



Scottish Rowing

Membership Consultation Paper

November 2017

Introduction

In the new Scottish Rowing strategic plan for the next four years (2017-21), the need to review Scottish Rowing's membership model was identified as an important element of removing barriers and making the sport more inclusive. This paper sets out a proposed membership model for consultation and feedback. There are two aspects of membership covered by this consultation:

- 1) The membership model for club rowing; and
- 2) A model which recognises the indoor rowing leagues in the Scottish Rowing constitution.

Item 1 Club Rowing

For the purposes of this paper the membership model is defined as the combination of club and individual memberships, and associated rights/benefits.

The case for change

There are a number of reasons for considering a change to the Scottish Rowing membership model.

1. For Scottish Rowing to visibly act as the governing body for rowing in Scotland by offering a single model of membership which does not disadvantage or distinguish between any given club or participant irrespective of:
 - Discipline;
 - Size; or
 - Operating/Financial Model
2. To remove barriers real or perceived to joining Scottish Rowing. The current cost model is a barrier to new and growing clubs, smaller clubs, and clubs with different operating models. This is primarily because of the cost as a proportion of membership income. The cost of individual membership is also a barrier to those who don't want to race. Finally, while the lack of additional membership benefits is not a barrier, it is a disincentive to individuals becoming members of Scottish Rowing.

3. There is a need for better communication and engagement with and understanding of the wants and needs of all participants in our sport. The benefits of this are:
- a. allows Scottish Rowing to run the sport for the benefit of all participants – not just keen racers;
 - b. helps Scottish Rowing allocate resources better;
 - c. improves Scottish Rowing's ability to govern the sport and fulfil its responsibilities in areas such as safeguarding, anti-doping and equality; and
 - d. all regular participants in the sport make a small contribution to the overall running of the sport - in proportion to what they want back from it.

In developing an alternative membership model, the underlying principles of the proposed model for consultation were:

- Lower club fees – means no barriers and treats all disciplines the same. We know that the current fees are a huge barrier to e.g. coastal clubs which have lower running costs and lower membership fee income.
- All active participants in the sport make a small contribution to the governing body – in return for a range of benefits.
- Ensuring the proposed model for membership is financially sustainable.

At present, only 9.8% of Scottish Rowing's annual income comes from club and individual membership fees with nearly 74% coming from grant income (**sportscotland** and other grant funders). As the funding environment for sport is becoming increasingly more challenging it is important that Scottish Rowing has the right structures to ensure its sustainability in the longer term.

The proposed model

- **Reduce club fees significantly (with no corresponding reduction in benefits); and**
- **Introduce a significantly cheaper recreational membership (which would encompass the current coastal membership) in addition to the full competition membership; and**
- **Require all active members of member clubs to take out a Scottish Rowing membership (either recreational or competitive); and**
- **Introduce registration (no fee) for non-rowing club members (committee members, volunteers etc.).**

There is no proposal to change the voting rights. Club Members would still be entitled to 2 votes per club and individual members would not have a vote. Individuals have representation at a general meeting of the company through their clubs.

Introduction of this model means that, taking the combined fees from clubs and individuals, small clubs will contribute less than big clubs and clubs with more racing members will contribute more than less competitive (or non-competitive) clubs of the same size.

Current and proposed benefits for clubs are set out in Appendix 1. We are currently working on securing a wider range of discounts to be offered to Scottish Rowing members.

There are also some secondary benefits that may arise from adopting this model.

Free Club Management System

We announced earlier in the year that we are working with Azolve to migrate our current membership system on to a more modern, user friendly system. This online system is used by many other sports although we are working with Azolve to tailor the system for the needs of our sport (in particular managing the points system).

Part of the package with Azolve is the ability to provide a club management system which can be used by all member clubs to communicate with and manage your own memberships. More information about the new system will be provided over the next few weeks.

Insurance costs

It is the intention to provide all individual members with insurance, even at the recreational rate. This will not apply to any non-rowing members who opt to register rather than take out a paid membership. While clubs will still need to have their own insurance cover, the fact that all (or nearly all) club members have individual insurance from the governing body may result in lower insurance premiums.

Questions and Issues

We are seeking feedback on the proposals for Club and Indoor rowing set out above, both in terms of the proposed membership model in general, and also specific issues/questions around the logistics of operating the proposed club model.

There are some specific areas already identified on which it would be helpful to have feedback including:

1. Ensuring a clear definition of active member. There are possible grey areas such as:
 - school clubs – there is no intention to have everyone who rows during PE/Games join Scottish Rowing – but it would be helpful to identify at what point they should.
 - Where clubs doing a lot of outreach club/learn to row activity – again at what point do they become a member for the purposes of this.
2. we would welcome your views on the membership categories offered if a recreational category is introduced including:
 - a. Is an adaptive membership still needed
 - b. Should there be a junior recreational membership or does one size fit all?
 - c. Should there still be a cadet membership?
3. What is the view on what is an acceptable recreational membership fee bearing in mind there is an incremental cost per member?

Timescales

We are working towards the new membership system going live by end of this calendar year. Subject to the successful completion of this consultation, we would plan to introduce a new membership model from 1st April 2018.

Appendix 1

Benefits of club affiliation

1. A say in how the sport is governed in Scotland through voting rights
2. Access to funding and grant application assistance and support
3. Information and advice to help you run your club from SR staff and club accreditation scheme
 - a. Participation resources and programmes
 - b. Links to local partners
 - c. Programmes and resources for beginners
4. Access to equipment for beginners
5. Ability to run events as part of the Scottish Rowing competition calendar and framework
6. Education and development
 - a. Subsidised coaching courses and CPD
 - b. Support for club officials (CP, club development)
 - c. Opportunities for athlete development
7. Coming soon – free club management system

Benefits of individual membership

Recreational membership would include;

1. Public liability and personal accident insurance
2. Access to SR coaching courses, workshops and conferences
3. Access to certain SR run athlete development opportunities – camps/workshops
4. Coming soon – member discounts and regular newsletter.

Competition Memberships would include:

5. All benefits above
6. Access to SR run athlete development opportunities – camps/workshops
7. Access to competition in Scottish and British Rowing events (and beyond)