



WEYBRIDGE ROWING CLUB

5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

2015 - 2020

Version No: 1.6 - Final
Date: March 2015
Author: Committee

CONTENTS

1	SUMMARY	3
2	INTRODUCTION Purpose Scope	3
3	MISSION STATEMENT	3
4	ANALYSIS AND AIMS 2015/20 Analysis Aims	4
5	BACKGROUND Membership Coaches Activities Fleet Race Wins	5
6	REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN AIMS 2009/14	9
7	ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS	11

1 Summary

By any measure that is applied whether it's the condition of the fleet, race wins, active membership participation or the condition of the club infrastructure itself, we believe we can confidently say that Weybridge Rowing Club has continued to raise its profile within the rowing community over the last 5 years. Herein we've reviewed the progress made against the aims of the 2009/14 Development Plan which we believe supports this assertion.

This is not to say that we are completely satisfied with our achievements. We have the day to day challenges of running the club in an aging building, and our finances are continually stretched as we try to meet the needs of the members. Expenditure has to be prioritised, and we did not meet all the aims we set ourselves.

However, the club now faces one of the biggest decisions of its history, and that is whether or not to relocate to a new site that has been identified just along the river. This will involve needing to raise the funding necessary to support this move and managing the project and all the various stakeholders. The alternative is to remain on the current site and redevelop the existing facility to ensure it meets the needs of the Club into the future.

This Strategic Plan therefore places the aims of continuing to run the Club successfully in a financially prudent manner within a budget, and deciding upon the relocation to the new site or redevelopment of the existing one as the first two aims of the next 5 year period. Supplementary aims that identify the need to improve the relationship with Weyfarers, raise funds for the club and positioning the club to run rowing sessions with local schools during periods of low utilisation have also been identified and included within the 2015/20 Plan.

2 Introduction

Purpose

This document aims to provide the strategic aims that will guide decisions on the way the Club is developed over the next five years from 2015 to 2020.

Scope

In order to achieve a baseline from which to build these aims, the previous Development Plan, 2009 to 2014, has been reviewed and the statistics provided in that Plan are compared with those available for the year 2014. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis has then been compiled in order to inform a set of development aims for the next five years. These aims should provide guidance to assist with determining the areas in which effort and funding should be focused over this period.

3 Mission Statement

Weybridge Rowing Club is a sports club that seeks to encourage competition and to provide comprehensive rowing facilities that enables individuals of all ages and abilities to achieve their potential at whatever level of the sport they choose in a safe and secure environment. The Club aims to support this activity through training and qualifying sufficient numbers of coaches, and by maintaining a fleet of boats and blades to an appropriate standard commensurate with the ambitions of the participant.

4 Analysis and Aims 2015/20

Analysis

The profile of the Club in rowing circles is probably higher than its membership might indicate; this is achieved through the continued success of the Weybridge Silver Sculls, the revived Weybridge Winter Head and Walton & Weybridge Regatta, the inaugural Community Regatta which secured sponsorship from British Rowing at board level, through having four active umpires and through its support and senior representation at British Rowing and its recent high profile junior successes at national events.

The weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis need to be tackled and strengths and opportunities exploited if the club is to continue to thrive.

Aims

This Plan does not aim to provide specific competition targets for sections of the Club as over a five-year period it is inevitable that the membership will change and aspirations will need to be tailored accordingly. It does, however, provide the direction that the Club shall follow in order to meet its mission statement.

