



WESSEX REGION

PLAN 2009 - 2013



Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Review 2005 – 2009
- 3 The Vision
- 4 Values and Principle
- 5 Working in partnerships
- 6 Building on Success
- 7 Impact



Wessex Regional Plan 2009-2013

1. Introduction

1.1. From the regional chairman:-

It gives me great pleasure to present you with the Wessex Region's Forward Plan which has been drawn up from the progress and achievements of our registered Clubs, Universities and Schools in the previous period, plus the aspirations and plans for the specified period. This taking into account the British Rowing Whole Sport Plan.

The current success of British Rowing both nationally and internationally are based on sound and well managed local rowing, of which our region, although being small makes and significant contribution.

We appear to be very fortunate in the number of wholly committed volunteers to whom i extend sincere thanks. Long may this continue, as we see competition for the waters we use to train and race. Your contributions are invaluable in sustaining our position and profile.

Finally I would ask you all to give due consideration to one of the key themes for the new plan, that being Participation. Continuing growth can bring us further recognition and success both on and off the Water.

1.2 British Rowing is the United Kingdom National Governing Body for rowing and sculling. The Wessex Regional Rowing Council (WRRRC) is one of 12 regional bodies establish in 1984.

The WRRRC governs and develops rowing and sculling activities within the counties of Hampshire, Dorset and Isle of Wight. None of these counties have what can be considered major rivers or waterways, therefore most rowing takes place along the coast or in tidal river estuaries. Indoor Rowing in the region is growing in an encouraging manner with a number of Club/school partnership evolving

The WRRRC is represented on the British Rowing Council by an elected Divisional Member for a 3 year period. They represent the views and opinions of the clubs within the region, as well as the schools, colleges and university. The region has strong relationships with other organisation in particular the Hants and Dorset Amateur Rowing Association (HDARA) which organise and run competitions between May and September.



1.3 Rowing in the Wessex region comprises of a range of activities and clubs. There are 12 Coastal Clubs, which row both coastal and river boats, 3 Rowing schools, 1 new rowing college and 3 Universities. Recently there has been the emergence of 4 Cornish Gig Clubs Swanage, Weymouth, Lyme Regis and Portland, and many state schools taking up indoor rowing.

1.4 This is the 4th Forward Plan published by the WRRC and sets out the current opportunities for Rowing. It also includes an Action Plan for the next 5 years. Where ever possible it gives due recognition to the aims and targets outline in the British Rowing 5 year Whole Sport Plan.

The successful implementation of this plan is reliant on both existing and new partnerships. Liaisons between British Rowing affiliated clubs, Local Authorities, Sport England, Sports Councils, Schools, Universities, Community Organisations, Sport Coach UK, and British Rowing.

1.5 The Region will provide encouragement, services and information to its Clubs, Schools, Universities and Partners providing and interface between them and British Rowing, whilst promoting co-operation between all parties which is of mutual benefit to the sport of rowing.

2. Review of 2005 – 2009 Plan

Detailed below is a summary of developments and achievements from the previous plan.

2.1 Aim: To encourage and support existing Clubs who wish to upgrade their facilities and infrastructure, and to seek opportunities to develop new bases for rowing.

During the last 5 year, the WRRC has supported it clubs in upgrading and developing their facilities by helping to secure grants and lease agreements with local councils. Christchurch Rowing club has had a Community club development program and lease has been secure for the following clubs for 25 years, Itchen Imperial, and BTC.

Regional Rowing Conferences and meetings have also given clubs the opportunity to share good practice and keep up to date on the latest good practice, guidance available.

Over the last 5 year the number of accredited Clubmark clubs has grown from 3 to 7, and one club has also become an adult Learn to Row Centre.

2.2 Aim: To increase the number of young people participating in the sport, competitively, recreationally, health wise and administratively plus retain into adulthood.

