

Scottish Rowing  
**AGM – 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2020**  
 Zoom – 1.30pm

**Welcome**

Martin Claxton (MC) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1**

**Accreditation**

- 14 Clubs represented at the meeting/21 individual votes
- All votes were received by Proxy through ElectionBuddy online voting with some submitted prior to the meeting and some during the meeting. **Total individual votes – 36.**

Club	Name	Name
Aberdeen Boat Club	Jim Steel	
Aberdeen Schools Rowing Association		
Aberdeen University Boat Club	India Dodd	Emily Carruthers
Albyn School BC		
Castle Semple Rowing Club	Melanie Brander	Graeme Fletcher
Clyde Amateur Rowing Club	Dan Williams	Caitie Gorton-Phillips
Clydesdale Amateur Rowing Club	Apologies Received	
Deeside Scullers Club		
Dundee University Boat Club	Matthew Simpson	
Edinburgh University Boat Club	Dan Baillache	
George Heriots School RC		
George Watson's College Rowing Club		
Glasgow Rowing Club		
Glasgow Schools Rowing Club SCIO		
Glasgow University Boat Club		
Heart of Scotland Boat Club		
Heriot Watt University Boat Club		
Inverness Rowing Club	Dave Rothwell	
Loch Lomond Rowing Club		
Nithsdale Amateur Rowing Club	Alison Dunse	
Robert Gordon University Boat Club	Lizzie Buchan	Sophie Telfer
St Andrew Boat Club	Neil MacFarlane	
Stirling Rowing Club	Graeme Duff	Natalie Firth
Stirling University Boat Club		

	Strathclyde Park Rowing Club	Alistair Neill	Ailie Ord
	Strathclyde University Boat Club	Cameron Kinnear	
	Tay Rowing Club		
	The Glasgow Academy	Iain Somerside	Mary Massaro
	University of St Andrews Boat Club		
	<b>BOARD</b>		
	Board	Martin Claxton	
	Board	Caroline Parker	
	Board	John Gill	
	Board	Elizabeth Mitchell	
	Board	Matt Taylor	
	<b>OBSERVERS</b>		
	Amanda Cobb – Scottish Rowing COO	Lee Boucher – Scottish Rowing Head of Performance Pathway	Adam Hardy – Scottish Rowing Competitions and Events Manager (East)
	Carol Ann Ellis – Scottish Rowing Administrator & Minute Taker	Ken McCracken – JRD Accountants	
<b>2</b>	<b><u>Notice of Meeting</u></b>		
	It was agreed by Members represented that the Notice of Meeting was in order.		
<b>3</b>	<b><u>Apologies</u></b>		
	Apologies were received from:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stella Hawthorne – Clydesdale ARC</li> <li>• The Rector of The Glasgow Academy</li> </ul>		
<b>4</b>	<b><u>Approval of Previous Minutes (Appendix 1)</u></b>		
	Papers previously circulated.		
	Minutes approved.		
<b>5</b>	<b><u>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</u></b>		
	<p><b>Item 10.</b> At the 2019 AGM, Loch Lomond Rowing Club queried if there had been a recent evaluation on the Scottish Rowing Centre and they were advised that this would be carried out as soon as the lease was signed over from North Lanarkshire Council to Scottish Rowing. AC highlighted that there has been no movement on this due to an issue with the assignation however, NLC have agreed in principle and once the paperwork is complete an evaluation will be carried out.</p>		
<b>6</b>	<b><u>President's Report</u></b>		
	I would like to cast your mind back in time. Back to a year BC. No not 'Before Coronavirus' but 5 BC. In 5 BC the Greeks were the acknowledged masters of oared		

galleys and their ships dominated the Mediterranean. With a rowing crew of 170 a Greek Trireme was a fast and fearsome warship. But one of the tricks that the Greeks had learned that gave them an edge in speed was what was referred to as a rowing cushion. This is believed to have been a fleece or hide strapped to the rowers' backside that allowed the rower to slide on the seat thus enabling them to bring the power of their legs to bear for longer during the stroke. Wind the clock forward to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and competitive crews in the UK, US and Canada re-invented the Greeks' cushion and were using buckskin and butter or soap to achieve the same effect. This principle then evolved into the mechanical slide that we are now so familiar with.

So, what is the relevance of this to us today? Well to me it typifies the adaptability that sports people can show when overcoming a challenge such as gaining those decisive seconds of advantage in a race. And yes, rowing like all other sports has faced its challenges this year. Our ancestors knew a thing or two about this; The Roman philosopher Horace, who died in 8 BC said: "Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which, in prosperous circumstances, would have lain dormant". Or as Gunnery Sergeant Highway aka Clint Eastwood put it slightly less eloquently: "You're Marines now, you adapt, you overcome, you improvise!"

