

Chair's Report to the AGM

Mike Parsons

12th July 2023

Summary

Many thanks to all who stepped up and volunteered during the year, without you, we are nothing.

Going Well

- Performance
 - Continued increase in club wins
 - Performance squads performing
- Junior squad numbers up in line with the growth plan
- Senior squad numbers up, again broadly in line with the long term plan
- Junior and Adult learn to row – excellent
- Overall club growth.....
- Para squad growing – additional coaches
- CrowdFunder
- Completed a Social Impact Review....

Challenges For Coming Year(s)

- Safety improvement plans
- Step up our fundraising to help support renewal and growth
- Stronger connection
- Second site below the lock
- Structures and Processes that support growth
- Action at least three significant items from the impact review
- Coach development programme

It's All Meant To Be About Rowing?



CrowdFunder – Thankyou so much for your support

Boats for the expanding Junior Squad

by [Marlow Rowing Club](#) in Marlow, Berkshire, United Kingdom



This project supports the growth of our junior squad, up in numbers from 64 to 121 in the last three years and still growing.

£17,602 giftaid + est. £1420.00

£34,000 stretch target 15 days left

103% **107** supporters

Support Us

Keep what you raise – this project will receive all pledges made by 27th July 2023 at 2:52pm

[Project Facebook](#) [marlow_rowing](#)

[Sports, Health & fitness](#)

Share



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New stretch target

If we achieve our base target of £17,000 we will put the additional funds towards the second boat