The number of juniors participating in rowing in the region has grown rapidly over the past 5 years with 7 clubs all having thriving junior sections. Indoor rowing in schools across the regional has also grown rapidly and Wessex has seen a number of new indoor schools rowing competition emerge, through working with partners.

The region with thanks to the Junior coaches and the Henley Stewards Charitable trust has been able to host and number of junior training days over the year sand in the last year of this plan the region was able to offer a 3 day training camp at Easter.

2.3 Aim: To Encourage the athletes within the Region to develop and complete at both regional and national level to achieve their full potential.

Junior training days and camps have been held to encourage athletes to compete at Junior Inter-regionals, and National Championships. Coaches have also worked together to ensure athletes are support to reach their full potential.



The following athletes have been selected to row for GB either at junior or senior level; James Foad, Sam Vye, George Nash, John McCann, Brianna Stubbs, Caragh Mc Murty.

2.4 Aim: To train high quality coaches for athletes of all ages and at all levels of performance, including parents and teachers.

The WRRRC has been proactive in supporting club coaches though grant aid to go on coaching courses.

Each year the region stages at least one IA/level 2 UKCC Rowing course, plus provides seminars on topics such as British Rowing Technique and the coxing etc. The region also hosted one of the New UKCC level 3 course and had a number of candidates from the region attend the course. The region has benefited from 3 Tutors and 4 Assessors plus an IV, EV over the years.

There has been the appointment of a Community Sport Coach and in the last couple of years Henley Stewards Coaches, who have aided the develop of Juniors in numerous clubs and schools across the Hampshire, IOW area. The WRRRC is thankfully for the continued support from the HSCT and BR for this resource.

The region during the last year of the plan has also been successful in securing support under the BR / Sport England club and coach scheme for coaching to help develop the clubs over 16's, introducing new participants to the sport and progress athletes up the competition pathway.

Dry Instructors course and Junior Leaders award have also been run on a need and demand basis.

2.5 Aim: To manage and maintain the WRRRC funds and equipment in a prudent and sustainable manner for the current and future needs of the region.

The WRRRC has secured a number of grants to help support coach education, volunteer development and Junior development over the past 5 years. The region runs its own bursary scheme, to support individual within the region who wish to put something back it into the sport.



3. The Vision – for the future.

The vision for 2009-2013 remains

- More participants through new activities
- Rowing for life through clubs with excellent facilities and well-supported volunteers
- Inspiration through success on the world stage and at London 2012

4. Values and Principles

- Recognising that the development of the sport depends on the development of all British Rowing's member clubs, and therefore adopting policies that enable each of them to achieve their full potential
- Providing a welcoming environment and support for participants to enjoy the sport at whatever level they choose to participate
- Playing an active part in developing rowing as part of the broader sporting and social agenda, and to benefit local communities
- Playing our part in protecting and caring for the outdoor environment which is so important to all those participating in rowing
- Creating the opportunity for those with the desire and talent to achieve success to receive the support they need to fulfil their potential
- Providing equal opportunities to participate in rowing in accordance with the standards and best practice in sport
- Encouraging and developing safe practices in rowing and the culture of safety in general
- The welfare of both children and vulnerable adults will remain as fundamental principles of all our activities at every level, in line with the standards and best practice in sport
- Valuing the work of volunteers and providing recognition, support and training
- Providing excellent career development opportunities and a caring, supporting environment for our staff and volunteers
- Encouraging and developing good practice to provide a transparent and accountable organisation at national, regional and local level.

5. Working in Partnership

5.1 Regional Partners in Sport

At a regional level we welcome the support of regional Sport England offices and the County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) and Physical Activity groups to ensure that we are working within local community and regional networks eg LAs, LEAs, PCTs, NSAs etc to develop and promote the opportunities we are making available to local communities include universities.

5.2 Partnerships within the rowing family

At a local level we will continue to support and work with HDARA, IOW Rowing Forum, emerging Cornish gig clubs, Universities and Schools partnerships via the competition managers to develop and grow both indoor and outdoor rowing opportunities.

