

Scottish Rowing
AGM – 1st of October 2023
 Zoom – 1.30pm

Welcome

Matt Taylor (MT) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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Accreditation

- 19 Clubs represented at the meeting/25 individual votes
- Two Proxy votes from two clubs received.

Club	Name	Name
Aberdeen Boat Club	Brian Bain	Elaine Law
Aberdeen Schools Rowing Association	Alan Lawrie	
Aberdeen University Boat Club	Jakub Zbikowski	
Castle Semple Rowing Club	Keith Robertson	
Clyde Amateur Rowing Club		
Clydesdale Amateur Rowing Club		
Deeside Scullers Club		
Dundee University Boat Club	Molly Scott	
Edinburgh University Boat Club	Mia Freischem	Charley Faint
George Heriots School RC		
George Watson's College Rowing Club	Hamish Burrell	
Glasgow Rowing Club		
Glasgow Schools Rowing Club SCIO	Iain Somerside	
Glasgow University Boat Club		
Heart of Scotland Boat Club	Adam Hardy	Graeme Cunningham
Heriot Watt University Boat Club	Cole Taylor	William Coalter
Inverness Rowing Club	Robert Gordon	
Loch Lomond Rowing Club	Jackie Smith	
Nithsdale Amateur Rowing Club	Alison Dunse	
Robert Gordon University Boat Club		
St Andrew Boat Club	Lindsay Flockhart	Sarah Whitely
Stirling Rowing Club	Graeme Duff	
Stirling University Boat Club		
Strathclyde Park Rowing Club	Ailie Ord	Tom Ord
Strathclyde University Boat Club		

	Tay Rowing Club	Chris Smith	
	The Glasgow Academy	Mary Massaro	
	University of St Andrews Boat Club	Alice Vine	
	BOARD		
	Board	Matt Taylor	
	Board	Alistair Neill	
	Board	Dot Roberts	
	Board	Neil MacIver	
	Board	Sam Winton	
	OBSERVERS		
	Amanda Cobb – Scottish Rowing COO	Lee Boucher – Scottish Rowing Head of Performance and Pathways	Carol Ann Ellis – Scottish Rowing Administrator & Minute Taker
	Helen Lawrance – SR Competition and Events Manager	Iain Rice – SR Coaching and Workforce Manager	Cara O'Donnell – SR Sports Programme Co-Ordinator
	Peter Morrison – Honorary Member	Ken McCracken - JRD	Laura Graham – SR Director Nomination
	Sophie McCall – SR Director Nomination	Tony Slater– Mi-Voice (voting system)	Jill Adam - RGUBC
	Fraser Innes - GUBC	Graham Gibb – Clydesdale ARC	
2	<u>Notice of Meeting</u>		
	It was agreed by Members represented that the Notice of Meeting was in order.		
3	<u>Apologies</u>		
	Apologies were received from:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charlotte MacBeath – sportscotland Partnership Manager Strathclyde University Boat Club 		
4	<u>Approval of Previous Minutes (Appendix 1)</u>		
	Papers previously circulated.		
	Minutes approved.		
5	<u>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</u>		
	No matters arising from previous minutes.		
6	<u>President's Report</u>		
	It is a true privilege to be able to report on the key developments, issues and points of pride over the past year for the Scottish Rowing community. As ever, I want to sincerely thank every individual present today as well as each member of our wider community for their contributions and dedication to our sport –whether it is rowing, coaching, umpiring, organising, advising, leading or any other role that is crucial to our effective		

functioning; the commitment, patience and kindness of so many continue to be the biggest and best force within our sport.

Now into our second year of our strategic plan, which emphasises reflection, empowerment and change – we are investing in enabling and developing the next generation of leaders within our sport, through flagship programmes such as Champions for Change and Future Leaders. Similarly, the rollout of the Coach Club intends to provide a more supportive and structured package for those invested in developing others.