1. To be good at what we do as a rowing club so as to attract new members and retain current members who enjoy competitive rowing, achieved by;
 - Providing appropriate coaching to meet the aspirations of all competitive members equally regardless of the level they are aspiring to.
 - Introducing beginners, both junior and adult, to the sport by running courses at the Club.
 - Ensuring beginners are guided safely and correctly through the introductory stages of the sport.
 - Meeting the aspirations of all members for enjoyment, improvement and competition.
 - Managing the club effectively and in a financially prudent way to ensure we operate within a budget, and secure funds where needed to support capital purchases through grants, fund raising and sponsorship.
 - Continually reviewing the boat fleet via a rolling programme to ensure it provides competitive boats to support the needs of all members of the Club.
 - Undertaking reasonable repairs to the current facility
 - Continuing to run the Weybridge Silver Sculls and the Weybridge Winter Head annually and to support the Walton & Weybridge Regatta.
 - Maintaining a lively, inclusive and welcoming club atmosphere where members and their families contribute willingly to support its aims.
 - Seeking to provide a mechanism which allows members to be supported if they wish to undertake recognised BR coaching qualifications.
2. To have a time-bound plan to relocate to new premises by June 2019 with milestones that we can achieve and afford, achieved by;
 - Determining beyond doubt during 2015 whether the club can move to the new Elmbridge site downstream of Shepperton weir and allow the membership to vote on the proposal.
 - Developing and resourcing a plan to move by 2019, if supported by the membership, and then delivering the plan on time to a price we can afford.
 - Alternatively, if relocation is not feasible or accepted by the majority of the membership, then a plan to refurbish the existing Clubhouse and facilities will be drafted, agreed and executed.
3. To explore ways to further strengthen the relationship with Weyfarers Rowing Club thus ensuring the two clubs clearly differentiate themselves (WRC for racing, WEF for recreational), whilst allowing those WEF members who wish to race occasionally the opportunity to compete under Weybridge colours.
4. To run the Community Regatta, or other such high profile activities, as primary regular fundraising events to support our Club, and build relationships and support within the local business community.
5. To develop indoor and outdoor rowing sessions with local schools, with the aim of increasing participation in rowing during the day when our facilities are under-used.

5 Background

The 2009/14 Development Plan summarised the membership, the numbers and levels of coaches, activities, equipment and wins. These tables have been updated in order to show a direct comparison with the situation as it pertained in December 2014 with that of the start of year 2009. Membership numbers are taken from June 2009 and June 2014.

Membership

Category	Age	Male	Female
Non-rowing	Any	18 (37)	3 (3)
Junior	J13 and under	0 (1)	0 (0)
	J14-J15	14 (18)	13 (13)
	J16-J18	17 (17)	15 (12)
Student	19-23	7 (1)	4 (2)
Senior (19-26)		5 (*38)	2 (*19)
Masters A – B		3	11
Masters C – D		12	13
Masters E – F		9	7
Masters G+		19	0
Total		104 (112)	68 (49)

Figures in brackets are from the 2009/14 Development Plan.

Comments:

- The Figures marked (*) include Senior and Masters, in previous years all seniors / masters were included in a single figure, since masters rowing is such a large portion of the membership the ages have now been split into the different masters categories to provide additional insight.
- Figures as at June, members ages are the rowing age as at 1st January during the relevant year.
- Overall membership numbers have seen a slight increase between the two benchmark points (161 in 2009 and 172 in 2014 (+7%)), within this the club has seen a reduction in male members of 8 (-7%) and an increase in female members of 19 (+39%).
- The male:female ratio has moved from 70:30 in 2009 to 60:40 in 2014, and the interest from both junior and senior women in taking up rowing continues to outstrip applications from men, which is a trend seen at Weybridge and other rowing clubs.
- The Committee believes the current club location and infrastructure will support a maximum active membership of 200.

Coaches (active)

Qualification	2009	2014
Silver / Level 4	0	0
Bronze / Level 3	3	3
IA / Level 2	10	6
Unqualified	2	5

Comments:

- We have one paid professional coach who is the Junior Head Coach and runs the water and land based training sessions for the junior performance group, and oversees the other junior groups.
- Volunteer coaches run the remainder of the junior section, taking guidance from the Head Coach.
- Various coaching has been available to the seniors for much of 2014, but as at the end of 2014 the senior section of the club does not have a Head Coach in place.
- A paid coach provides coaching on Friday early morning, and regularly on Sunday mornings and Monday evenings, The Friday sessions are open to intermediate and experienced scullers
- We currently have two J18 juniors working towards coaching qualifications who are coaching seniors on Saturday mornings.
- In previous years the club has benefited from a Henley Stewards Coach, but this option is no longer available to us as we have had our allocation of HSCs and the club is deemed to have gained sufficient scale and stature to stand alone.

