were very open to the idea, and currently host a table tennis club. It was noted that many clubs were increasingly happy to work with other sports to their mutual benefit, and especially with other water sports.

The Chair passed on the Group's thanks for the presentation.

The Chair welcomed Jess Eddie as the Group's Honorary President. Eddie briefly discussed her background in rowing, and plans for the future.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking all in attendance for their continued support.

Meeting closed at 1901

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