6. Building on Success

The WRRRC will continue to build upon the successes of our last forward plan outlined in section 2.

Junior development will still play a major role in clubs, bring new members in to the sport and accreditation will be key, to this ensuring the correct policies and procedures are in place. Regional training days and camps will continue to support athletes/ juniors in reaching their full potential, in both rowing and coaching alike.

The region wishes to also develop and expand the numbers of adults taking part in rowing and processing through both the coastal and river competition frameworks. Many clubs will be looking to run Learn to row courses to grow participation followed other activities to enable people to stay in the sport as recreational rowers or competitive athletes.

The region wishes to continue to support both the volunteers and coaches in the region, and will continue to look for appropriate grant aid to support these key people in developing their skills and recognising the hard work they do.

6.2 Research and Marketing

British Rowing has undertaken a major piece of work at a national level to inform the rationale and evidence for our targeted expansion. This has been made possible through the BOA's initiative for Olympic NGBs to receive support from FTSE100 companies to assist them in incorporating business principles into their work. British Rowing is delighted to have been linked with the Marketing section of AstraZeneca with the objective of –

- Building on the success achieved to date in promoting rowing to a wider audience



- Adding to the high profile strength of the sport at Olympic level, by growing the brand of rowing through increased participation at the grass roots level and a more consistent media presence for the sport

To this end both qualitative and quantitative research was commissioned by AstraZeneca which has underpinned our funding application to Sport England, and which will drive the marketing plan for our new programmes.

Further exciting work on the rowing and ARA 'brand' with Astra Zeneca (AZ), and generous input from Brand(X), culminated in the agreement of the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA) to change its name to British Rowing. The partnership continues to provide opportunities for all levels of marketing staff at AZ to engage with British Rowing, as a successful sport at both world and community level, and with our desire to market and expand the sport even more effectively. Both organisations have found much synergy and common purpose in their joint objectives, and look forward to a close and productive relationship leading up to London 2012.

The Wessex Region plans to promote its self and coastal rowing, via developing a new website to encompass all rowing activities, events, and continual professional development for both coaches and volunteer within the region.

The region will also be looking to develop a couple of research projects / titles which could be undertaken by university students.

These would include research in to: The number of schools involved in rowing across the region, what they do, events, qualified instructors etc.

Continued participation in rowing, looking venues, and group who do rowing activities indoors or out.

Promotion of coastal rowing & gig rowing.

6.3 World Class performance

Rowing continues to be one of Great Britain's most successful sports on the World Stage. In 2008 our athletes were overall winners of the FISA World Cup, and once again have been very successful at Olympic level, winning two gold, two silver and two bronze medals at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, where we were the top rowing nation, and made a significant contribution to Team GB. For the first time rowing was included in the Paralympic Games and Great Britain won the first ever rowing gold medal, followed by another gold and a silver.

6.4 Performance and talent pathways

Clubs have also played a vital role in providing a talent pathway through the performance continuum from the first experience of rowing in school or the community right through to representation at World and Olympic level. In England, the World Class programmes identify talented individuals who can be supported and nurtured to achieve excellence. Clubs will be supported and encouraged to develop talented individuals within the club environment to excel and to achieve their potential through high quality coaching. An enhanced programme of CPD, training and mentoring of



club coaches will be a key element of our work. Better performance in the British Rowing competition structure will demonstrate success in this area.

The Wessex region will continue to support individuals aspiring to world class level, by setting up a talent athlete support system at local level.

6.5 Clubs, Universities and Schools

Clubs, Universities and Schools are at the centre of the sport of rowing, and are a key factor in both recruiting and retaining people of all ages in the sport. They provide a community identity for their members and students.

Clubs, Universities and Schools are also the base for developing our talented athletes to achieve their potential and we will continue to develop a strategic and systematic approach to increasing the breadth and depth of the talent pool.