Activities

(Winter – September to December)

Day	Activity	Average attendance
Monday	Weight-lifting / ergos	(8) 10 / 17
Tuesday	Ergos / rowing	(16) 0 / 21
Wednesday	Juniors Off / Seniors ergos	(10) (inc.. non- members) 14 / 0
Thursday	Ergos/ rowing	(16) 0 / 38
Friday	Junior weights	0 / 20
Saturday	Rowing	(40) 36 / 51
Sunday	Rowing	(40) 30 / 33

Figures in brackets are from the 2009/14 Development Plan.
First figure is seniors,/ second juniors.

(Summer – May to July)

Day	Activity	Average attendance
Monday	Rowing / ergos	15 / 17
Tuesday	Ergos / rowing	0 / 21
Wednesday	Juniors Off / Seniors rowing	15 / 0
Thursday	Ergos/ rowing	0 / 38
Friday	Juniors weights	0 / 20
Saturday	Rowing	36 / 51
Sunday	Rowing	30 / 33

First figure is seniors,/ second juniors.

Comments:

- Wednesday is a rest day for juniors throughout the year. Thursdays is a rest day for seniors throughout the year. On Tuesdays and Fridays, seniors train away from the club.
- Weekend rowing flourishes but, with Weyfarers sharing the landing stage, the numbers boating in the summer months can reach over-crowding levels. However, designated boating times introduced in 2012 for all groups have improved matters considerably.
- A direct comparison is only available with the 2009/14 Development Plan for Winter activities, we have added the Summer activities table in this plan to provide additional information.

Fleet

Boats in **blue** have been added to the fleet since the last report; boats in **red** were on the last report but have since been sold or scrapped.

Boat Name	Type	Comments
Get A Wey	8	
Weyward	8	
Take A Wey	8	
Tossed A'Wey	8x/+	
Quickest Wey	8	
Break A Wey	4x/+	
Wey Hey	4x/+	
Carried A Wey	4+	Was Weybridge in 2004, now Weyfarers
Move a Wey	4x	75kg, New Janousek new 2014
Anywey	4x/-/+	75 kg New Wintech, has pod that makes boat coxed or coxless new 2012
Hands A'Wey	4x/+	
All the Wey	4x/-	
One Wey	4-	
Another Wey	4x-	Damaged whilst on trailer on Bulldog Island but will be repaired early 2015.
Always Another Wey	4x	65kg Stampfli bought as replacement for above new 2014
Turn A'Wey	4x	Sold in 2014
Chocks A'Wey	4-	
Thames Wey	4x/+	Owned by C Turnbull. Licensed and maintained by Weybridge
Either Wey	2x/-	Sold 2013
Basil	2x/-	
Cross Weys	2x/-	
Winning Weys	2x/-	Sold 2014
Both Weys	2x/-	
Wey to Go	2x/-	
Milky Wey	2x/-	
Our Wey	2x/-	
This Wey Up	2x/-	
Wey To Do It	2x/-	
Other Wey Up	2x/-	
LightWeyt	2x	
Heavy Weyt	2x/-	85-95kg
Feather Weyt	2x/-	Stampfli 55kg new 2014
Seoul Survivor	2x/-	85kg Donated by Peter Morley in 2014
Stow A Wey	1x	
Tear A Wey	1x	
Teresa	1x	Broke in half in lifting accident, now hanging from Club house ceiling
JT	1x	Owned by J Turnbull; licensed as club boat for club use
Norwegians	1x	Two damaged beyond repair Two in use
Hummingbird	1x	Bought in 2011 from Robert Keynon
Run a'Wey	1x	
Allaway	1x	Donated by Cath Allaway
Doodlebug	1x	
Urging Amy	1x	Donated by Guy Ingram
Cumpper	1x	WEY034 Donated by Mike Cumpper
Curt	1x	Damaged in storm when racks fell over
Grace	1x	Bought in 2014 to replace Curt
Fly Wey't	1x	65kg Bought as replacement for Teresa
Eton Whiffs	1x	Four boats in use by both Weybridge and Weyfarers predominantly on courses
Trimmys	2x+ (2 boats)	
Mondego	1x	Sold 2014

