



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 11 September 2018, Committee Room 9

Meeting commenced 1809

In attendance

Members: Matthew Offord MP; Lord Thomas of Gresford (in the Chair); Baroness Walmsley; Baroness Neville-Rolfe; Jim McMahon MP

Honorary Members: Alan Foster; Annamarie Phelps

Organisational Associate Members: Nick Murray, Ian Henley (Broxbourne RC); George Perrin (NWRRC); Paul Lorenzato (British Rowing); Richard Ellis (Lea RC); Ben Cox (RowUK); Jo Broadhurst, Cara Cahill (Barnes Bridge Ladies RC); Gillian McFarland (CUBC); Brian Dobson (Molesey RC)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Philip Foster; Tony Bull; Chris Dodd; Richard Packer; Andy Crawford; Tim Koch

Secretariat: Jack Baker; Mark Ramsdale

Welcome

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

New Members:

- Steve Double MP

New individual associate members:

- Eric Ken
- Laurence Darcy
- Anthony Bull

Apologies

Members: Jonathan Djanogly MP; Lord Bilimoria; Lord Addington

Honorary Members: Isobel Pollock-Hulf

Organisational Associate Members: Steve O'Connor (Fulham Reach Boat Club); Cath Bishop (Cambridge University Boat Clubs); Mike Baldwin (London Rowing Club); Suzanne Rae (RowUK); Jock McKerrell (Vesta Rowing Club); Amanda Hosking (Broxbourne Rowing Club); William Darlington (Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown Amateur Rowing Club); Kenny Baillie (British Rowing)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Laurence Darcy; Ray Cassidy; Alison Love; Malcolm Knight; Matthew Gordon; Ivan Pratt; Peter Barker; Sally Pettipher; Judith Packer

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Minutes of previous meeting

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

Matters arising

- The Secretariat was looking to schedule future presentations from the AHOY Centre, Row UK, and Upton Rowing Club.
- The Group was continuing to liaise with British Rowing on issues around dredging, following correspondence from Durham ARC, which was passed to local Member of Parliament, Roberta Blackman-Woods MP, who took up on behalf of the club. **Action: Secretariat to keep Members updated.**

Correspondence

- The Group received a paper from Lea and Broxbourne Rowing Clubs regarding ongoing challenges around the powers and existing procedures used by the Canal and River Trust to provide a safe environment on the rivers and canals under their jurisdiction. Group Co-Chair, Lord Thomas of Gresford, wrote to the Canal and River Trust and included this paper, and received a response from their Chief Executive, Richard Parry. **Action: Secretariat to arrange a meeting.**
- An email was received from London Rowing Club, offering to present to a future Group meeting on their experience of the CASC scheme. **Action: Secretariat to schedule.**
- An email was received concerning Thames Tradesmen's eviction from their clubhouse by Hounslow Council. The Group understood that British Rowing was supporting the club, and was liaising with them to provide further support.
- An invitation for Members to attend a session in Parliament on UK Sport's public consultation on future funding strategy was received and circulated.

Group activity report

Parliamentary

At DCMS questions, Steve Double MP raised Cornish pilot gig rowing in his constituency, and asked if the Sport Minister would meet to discuss how to secure better recognition for pilot gig rowing. The Minister responded that she had tried some gig rowing, and would be happy to meet.

The Secretariat noted that Steve Double MP was now a Group Member, and that a meeting with British Rowing had been organised.

Public

The Group sent out a press release on the last meeting on the GB Rowing Team.

At the time of the meeting, the Group had 400 followers on Twitter. The Group's twitter name: @ParliamentRow.

AOB

An annual dinner was raised and discussed. **Action: Secretariat to investigate.**

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

Main business concluded at 1821

Presentation: Rowing and Conservation, Jon Neale

The Chair welcomed Jon Neale.

Neale made a presentation on rowing and conservation, including a discussion of his role in establishing Hillingdon Rowing Club and background in the sport.

The club's existing facility was discussed, and it was noted that Hillingdon RC were moving site due to HS2.

The variety of sports using the facility were raised, including sailing, canoeing, climbing and archery, in addition to rowing. There was discussion around how water usage would be managed.

A map was circulated showing areas of the country that weren't covered by a rowing club, and identifying opportunities where water might be able to provide opportunities to take part in the sport.

It was noted that where a site had been identified by British Rowing and perhaps another sport had control, the Group could play a role in breaking down some of the barriers, and encourage other sports to work together.

The importance of understanding conservation issues was raised, and instances of conservation groups having concerns around rowing were highlighted. It was suggested that the sport work more closely with conservationists, in collaboration rather than conflict.

The advantages of rowing to conservation were emphasised, and it was suggested that the sport should look to work more closely with Natural England and the Environment Agency in this regard. There was a discussion of previous experience with Natural England in particular.

Action: Secretariat to prepare a letter to Natural England.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking Neale for his presentation.

Meeting closed at 1919

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