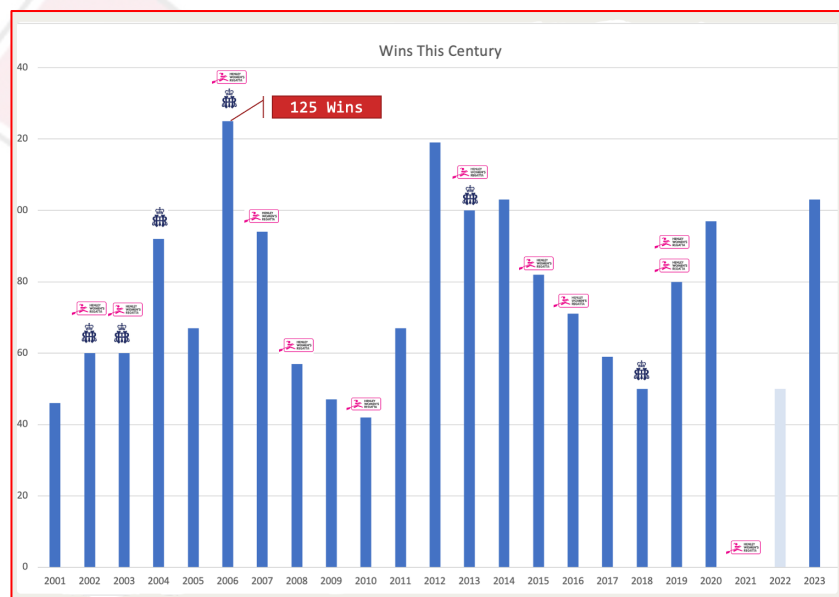
Donate

£20	£40	£60	£100
<input type="text" value="£ 40"/>		Donate	

Many Thanks To All Who Have Helped Make The Season Special

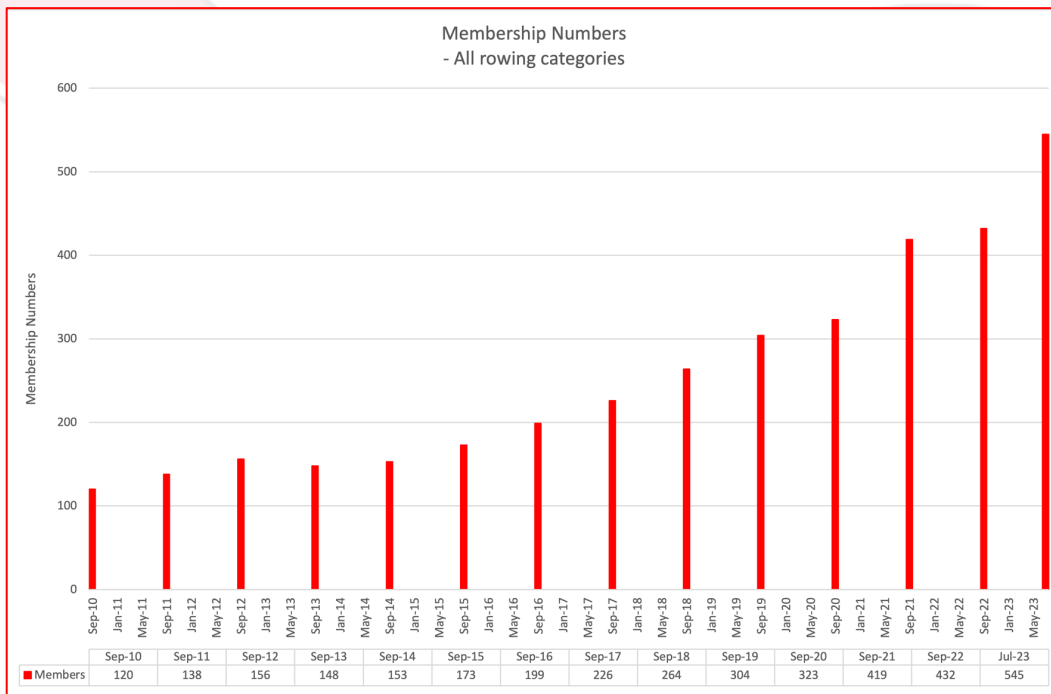
- Once again, we need to stop, draw breath and remember that the majority of what happens at the club, happens because someone stepped forward and volunteered. So on our collective behalf, I would like to thank:
- **Everyone** who stepped forward and volunteered during the year. We had a really great response to the volunteer calls for various clean up days, Marlow Spring, sadly cancelled, and Marlow Town regattas.
- **John Stephenson** who continues to work tirelessly as boatman. Visitors to the club are often impressed by the good condition of our fleet, testament to John's endeavours.
- **Peter Hunt** who has been at the centre of pretty much all the behind-the-scenes action. Has kept our launch fleet, truck, trailers, and building running as well as supporting the regatta committee.
- **Sophie Pain** who has taken over as membership secretary from **David Plaskitt** and proving a skilled and adept operator. We need to thank David for a huge contribution to club, from coaching, through to managing the rebuild and many years as membership secretary. We owe David a huge debt of gratitude.
- **Ella Holloway** who has taken over as racking secretary from **Suzie Moon** and is keeping us all in order. We need to thank Suzie for her thirteen years of service as racking secretary.
- **Jayne Thomas** for her support both as our insurance officer and as squad lead for the Masters Women.
- All our coaches, **Jamie, Sophia, Flora, Richard, Jamie, Lachlan, Emily, Eleanor, Olivia, Freddy, Ed, Ed, Marc, Mike, Amy, Iain, Bruce, Claire** and all the others I should have listed.
- The regatta committee and all who helped make the regatta happen. We collectively pulled off yet another incredible event. Many thanks to our new Regatta Chair, **Graeme Gordon** and committee which included **David Jackson, Jon Drake, Helen Essa, Ian Goodman, Charles Hill, John Kirtland, Julie Lyons, Helen Essa, , Jenny Hargreaves, Stefanie Mendes de Leon, Ruth Naylor, Martha Penny, Chris Renwick, Jeremy Rowe, Melissa Sage, Helen Thompson** and **Christine Weaving**.
- Our **squad leaders** and our coaches who put in some incredible hours at odd times of day and in all weathers.
- **Mike Reed** and **Lai Ching Brindle** who run an incredible back office that keeps the Junior Squad up and running. Mike stepped down during 2023 and his duties have been taken over by **Sophia Heath**.
- **Helen Thompson** for all she continues to do for our outstanding Learn to Row programme along with **Mike Landers** and his coaching team of **Emma Pressling, Tamsin Vernon, Toby Strode** and **Mike Jones**, who are doing an exceptional job of extending our reach. This team is complemented by **Lisa Knill** and the Senior Development squad. Both the improvers and Dev squad are a key part of our drive to engage more adults in rowing.
- This year's committee, Treasurer; **David Wells**, Captain; **Jenny Hargreaves**, Secretary; **Helen Chadley**, Welfare Officer; **Julie Lyons**, Deputy Chair, **Matt Smith**, Deputy Treasurer; **Alix French Brown** and **Mel Shelton**, Deputy Captain; **Alex Bavage**, Deputy Secretary; **Martha Penny**, Safety Officer, **Andrew Garnett** and **Jim Cotter** and Bar Secretary; **Ras Tiwana**. Matt, Alix, Alex, Andrew and Ras are all standing down, many thanks for your contribution.