And yes, rowing has adapted, it has improvised and it has in the main overcome the challenges of 2020. I have been so impressed by the adaptability that many rowing clubs have shown in seizing opportunities and exploring novel ways of keeping their members engaged and offering ways to continue with our sport. I have also been delighted by the wide variety of webinars and virtual competitions that the Scottish Rowing team have arranged in order to help entertain, encourage and educate clubs and their members.

Scottish Rowing is your Governing Body and we exist to help you, to promote and facilitate engagement in our sport and to enable everyone involved in rowing to achieve their ambitions be it for simple recreation through to high performance. I firmly believe that Scottish Rowing has continued to fulfil that remit and risen to the challenge. Led firmly and tirelessly by our Chief Operating Officer Amanda, the team has made sure that the spirit of rowing has been maintained and the Board is indebted to them all for all their efforts in steering us through the return to rowing.

The Board itself has welcomed two new members this year in the form of Matt Taylor as Commercial Director and Sam Winton as Ordinary Director leading on Youth Engagement. Their enthusiasm and engagement have been palpable right from the start and I have absolutely no doubt about the positive impact they will have. Regrettably Mark Barry the Finance Director has recently had to stand down for health reasons and I would like to record my sincere thanks to him for the professional support he provided during his relatively short time on the Board.

I do not wish to dwell on what could have been or what we did not do in 2020. Although the restrictions that affect us all to varying degrees will remain a feature of our lives into next year it is time to prepare to move on. It is time to ready ourselves for the brighter challenges that 2021 will bring. Back in 1927 Prince Edward, Prince of Wales made a speech aimed at re-invigorating industry after the economic stagnation of the 20's. With apologies for the gender bias of the time he said: "The young business and professional men of this country must get together round the table, adopt methods that have proved so sound in the past, adapt them to the changing needs of the times and wherever

possible, improve them". So, no matter if you subscribe to Ancient Roman or 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophies, the message is the same, this is an opportunity to be seized!

The Board and staff of Scottish Rowing remain fully committed to ensuring that you the clubs are supported in re-establishing everything we enjoy about the sport, to continue to take the opportunities to look afresh at how we collectively manage our sport and to working with you to jointly improve what we do and how we do it.

## 7. Chief Operating Officers Report

It is safe to say that the 2019-20 season has been a memorable one. Ten years ago this month, I started working at Scottish Rowing and I don't think anyone could have predicted then what our sport would be facing 10 years later. However, the development of Scottish Rowing as a governing body and an organisation means we are well placed to deal with the situation we now face. We have an engaged and active Board of Directors and a dedicated and experienced staff team.

The core team has grown to nine staff members, seven of whom have significant experience in the sport as rowers, coaches and club volunteers and understand the issues and challenges faced by member clubs. With decades of collective experience in rowing, the team has responded to the current crisis with enthusiasm and passion.

Steve O'Connor joined the team in June 2020 as the part-time lead for business development at the Scottish Rowing Centre. In this role Steve will be responsible for bringing to life the vision for the Scottish Rowing Centre, optimising its potential through building sustainable local partnerships, community outreach programmes and commercial opportunities as well as enabling access for club and performance rowers. Steve will combine this exciting new role with his existing role as Chief Executive Officer at Fulham Reach Boat Club, a position that he has held since 2014.

I am grateful to have such a capable team in place at what has been the most challenging year in my time at Scottish Rowing. 2020 started with significant disruption to competition caused by poor weather, including the cancellation of the newly launched Winter Challenge. The COVID-19 virus also emerged in the early months of 2020, culminating in an unprecedented shut down of the sport as part of a wider national "lockdown". Since then, the sport has responded with resilience and initiative, with clubs adapting to find ways of keeping members active and engaged. Delivering the "Return to Rowing" in line with published guidance has been a huge amount of work for club committees and volunteers and their commitment and diligence has been fantastic.

Scottish Rowing's focus throughout has been to ensure clubs were supported and members felt connected and part of the Scottish Rowing community. The importance of communication was recognised early on and we diverted time into more focused social media activity, club webinars and the launch of the Scottish Rowing enewsletter. As well as rowing technical content we have covered important topics such as mental health, anti-doping and diversity and inclusion.

Over the course of the last six months, the Scottish Rowing team has produced advice for clubs, coaches and rowers; resources, workshops, ideas, activities like the "Lockdown League" and hopefully a bit of fun (Scottish Rowing bingo anyone?). Working closely with **sportscotland** and the Scottish Government, the "Return to Rowing" guidance has been a significant piece of work, which is still ongoing as restriction change. We have also

worked closely with colleagues from Welsh Rowing and British Rowing, to ensure guidance is aligned and, as far as possible, consistent.