Our aim will be to expand the capacity of a substantial number of clubs, by supporting them in modernising and improving facilities and equipment, increasing the uptake of training and education, and forming lasting and mutually beneficial links with the local community, schools and universities.

Coaching will be an important ingredient of success at all levels, and our Coaching Action Plan, drive the improvements needed to improve the experience of coaches and coaching at all levels.

We recognise the value of volunteers in delivering rowing activities in the region, and will continue to look for appropriate grant aid to support these key people in developing their skills and recognising the hard work they do.

6.6 Capital investment

The club capital investment programme (through CCDP and CIF) has been highly successful in providing modern, efficient and welcoming places for people taking part in rowing with two clubs having support from this scheme.

In all clubs volunteers are entirely responsible for the ownership and management of their clubs, thus producing substantial savings in the running costs of the sport. Rowing has not in the main benefited from Local Authority provision of sporting facilities, and British Rowing and its clubs have taken on the responsibility of providing community club facilities.

There are still many clubs Wessex Clubs trying to operate from outdated and sub-standard facilities, which are totally inadequate to meet the needs of an expanding participation base, and the expectations of 21st century consumers. We will continue to support invest whenever and wherever funding support is available.

We will also continue to provide support to clubs for renewal of leases, tenures etc. This is a critical issue for many, where long term leases are expiring, and the water sites occupied are under increasing commercial pressure.



We will seek opportunities to develop new clubs where there is an existing water facility, as well as supporting proposals for sustainable new water and land-based facilities.

In conjunction with British Rowing we will seek every opportunity to work with regional agencies, including SE regional offices, CSPs, RDAs, as well as those with a national remit, e.g. Environment Agency, Harbour authorities, Local Water Authorities, mineral extraction companies and any other agencies with responsibility for development and planning of both urban and rural water spaces.

Tenure Retention/Development Issues:

5 Wessex Region Clubs have or will have issues relating to tenure and development of the premises over the next Plan period.

- 1) Itchen Imperial R.C. and BTC R.C. are located on the Crosshouse site which is in the initial stages of redevelopment consideration by Southampton City Council.
- 2) Westover R.C. position on their West Beach site has been known for some months now. It is very much on the cards the Club will be looking for relocation on the sea front, some half a mile to the West of current boathouse. If this is to go ahead then new premises will have to be built.
- 3) Poole R.C. has been awaiting the granting of government funds to assist the building of Poole Town's Twin Sails bridge (relief road). This money has recently been approved so this will mean the Club relocating approximately a quarter of a mile away in a new building development on West Quay.
The Club is keen to obtain long overdue larger and more modern facilities to permit it to expand its activities.
- 4) Lymington R.C. has been very successful in expanding its activities over the last few years, and to sustain this and grow even more, it is now vital the current premises are modernised to upgrade both changing and boathouse facilities.

Other clubs have development aspirations including, Southampton ARC, Southampton University and Brynston School.

6.7 major rowing sites

Over the years coastal areas have seen a major increase in the level of leisure and sports activities within the harbours, estuaries and rivers on which we row.

With the increase in demand for space and facilities along the coastline and on the water front, it is important that the Wessex Region continue to attend and represent the sport and clubs to ensure their needs are recognised and considered within their strategies and this region's forward plan.

The major centres for rowing in the region include the River Itchen Southampton, River Stour/ Christchurch Harbour, Medina IOW, Lymington River.



The region currently has no flat water rowing sites or multi lane course and we will continue to explore the possibilities of this in the future with the increasing demand and growth in river and flat water racing.

6.8 Legacy

London 2012 will provide an unprecedented opportunity to showcase our sport through our GB Team and to provide a lasting legacy for rowing for future generations. The British Rowing associations new adult participation programme, 'Explore Rowing' will provide a country wide legacy of boats, trained volunteers, and new activities, to underpin sustainable growth for community rowing, and it is hoped that the Wessex Region will benefit directly from this program offering a number of new activities and developing a number of explore rowing centre's.