As another central pillar of the strategic plan, the Scottish Rowing Centre continues to go from strength to strength in order to be the ‘thriving home’ of rowing in Scotland, with the recent refurbishment of the tank allowing for many more people to experience the joys of rowing, many for the first time. Projects in Ayr and Firhill also continue to be highly successful in extending our reach to those who may have never considered rowing. It was so exciting that this past year has also seen the revitalising of another epicentre of rowing in Scotland, with the West Boathouse on Glasgow Green celebrating its reopening following a multi-million pound restoration.

Coastal rowing continues to develop at a fast and exciting pace, with Scotland being one of the forefront nations within this discipline. In December, Scotland topped the medal table at the Commonwealth Rowing Association Beach Sprint Championships in Namibia. The exciting prospects for coastal rowing, the withdrawal of the GB Start programme from Scotland this year and the continued commitment of **sportscotland** facilitated an exciting opportunity for our performance capability this year. Through both a replenished performance fleet, aptly named in April after some exceptional contributors to rowing in Scotland as well as three new coaching roles, including one focused on coastal rowing, and an additional programme support role, we are excited to see how this team can continue to build Scotland’s ability to develop athletes and para-athletes, junior and senior, who can compete against the world’s best.

As aforementioned, individuals are the backbone to any sport – and I wish to specifically recognise several this afternoon. I’d like to thank my former Board colleagues, Chris Woods and John Gill, who departed their roles over the past year. My sincere thanks to the rest of the Board for their ongoing dedication in strengthening the governance of the sport, the key volunteers and the staff team, led by Amanda, for their day to day work and support. I also wish to recognise those who we have sadly lost from our community this year; Colin Simpson, Bob Neill, George West and Jo Pinder, in particular, are remembered with genuine appreciation for the legacy each of them has left within rowing in Scotland.

As we look to the coming year, along with other sports, we are no different in reflecting and planning for a better and safer culture for every individual who is involved with rowing in Scotland. We recognise that this is an area that we all must play a part in, and one that we can always improve on. We want to work in collaboration with clubs to ensure that we always remain true to our values and strive for a future of rowing with fewer barriers, however they may present – so that the special feeling and affection that we all hold for rowing can be felt by more and more people.

7. Chief Operating Officers Report

The year since the last AGM has been a busy one with new activities and existing programmes. You can read about all of these in detail in this Annual Review.

Following a strategic review with our funding partner **sportscotland** in November 2022, we were successful in securing additional investment to support our performance pathway activities and the development of Beach Sprints with a view to the Commonwealth Games in 2026. Our capacity to support athletes in Scotland is better than it has ever been and this new investment will add to our capability.

The announcement of the inclusion of Coastal Beach Sprints in the Commonwealth Games sport programme was a huge boost for the sport. We were well placed to respond having had a level of involvement since the first Commonwealth Beach Sprint Championships in 2018. A successful performance in the Commonwealth Rowing Association Beach Sprints in December last year underpinned a successful proposal for additional investment from **sportscotland** to enable us to build on our early success towards Victoria 2026.

Sadly, at the time of writing, Victoria has pulled out of hosting the games, leaving the 2026 event without a home. We are aware that there is significant work going on behind the scenes to secure a new host, and we await a decision on this and on whether Beach Sprints will be included in the programme for the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

With this new investment and following the departure of Andy Barton as Pathways Manager, Lee Boucher has taken on an enhanced role and is now heading up an expanded Pathways and Performance team, integrating our approach to the sporting pathway from club beginner to GB representation.

The governance and culture within sport rightly continues to be an area of focus. At the last AGM, we discussed the implications of this review for rowing and since then we have been making progress in reviewing our own procedures around Club Governance and Safeguarding.

On the systems side, we have been disappointed with the significant issues that members have experienced with the competition entry system. We believe an online entry system linked to our membership system is a basic requirement for any sport and are looking at options to address this need.