Before COVID, the first half of the season saw the delivery of a number of performance development activities, including an Early ID Trial and Training Day at Strathclyde Park in October 2019, the popular residential J16 Land Camp at the National Sports Training Centre Inverclyde and a residential land camp in early January 2020. Unfortunately, the racing opportunities at the Women's Head of the River Race and the Head of the River Race, which are a focus for the programme at that point in the season, were cancelled. However, athletes on the Scottish Rowing performance programme have been supported throughout the period of lockdown.

The work on competition has continued, with significant progress been made on the development of the new Winter Series format. The competition strategy group is also considering how competition and events might be adapted or developed to provide opportunities to race as part of the Return to Rowing.

We continued to support our outreach projects at Firhill Basin and with the ASN schools in North Lanarkshire and although they have also experienced the same hiatus as club rowing the work to get them up and running again is now underway.

The impact of COVID-19 on Scottish Rowing membership has been significant and we are grateful to everyone who has renewed their membership since the start of lockdown. Scottish Rowing needs your support as much as ever. As case numbers show signs of increasing and we face the possibility of COVID restrictions being in place for some time to come, the need for us to pull together and to be flexible, adaptable and innovative has never been greater.

Scottish Rowing exists for its member clubs and to support you and the rowers, coaches and volunteers that make up our sport so that when the time comes and we can properly "Return to Rowing", we will be ready.

As always I would like to end my report with a few thanks. First, to our funding partners **sportscotland** for their support both financial and in terms of knowledge and expertise. Their work on the guidance for a Return to Sport has been immense. I would also like to thank the Scottish Rowing staff team for all their hard work, adaptability, and creativity over the last few months. Thanks also to the Scottish Rowing Board of Directors, a group of volunteers whose experience, knowledge and support adds huge value to Scottish Rowing. However, Scottish Rowing is its clubs and the people in them and huge thanks are due to the club committees, newly appointed COVID Officers, coaches and volunteers who have worked so hard to keep the sport we love going strong.

AC presented slides to the meeting outlining the highlights from her report.

MC congratulated AC on her ten years of service with Scottish Rowing and thanked her for all of her hard work. He also thanked the clubs for their patience with the distribution of guidance and controls relating to COVID-19.

**8. Proposal of Scottish Rowing Membership fees for year ending March 2022**

Paper previously circulated.

	Approved.
9.	<p><b><u>Finance</u></b></p> <p>AC presented slides to the meeting on the accounts which have previously been approved by the Board.</p> <p><b>9.1. Presentation of Accounts</b></p> <p><b>I. Scottish Rowing Report of Directors for the year ended 31 March 2020 (Appendix 2)</b></p> <p>Paper previously circulated</p> <p><b>II. Scottish Rowing Supplementary Accounts for year ended 31 March 2020 (Appendix 3)</b></p> <p>Paper previously circulated</p> <p>No questions were raised regarding the accounts.</p> <p><b><u>9.2. Proposal of Accountant</u></b></p> <p>It was proposed that SR continue with JRD Partnership for the preparation of its accounts.</p> <p>JRD approved to continue as the Scottish Rowing accountant.</p>
10.	<p><b><u>Election of Board Members</u></b></p> <p>Paper previously circulated.</p> <p><b><u>10.1. President – Martin Claxton</u></b></p> <p>Proposed by the Board.</p> <p>Approved.</p> <p><b><u>10.2. Director (Coaching) – John Gill</u></b></p> <p>Proposed by the Board.</p> <p>Approved.</p> <p><b><u>10.3. Director (Ordinary) – Alistair Neill</u></b></p> <p>Proposed by Strathclyde Park Rowing Club.</p> <p>Approved.</p> <p><b><u>10.4. Director (Performance) – Dorothy Roberts</u></b></p> <p>Proposed by the Board.</p>

	<p>Approved.</p> <p><b><u>10.5. Director (Ordinary) – Sam Winton</u></b></p> <p>Proposed by St Andrews University Boat Club.</p> <p>Approved.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b><u>Other Competent Business</u></b></p> <p><b>11.1. Date of AGM 2021</b></p> <p>The provisional date of the next AGM is 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and clubs will be consulted if this date is required to be amended.</p> <p>Dave Rothwell queried if the 2021 AGM would be a virtual meeting and highlighted that it is more convenient for clubs situated further afield to attend. AC advised that, due to the resolution that passed to change the organisations Articles of Association to allow a virtual meeting, this is now an option and will be considered for next year.</p> <p>Martin Claxton thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting inviting anyone who wished to stay on the call for a Q&amp;A session directly afterwards.</p>