6.9 Competition

The core activity for many club members within the Wessex Region are the Hants and Dorset ARA's annual competitions along with the British Rowing's annual calendar of competitions, with regattas in the summer months and head of the river races in the winter.

The major competitions such as the South Coast Championships, National Championships, Junior Inter-Regional, National Schools and Veterans regattas, the BUCS Championships, multi-lane regattas, and five Tideway Head of the River races attract many thousands of competitors and are run by a large contingent of volunteer organisers, umpires and officials.

These are supplemented by many and varied traditional river events that are part of the history and culture of our cities, towns and villages, and are very much valued and supported by their local communities.

We expect these events to flourish, and aim to ensure that the structure encourages and enables rowers to progress, to gain satisfaction and rewards and to carry on competing.

We will develop easy entry and exit pathways from the status competition structure, from and to other competitive and non-competitive rowing activities.

The volunteers who work so hard to organise competitions are crucial in providing a highly trained and technically competent workforce to run all aspects of rowing events in the region.

6.10 Indoor rowing

Indoor rowing has grown in popularity, with many participants in schools, rowing clubs and gyms using rowing machines to keep fit, for training for rowing and other sports, and for competition. British Rowing's Project Oarsome scheme, launched in 1999,



provided a systematic programme to link schools and clubs through indoor rowing in schools, and many schemes throughout the country have built on this success.

The introduction of school indoor competitions as also raised the numbers rowing in educational centres, particular in Hampshire and the IOW, where rowing has been selected as one of the key sport in the new school Competition framework. We hope to continue working on this and developing the structure and level of competition across the region. The introduction of the Steve Redgrave Sport Relief project in Southampton in 2009 will also mean the region need to rise to the challenge of keep young people involved and interest in the sport, helping to guide participants to establishment to continue their participation.

British Rowing has now launched a new United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) endorsed Level 1 and Level 2 coaching qualification for indoor rowing coaches and fitness instructors. The qualifications will be made widely available through trainers in the fitness industry and gyms throughout the country. Additionally a new training course for teachers of indoor rowing, in line with the new PE curriculum – ‘Indoor Rowing in Secondary Schools’, was launched in July 2008. British Rowing will continue to work with a wide range of partners, including ISPAL and EFDS to develop all aspects of indoor rowing.

The WRRRC will try to support and guide schools, and gyms to local coach/teacher educational course available.

6.11 corporate governance

Good corporate governance and effective good practice policies including Equality, Child Protection, Water Safety etc. will continue to be developed and are fundamental to all our activities.

We will examine our informal volunteer structure to ensure that we retain our ability to progress and implement our strategic plans in a timely and effective way, and to ensure that the views of our members, the clubs and competitions, and the individuals who participate at all levels of the sports are represented.

6.12 University rowing

Currently within the Wessex Region we have two affiliated university rowing clubs and a further two rowing through partnerships with local clubs. Over the period of this plan the region wishes to strength its links with the universities to add value to the sport of rowing and help to retain rowers who currently give up rowing once they leave university. The region will encourage members of the universities to attend and be involved in the follow activities, Regional Rowing Council meeting, Coach, participant and volunteer training day, and Regional Events.

The region will also support universities to gain accreditation, develop links in the community and write development plans for the future.



7. WESSEX IMPACT

The Wessex region has set its targets based on the current percentage of British Rowing Members in the region.

Based on this the regions target are outlined below.

1. To support 400 additional participants over the period of the plan to either take part in the sport for the first time or to stay in the sport. This will include rowing on the water and indoor rowing participants.
2. To increase the breadth and depth of the talent pool by supporting 48 competitors in high quality club environment to improve through competition, with 50% of this group moving up equivalent to one status point.
3. To increase awareness of the Wessex Regional Rowing Council, and its role within the National Governing Body structure.