There were significant changes in staffing this year. We said goodbye to a number of respected colleagues from our team, all of whom leave with our thanks and appreciation for their contribution. We were also devastated to lose our dear colleague Jo Pinder – Member Services Administrator – after a long and difficult illness. Her memory will live on through her many friends in the sport.

Within the performance pathway the additional investment from **sportscotland** enabled us to create three new coaching roles. Tom Young was appointed as the new Lead Performance Pathway Coach and he was joined by Iain Docwra who returns to Scotland to take up the new role of Beach Sprints Pathway Coach. Dale Flockhart has recently been appointed as the new Assistant Performance Pathway coach. This is an exciting new phase in the development of our performance programme.

The Pathway Development Team also welcomed new team members during the year including Helen Lawrance (Competition and Events Manager) and Ronan Welch (Pathways Manager). Cara O'Donnell, takes on the new role of Sports Programme Co-ordinator working across the Performance and Pathways team on various projects.

	<p>As always, I would like to end my report with some thanks. First, to our funding partners sportscotland for their continued investment and for their support and advice. Thanks also to the Scottish Rowing staff team who each year deliver new activities and opportunities with enthusiasm and creativity. The Scottish Rowing Directors are all volunteers who give generously of their time, support and expertise. I thank them for the service they give the sport. The biggest thanks go to all the volunteers across the sport. Whether you give two hours or two hundred, you contribute to making clubs and events successful year after year.</p> <p>Iain Somerside, Glasgow Schools RC, asked for an overall number of active memberships. AC advised that she didn't have these to hand but they were up from last year and they would be circulated to all clubs after the meeting.</p>
8.	<p><u>Proposal of Scottish Rowing Membership fees for year ending March 2024</u></p> <p>Approved.</p>
9.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>AC presented slides to the meeting on the accounts which have previously been approved by the Board.</p> <p>9.1. Presentation of Accounts</p> <p>I. Scottish Rowing Report of Directors for the year ended 31 March 2023 (Appendix 2)</p> <p>Paper previously circulated</p> <p>II. Scottish Rowing Supplementary Accounts for year ended 31 March 2023 (Appendix 3)</p> <p>Paper previously circulated</p> <p><u>9.2. Proposal of Accountant</u></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><u>Election of Board Members</u></p> <p><u>10.1 Director Coaching – Laura Graham</u> Approved</p> <p><u>10.2 Director Development – Sophie McCall</u> Approved</p> <p><u>10.3 Scottish Rowing President – Matt Taylor</u> Approved</p>
13	<p><u>Other Competent Business</u></p>

11.1 Special Resolution proposed by Aberdeen Schools Rowing Association

MT read out a statement to the meeting.

I wish to read the following statement of behalf of the Board of Directors of Scottish Rowing.

We are disappointed that this motion has been tabled at AGM. Scottish Rowing has established procedures in place to deal with such matters, and it is the opinion of the board that these are the most appropriate avenue for dealing with disciplinary matters, particularly when they relate to safeguarding young people.

Last year, the publication of the Whyte Report reiterated the need for a sporting culture that places safeguarding at the heart of all sporting activities, emphasising the need for robust and proper processes. Whilst we feel that, for this reason, the resolution proposed by ASRA is not a matter for discussions at a General Meeting, we are required to present it here after being advised it falls within the scope of the articles.

The motion for your consideration refers to the precautionary suspension of two individuals enacted and imposed under the Scottish Rowing Disciplinary Procedure. The policy sets out five circumstances in which a precautionary suspension may be considered. Whilst it is not appropriate to discuss the specifics of the matter, two of the five considerations were deemed relevant, those being:

“b. if the allegation made against the individual was ultimately to be proved, then there would be a significant concern about the conduct of that individual towards children or other adults;

c. if the individual’s attendance or involvement in Scottish Rowing activities could compromise the disciplinary process”.

The decision to issue precautionary suspensions to Mr Bryan Steel and Mr Ian Duncan was taken by a 3-person panel in line with our disciplinary policy, with the involvement of relevant safeguarding and legal experts. Investigations are still ongoing. The sensitive nature of the investigation has meant that this process has been longer than initially hoped by all involved.