Comments:

- The committee has responded to the demands of its active membership and has continued to expand the fleet.
- More scullers have their own boat and expect racking space to be provided.
- Many Seniors and Junior members have purchased their own blades which are stored in various locations in the boathouse
- Demands on storage space have been met through additional racks being purchased
- Following the clubs decision to not buy performance singles, more members have opted to buy their own and rack them at the club. There are 12 inside racks and 26 outside racks available for rental. Racking offers the club a source of revenue.

Race Wins (Regattas and Heads)

Seniors / Masters

Boat Type	Regattas			Heads		
	Sen / Mas Men	Sen / Mas Women	Sen / Mas Mixed	Sen / Mas Men	Sen / Mas Women	Sen / Mas Mixed
8		0 (1)	2	1	0 (1)	
4+		3		1	1	
4-				1 (1)		
4x+					1	
4x	4	1 (2)	1	1		
2-						
2x	1	3 (5)	(2)		5 (6)	0 (1)
1	5	7		0 (1)	6 (3)	
Total	10 (0)	14 (8)	3 (2)	4 (2)	13 (10)	0 (1)

Figures in brackets are from the 2009/14 Development Plan.

Juniors

Boat Type	Regattas			Heads		
	Junior Boys	Junior Girls	Junior Mixed	Junior Boys	Junior Girls	Junior Mixed
8						
4+					1	
4-						
4x+						
4x	0 (2)	1 (2)		2	2 (1)	
2-					4	
2x	4 (6)	6 (1)	1	2	6 (2)	
1	2 (8)	7		1	2	
Total	6 (16)	14 (3)	1 (0)	5 (0)	15 (3)	0 (0)

Figures in brackets are from the 2009/14 Development Plan.

Comments:

- 2014 was a very successful year for Weybridge, with a total of 85 wins, 37 at Heads and 48 at Regattas.
- Figures for race wins are for the calendar year 2014. Weather conditions in early 2014 were particularly bad, and many head races were cancelled due to flooding.
- The table above shows wins, but there were notable other performances at major events, such as:-
 - second place for the J17 4x at Schools Head of the River.
 - silver medal for Masters E IM3 2x at British Masters' Championships
 - silver medal for Masters G 4+ at British Masters' Championships
 - the masters G 8 were finalists at Henley Masters Regatta
 - new record time of 3:54:40 for W.IM3 2x at Boston Marathon.
 - Layla Wheeldon became the first Weybridge person to win the Bonnie Bird Cup at Silver Sculls
- The 2014 focus for juniors was almost exclusively sculling whereas Senior / Masters wins are more broadly spread between rowing and sculling.
- Senior men, women and junior girls recorded singles wins at regattas in 2014 where there were none in the 2009 racing year.