Overall Club Performance and the Performance Squads



- **Overall**, the club's total number of wins continues to improve year on year. In the 2023 Almanac we were 5th nationally and 2nd locally. This puts us on track for our 'Best in Britain' goal.
- **Junior squad** continues to grow, predominantly driven by our JLTR 'grow your own' programme and the pathway from JDS to J18s. We have now got to the point where junior subscriptions and JLTR income more covers the costs of coaching. Some strong performances from the squad during the year with 7 medal positions at NSR and promising performances at HWR and HRR. Five squad members have qualified for National honours. The diaspora has done well with two alumni racing as Marlow in the GB U23 eight at HRR and one in the GB Senior W4- that won the Town Challenge Cup and one in the GB Senior 8 in the Grand Challenge cup.
- **Senior Squad**. New coaches Jamie Axon and Lachlan Chapman have started well. Senior numbers have increased and new members from the development squad generally landed well and are thriving. Senior Women's performances were generally good with four crews qualifying for HWR, one progressing to the semi-final. Senior Men's performances were strong with a great lead in to HRR in the Dorney regattas with a number of high placed A final results. We qualified crews in the Britannia, Wyfold and Thames cups giving Thames their closest race in the Britannia. Two of the SM have been selected for the Home Internationals. The senior squads remain an investment area as we pursue growth and wins at HWR and HRR.
- **Young Veterans**. Again, we welcomed a new coach, Eleanor Brinkhoff at the start of 2023. The YV Women's group started from scratch and has made a great start. Performances have beaten last season with the combined squad clocking five National Masters wins and two HMR wins

Growth and Pathways



Throughout the club we can see growth in nearly every squad driven by a number of factors:

- Recruitment and attraction of experienced rowers
- Retention of our juniors as they become seniors
- ALTR filling the Improvers and Senior development squads and then migrating to Seniors, Recreational and Masters squads. The ALTR retention rates are amongst the best in the UK.
- JLTR filling younger age groups who then progress
- Para LTR

All of the above align heavily with our **'Lifelong Love of Rowing'** goal

We can see a sustained compound annual growth in excess of 10% annually.

We now have two squads (excluding juniors) where numbers have grown beyond 40 members which is putting pressure on allocations of gym time and boats.

Equally, when we compete, it has become the norm to need to travel on more than one trailer and on an increasing number of weekends, we need three trailers.

At peak times, the upper stretch is 'full'.