We have a duty of care of every individual within the Scottish Rowing community, including Mr Steel and Mr Duncan - therefore, we must set a precedent here, that a thorough and uninterrupted investigation should be completed into issues of such importance.

It is our firm view that this process is one which should be managed by professionals, those with experience, and who are fully informed. The membership does not have and cannot have access to all the information. This is for reasons of confidentiality of all involved and data protection. Indeed, disclosing further information, would risk compromising the process for all parties involved.

In conclusion, as a Governing Body, we have a duty of care to those taking part in the sport and a particular responsibility for the wellbeing of young people. We are acting under our published procedures, the authority delegated to us by you, the members of Scottish Rowing as well as the advice of legal and safeguarding experts. We recognise that every individual here this afternoon is responsible for leading their club community

and hence ask that you reflect deeply on the implications of any decision you make with your vote.

You are not and will not be casting a judgment on the end outcome of this process through your vote- you are simply deciding whether the precautionary suspensions should remain in place, due to the ongoing investigations and whether Scottish Rowing's approach to this manner is correct.

We ask you to uphold the important principles underlying our policies and procedures, allowing the process to continue in line with the rules and policies of Scottish Rowing by voting against the resolution. In doing so we ask you play an active role in shaping the kind of culture which prioritise the fair and rigorous investigations, taking matters of safeguarding and wellbeing seriously.

Alan Lawrie (ASRA) read out a statement to the meeting.

Good afternoon Ladies & Gentlemen, I am Alan Lawrie and I am one of ASRA's Trustees and committee member's and I am here today to speak to you on behalf of the ASRA committee, about the Ordinary Resolution we tabled and is included in the SR AGM agenda as item 11.1.

To be clear from the outset, ASRA are not requesting a stop to the ongoing investigations, we are solely looking for the precautionary suspensions of both Mr Bryan Steel and Mr Ian Duncan to be lifted.

As already intimated in the previous communication shared with you all by ASRA, via e mail, Mr Steel & Duncan were issued precautionary Suspensions by letter on 17th April 2021 from SR.

It is ASRA's believe that the investigation had commenced a number of months prior to the precautionary suspensions being issued.

That in effect means that the investigations have been ongoing for at least 2.5 years, but much more likely in excess of 3 years.

The white paper which is the output of the investigation into Gb Gymnastics, was issued within 2 years of the investigation being started.

What are SR's priorities?

You would think that Safety & wellbeing of Athletes, coaches, volunteers, would be right up there, however this investigation is demonstrating the complete opposite.

For a matter that was important enough to warrant the issuing of precautionary suspensions, you would think it would also warrant an efficient and timely execution, no matter how complex that investigation is. (ie it should have been a full time investigation team, not a part time activity carried out by individuals bolted on to their normal day jobs)

Over the intervening period the two individuals and their extended families have had to endure the stresses of having this hanging over them, this has no doubt had an adverse health effect on both families.

It has also had a significant impact on ASRA, with us having lost all of the experience and input from Mr Steel & Duncan on guiding and strategically developing ASRA as a charitable organisation and the loss of two very experienced coaches and stalwarts of the ASRA family.

ASRA believe if there was anything of any significance identified within the investigations then appropriate timely action would have been taken, it is on this basis, after more than 2.5 years of precautionary suspension that we are saying enough is enough and asking you to support us with the motion to lift the temporary suspensions on both individuals and allow them to return to their beloved sport.

Not approved.

Jackie Smith (Loch Lomond RC) expressed that 2 ½ years was a long time for all involved and she hoped that SR give due regard and do everything they can to work towards a resolution.

MT assured that they are dealing with it very seriously and are following the required process.

11.2 Date of AGM 2023

The provisional date of the next AGM is 6th October 2024 and clubs will be consulted if this date is required to be amended.

MT thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.