6 Review of Development Plan 2009/14

1. **Moving to a new site:** progress has been made, and a suitable site has been identified. The proposed site is on land owned by Elmbridge Borough Council and currently occupied by Weybridge Sailing Club and Weybridge Lawn Tennis Club. Many meetings have taken place and initial plans have been drawn up. The Tennis Club appears generally supportive and helpful, but the Sailing club is a little less enthusiastic fearing that they will lose land they currently have access to. Resolution of this remains a key aim for the Committee going forward.
2. **Undertake reasonable repairs to the current facility:** repairs in line with our National Trust lease requirements have continued throughout, including regular work parties organised to tidy the club room, boat house and grounds. Pathways have been added from the gate to the stairs, and to the gents toilets. The gents toilet has been refurbished and of particular note has been the sewage connection to the main sewer pipe, a project that took many years of negotiation to complete.
3. **Investigate grants to assist with funding boat purchases:** the club has been particularly active in this area, and has been successful in securing around £26k of grant funding in the years 2011-14. These funds have been mainly used to enhance the fleet of boats. Flood Relief funding has also been obtained from the Sport England, Surrey and Elmbridge Councils to help repair damage caused by flooding e.g. pontoon replacement,
4. **Coaching to meet the aspirations of competitive members:** after 2 years as a Henley Stewards Coach at Weybridge, Katy Knowles was engaged to continue coaching the juniors from 2011 to 2013 and during the period of the 2009/14 plan achieved notable success with Weybridge juniors representing GB at the Coupe de la Jeunesse, the GB vs. France match, and wins at Henley Womens Regatta at WJ16, qualification to the Fawley Cup at Henley Royal Regatta and records set at the Boston Marathon. Katy moved to a position with GB Rowing, and Mark Calvin was engaged as the new Junior Head Coach in 2013. Mark has continued to focus on the performance juniors but works with the volunteer coaches to oversee the junior membership, so that juniors have the required strength and technique to join his group when they are ready. After 3 years of professional coaching, juniors currently have a realistic expectation that they can qualify for GB junior trials at Weybridge. Senior coaching has not seen the same stability, with various coaches (Rachel Knight, Steve Heywood, Chihiro Calvin) becoming involved for periods of time. It has been clear to members that the standard of rowing improves when a coach is involved, and members have elected to pay an additional supplement for coaching.
5. **Introduce beginners, both junior and adult, to rowing:** both juniors and senior 'Learn to Row' courses have continued throughout, with juniors courses in particular seeing a good rate of 'retention' with many joining the club. Running 'Learn to Row' courses provides a valuable source of income for the Club.
6. **Guide beginners safely and correctly through the introductory stages of the sport:** the Club operates a formal incident reporting system via the BR online system, which is overseen by the Clubs Safety Officer. Safety is a standing agenda item on all Committee meetings, with each incident discussed and lessons learnt applied to continue to improve overall safety. A capsized drill is an integral part of all 'Learn to Row' courses. The club Safety Officer retains a list of all members who have passed their Certificate of Competency, and Certificate of Watermanship. The Certificate of Watermanship allows members to conduct risk assessments of the river condition.
7. **Support and expand juniors and veteran membership to promote high performance:** overall club member numbers in all categories between the two benchmark 2009 and 2014 dates show a slight increase, with 161 members in 2009 and 172 in 2014. For the years 2011-14 we saw a steady increase in juniors staying with the club for more than 2 years. By 2014, over half the juniors had been with the club for more than 3 years, which is a marked increase over 2009. The actual number of juniors has remained reasonably constant from 2011-14 at about the maximum the club can sustain. We have a significant challenge to be able to keep our junior membership at this high level. Senior (adult) membership has also increased but we have been less successful at retaining those new to the sport than with the juniors, due we believe in part to a lack of regular coaching support.

