



# All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

## Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 27 February 2018, Room C, 1 Parliament Street

Meeting commenced 1806

### In attendance

**Members:** Lord Thomas of Gresford (in the Chair); Sir Peter Bottomley MP

**Honorary Members:** Jess Eddie; Isobel Pollock-Hulf

**Organisational Associate Members:** Kenny Baillie, Paul Lorenzato (British Rowing); Michael Baldwin (London Rowing Club); Sian Kunert, Hannah Steedman (Barnes Bridge Ladies Rowing Club); Peter Barker, Ian Mackie (Upton Rowing Club); Ian Henley (Broxbourne Rowing Club); Stephen Mitchelson, Donald Ellis (Lea Rowing Club)

**Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation):** Philip Foster; Camilla Smallbone; Jonathan Brandt; Daniel Walker; Jon Neale

**Secretariat:** Jack Baker

**Other:** Jon Guest, Sorwar Ahmed (Canal and River Trust); Matthew Sutton (Cavendish Communications)

### Welcome

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

New Members:

- Robert Halfon MP

New organisational associate members:

- Broxbourne Rowing Club
- RowUK
- North West Region Rowing Association
- Upton Rowing Club

New individual associate members:

- Jonathan Brandt
- Camilla Smallbone

### Apologies

**Members:** Jim Fitzpatrick MP; Lord Moynihan; Dr Matthew Offord MP

**Honorary Members:** Alan Foster

**Organisational Associate Members:** Steve O'Connor (Fulham Reach Boat Club); Colin Middlemiss (Company of Watermen and Lightermen); Jo Harris (Thames Rowing Club); Annamarie Phelps (British Rowing); Suzanne Rae,

Supported by:



**PROFESSOR ISOBEL  
POLLOCK-HULF OBE**

Delivered by:





# All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

## Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 27 February 2018, Room C, 1 Parliament Street

Ben Cox (RowUK); Jock McKerrell (Vesta Rowing Club); Catherine Bishop, Pat Marsh (Cambridge University Boat Clubs); Patrick O'Connor (Southend Coastal Rowing Club)

**Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation):** Ray Cassidy; Sally Pettipher; Jim Pettipher; Ali Love; Trevor Comber; Nick Hubble; Andrew Crawford

### Minutes of previous meeting

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

### Matters arising

- The Secretariat was liaising with British Rowing regarding HMRC approved mileage allowances for private vehicles towing heavy boat trailers to and from competitions.

### Correspondence

- An email was received from the AHOY Centre, a charity that provides opportunities for disadvantaged and at-risk youths to take part in sailing and rowing activities in Deptford. **Action: Secretariat to schedule a presentation.**
- Emails were received from Lea Rowing Club and Broxbourne Rowing Club regarding the London Mooring Strategy.
- Co-Chair Lord Thomas of Gresford wrote to a number of suppliers, manufacturers and organisations involved with the sport, informing them of the work of the Group, and asking if they would consider joining as associate members.
- The Group's Honorary President, Jess Eddie, wrote to all rowing clubs, encouraging them to join the Group.
- A positive response was received from Dame Katherine Grainger to meet with MPs and Peers. An invitation was sent to all MPs and Peers to attend the meeting.
- An email was received from Lord Addington's office regarding the creation of a document to advise local sports clubs on how to deal with common issues faced, and how to deal with local government on these issues. **Action: Secretariat to pass on to British Rowing.**
- An offer to present to the Group was received from new associate member RowUK. **Action: Secretariat to look to schedule.**

### Group activity report

#### Parliamentary

In a Westminster Hall debate on outdoor endurance activities for prisoners, Douglas Ross MP related the story of John McAvoy, a man who carved out a career in endurance sport following a spell in prison, including breaking the British record for rowing a marathon and the world record for distance rowing in 24 hours.

In a Westminster Hall debate on basketball, David Lammy MP made reference to support to rowing, amongst other sports, from UK Sport, compared to basketball.