Given our mission to grow the sport, all the above feeds the need to:

- Increase our fundraising to match and exceed the pre-covid levels
- Seek a second site below the lock

Fundraising and Investment

Year	Items Purchased	Fundraising / Spend
2018-2019	JW 4x/-	£ 123,546.0
	M 4x/-	
	W 4x/-	
	W 8+	
	W 4+	
2019-2020	JW 8+	£ 51,860.0
	M 4+	
	BikeErg – donation	
	J 2x/- - donation	
	Security system	
2020 - 2021	Five ergos	£ 49,932.0
	SW 4-	
	JM 4x+	
2021 -2022	Bookable sculls – 20 sets	£ 51,219.0
	Women's 4x-	
	Women / Junior 8x+/8+	
2022 -2023	BikeErgs x 4	£ 45,193.0
	Sweeps - SM	
	Sweeps - SW	
	Refurbish MW Blades	
	Junior 4x+	
	Trailer 3	
	Junior 2x	£ 100,384
	Womens 4x/-	
	JW 4x-	
	SM 8+	
	Ergo Replacement	
	Junior Blade refurb	

- This has been one of our most challenging years financially with a range of inflationary pressures that total around £50,000, equivalent to 20% of our income. This was further exacerbated by the need to cancel Marlow Spring regatta due to the wet spring. The club is able to balance the books but has no surplus to direct towards capital spends beyond a catch-up on MRCT bar income.
- There have been some good positive moves on fundraising with a number of corporate and filming activities at the club managed by John Kirtland who is doing an outstanding developing a set of potential long term fundraising activities.
- We have also been the beneficiary of the Junior Fund who purchased three BikeErgs and to a junior parent who gave the fourth.
- Our most recent fundraising activities have centred around grant aided projects where we have launched our first Crowdfunder and successfully landed a Sport England grant. Many thanks again to John Kirtland for his support on the CrowdFunder and to all who have donated to date, there have been some incredible acts of generosity from which, we hope, generations of juniors will benefit.
- One of our key areas of focus for 2023-2024 season will be increasing our fundraising back to pre-pandemic levels and beyond.

Creating An Impact & Changing a Community

We believe that: "a good coach can change a game, a great one can change a life and great club can change a community."

Some highlights of our impact on the local community:

- We have grown the club and doubled our membership over the last ten years and have an ambition to do the same again. All in support of our 'rowing for all' mission
- We teach around 120 juniors to row each year and are close to doubling the size of our junior squad as a consequence.
- We teach around 150 adults to row each year and have an exceptional retention rate
- We have a large para and adaptive squad, one of the largest in the world and are pioneering ways for more athletes to find ways of participating in sport
- We have large and vibrant junior squad with a commitment to develop any athlete who engages with the programme to be the best rower they can be.
- Many of our alumni are on sporting scholarships in tertiary education and we have two former juniors competing as part of the GB National Squad
- We have a growing indoor rowing, GoRow group who enjoy the chance for regular exercise and social interaction
- We develop the skills of our members, teach first aid, launch driving and coaching skills to potential rowing coaches.
- We run two regattas a year, each one gives around 1000 competitors the chance to show up and race.

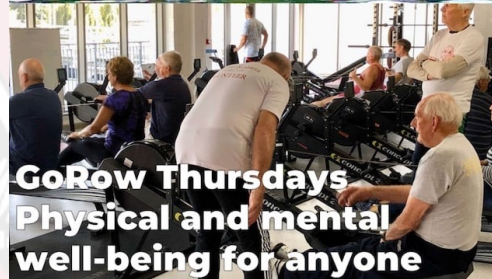
Learn to Row courses
120 Juniors each year



Learn to Scull courses
150 adults every year



GoRow Thursdays
Physical and mental well-being for anyone



Pioneering para and adaptive rowing group



No activity
No proof
Bad practice



Proactive
Evidence
Best practice

Membership	Community Participation	Diversity/ Inclusivity	Socio economic	Health & Wellbeing	Sustainability	Skills Development
Learn to Row	●	●	●	●	●	●
Juniors	●	●	●	●	●	●
Seniors	●	●	●	●	●	●
Masters	●	●	●	●	●	●
Para/Adaptive	●	●	●	●	●	●
Independent	●	●	●	●	●	○
Explorer	●	●	●	●	●	●
Recreational	●	●	●	●	●	●
GoRow	●	●	●	●	●	●