8. **Attract and retain more senior members:** men's and women's senior membership (ages 19-26) has remained the smallest population in the club. This would appear to be an area that most clubs in the area struggle with, as few can offer new senior members the opportunity to quickly integrate into an existing senior squad system.
Juniors and masters women often compete at 'IM' status in heads and regattas which gives the club a degree of representation in these classes. Masters men tend to compete at either novice or their relevant age class (e.g. MasC, MasD etc.).
9. **Form composite crews and explore beneficial arrangements with local clubs:** limited progress has been made in this area, with the focus instead on forming junior and masters crews based on the numbers and members we have. Women's masters crews have been formed with Walbrook, Burway and WLARC with some success, and junior boys have been paired with athletes from schools to participate in GB trials.
10. **Committee to operate to an annual budget of expenditure within income:** fiscal years 2012/13 and 2013/14 both ran to an operational budget but some investment has been made in refreshing a number of older boats, which has meant funds have needed to be withdrawn from the clubs reserves.
11. **Committee to support all sections through a rolling five-year boat procurement plan:** boats have been purchased and the fleet is in good shape. A focus on lighter weight boats has addressed previous years of underspend in this area and met the needs of the increased number of lighter weight / female members. A number of boats that were 20-35 years old have been replaced with higher performance boats allowing our top light weight crews to compete more evenly with the larger clubs and rowing schools.
12. **Run the Weybridge Silver Sculls and Weybridge Winter Head, and support the Walton & Weybridge Regatta:** Silver Sculls has run successfully and continues to attract a good competitive field and make a sizable financial contribution to the club. The Winter Head often succumbs to poor weather in January (flooding, snow) and in recent years has had to be cancelled around 50% of the time. Weybridge members continue to fulfil prominent roles in the Walton & Weybridge Regatta, including the Regatta Chair.
13. **Non-rowing members and parents of juniors to be encouraged to participate in club activities:** junior parents support the club by running the Breakfast Club during the winter months, which is a welcome facility and a good source of income. The profits from the Breakfast Club have been used to buy the gazebos that are used at regattas. In 2014 the club ran its first 'Community Regatta' which was the brainchild of one of the parents and was heavily supported by the parents and members to make this a resounding success. Parents of new members all receive an email from the Club Captain to emphasise that we rely on volunteer help, and to encourage their participation.
14. **Formalise arrangements with Weyfarers Rowing Club:** a memorandum of understanding was agreed in 2010 between WRC and WEF which outlines how the two clubs can share certain boats and equipment, and this continues to operate. Recently WEF members have begun developing their rowing skills in fine boats and a small number have expressed an interest in competing in open events which in the long term could lead to confusion as to the basic roles of the two clubs.

7 Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with sister recreational club (Weyfarers) provides equipment and courses for beginners • Popular junior structure with coaching, assisted by older juniors • Experience of organising rowing events, e.g. Silver Sculls, Weybridge Head, and significant roles within W&W Regatta • Healthy numbers of qualified umpires • Positive and visible image in the community gained via the Nat West Community Regatta and Weybridge \Leisure Live event • Social events provide funds, e.g. Ball, Dinner Dance • Fleet of good condition boats • Strong Masters membership • Strong Junior membership • Structure for juniors and seniors to take them from Learn to Row to their first races. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat storage space: limited undercover storage and many boats stored outside • Poor accessibility: small parking area shared with the public • Poor accessibility: limited opportunity for adaptive rowing • Boating through Shepperton weir stream produces greater restrictions than clubs further downstream on the stretch • Trailers parked on Bull Dogs Island courtesy of owner – difficult access and not possible to use when loaded • Trailer loading requires boats to be manually walked across bridge and along path, which takes time and can cause damage • Club room has to double as social area and fitness training room • Ladies' changing room too small for female membership levels • Too few regular coaches at senior level • Poor sanitation and showering facilities
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve non-rowing members and parents in coaching, organising and social events • Continuing discussions with Elmbridge Council may lead to possibility to relocate • Relocation could tie in with local school seeking to redevelop rowing facilities • Organise, publicise and invest in our Masters squad (male and female) as we have the largest competitive and emerging group on the reach. • Build on links established with local businesses through Community Regatta e.g. team building days • A better integration between Weybridge and Weyfarers such that competitive members come to Weybridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many other clubs in the area, all chasing members • We are hidden away so not seen by passing potential members. Walton RC has redeveloped a new club house and has a more prominent position on the river • Larger clubs can offer high-level coaching and opportunity to row within bigger squads, hence experienced / ambitious rowers defect (e.g. senior members aged 19-30) • NT may enforce large expenditure on refurbishing facilities • NT lease expires in 2019 • Trailer parking on Bulldog island now entering more formalised arrangements including payment to owners • Weyfarers have purchased a number of racing boats and have started competing in open events, thus blurring the lines and threatening the harmonious relationship between the two clubs