Supported by:



**PROFESSOR ISOBEL  
POLLOCK-HULF OBE**

Delivered by:





# All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

## Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 27 February 2018, Room C, 1 Parliament Street

An early day motion was tabled by Gregory Campbell MP, congratulating a four-man rowing team from Portrush, Northern Ireland, for breaking the world record in rowing the 3,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean.

### Public

Group Co-Chair Dr Matthew Offord MP met with Richard Parry and other representatives of the Canal and River Trust, to discuss the London Mooring Strategy.

Group Members met with Dame Katherine Grainger, Chair of UK Sport. The meeting was discussed.

The Secretariat met with representatives of Broxbourne Rowing Club, to discuss the work of the Group, and some of the challenges the club was facing on their stretch of water.

The Group sent out a press release on the last meeting with Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown Rowing Club.

At the time of the meeting, the Group had 351 followers on Twitter. The Group's twitter name: @ParliamentRow.

## **Announcement of Second Group Supporter**

The Chair announced that Honorary Member Isobel Pollock-Hulf would join British Rowing to become the Group's second supporter. Isobel's support to the Group and to rowing had been unwavering since the Group was founded and her husband Robin became the Group's first Honorary Secretary.

The Chair stated the Group's thanks to Isobel for her donation, which would allow it to continue its work.

## **Parliamentary Charity Regatta**

The Chair provided an update on the Parliamentary Charity Regatta.

Thames Waters' Super Sewer scheme meant that access the slipway on Albert Embankment at Vauxhall was not available, at least until 2024.

The Group had investigated alternatives and unfortunately had to conclude that the practicalities and costs of an alternate solution mean there is no option but to at least postpone the Parliamentary Charity Regatta until that time.

The Chair noted that this was a great shame, but that the Group would look at options for the Parliamentary Boat Race at another event, and would also look at putting together a Parliamentary boat to race elsewhere.

The Group still had the option of the afternoon reception on the date set aside for the regatta (12 July) and was looking at an annual dinner, both of which would require sponsorship to go ahead.

There was an offer of support from British Rowing to find an alternative regatta at which the race could take place, or to find opportunities for a Parliamentary boat to participate.

Supported by:



**PROFESSOR ISOBEL  
POLLOCK-HULF OBE**

Delivered by:





# All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

## Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 27 February 2018, Room C, 1 Parliament Street

### AOB

Upton Rowing Club offered to present to the Group at a future meeting. **Action: Secretariat to look to schedule.**

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

Main business concluded at 1838

### Presentation: Canal and River Trust

The Chair welcomed Sorwar Ahmed and Jon Guest from the Canal and River Trust, who spoke to a presentation on the Trust's work on canals and rivers across the country, with a particular focus on moorings and support for rowing clubs in the London region.

Opening to questions, the clearing of vegetation from banks was discussed, as were the challenges of working with landowners. The example of Broxbourne Rowing Club was cited as a good working partnership, and it was suggested that where clubs experienced challenges, they should engage with the Canal and River Trust team, for advice on how to build effective partnerships with landowners.

Regional differences in rules about unpowered craft going through locks were discussed.

The challenges around the stretch of water used by Broxbourne Rowing Club were outlined and discussed, especially regarding the proliferation of moorings, and the associated challenges with space to row on the water, and obstructions to access to people on the river from the towpath. There was also a discussion around potential challenges around the enforcement of watersport zones, which would be piloted, and the extent to which the Canal and River Trust could enforce these was questioned.

The Chair noted that it would be interesting to monitor developments, and asked if the Canal and River Trust could keep the Group updated.

There was discussion of opportunities for British Rowing and the Canal and River Trust to work together. A potential merger between the Environment Agency and Canal and River Trust was also raised and discussed.

Opportunities for rowing on reservoirs around the country were discussed

There was discussion of challenges faced by Lea Rowing Club. The evolution of the legislative framework was raised, and challenges around enforcement were again raised. It was suggested that Lea and Broxbourne provide the Canal and River Trust with some documentation around what they thought was required, to support.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking Guest and Ahmed for their presentation, and asked that they report back to the Group on developments in due course.

### Meeting closed at 1924

Supported by:



**PROFESSOR ISOBEL  
POLLOCK-HULF OBE**

Delivered by:

