

Inverness Rowing Club

Development Plan (2021 - 2026)

Executive Summary

This Development Plan sets the activities that Inverness Rowing Club will undertake to support the growth of the club and the sport of rowing on the Caledonian Canal between Dochgarroch and Muirton.

This plan covers the 5 year period starting from the completion of the new boathouse (assumed to be in 2021) with some preparatory work being delivered in 2020. It will be reviewed and updated each year to take account of the lessons learned during the project delivery and the changing environment in which the club operates.

The focus of this plan is the operational management of the club's activity and its organisational development to support the growth of rowing on the Caledonian Canal. The associated Business Plan sets out how the club expects to build the infrastructure needed to support that planned growth.

Club Vision - "Mission Statement"

Our vision is to provide the opportunity for anyone to experience and enjoy a lifetime of social and personal development through participating in the sport of rowing. This can be through rowing recreationally or to compete at a club, national or international level.

The club currently has approximately 50 active members (out of a total of 75), ranging in age from 12 to 76. Our goal is to increase the use of the facilities by the current membership, grow to 150 active members over the 3 to 5 year period starting in 2021 and aim for 200 active members by the end of the 2020s.

We will continue to work with Scottish Rowing to help develop the sport of rowing in Scotland. Specifically, IRC will follow the Scottish Rowing pathway for both club and athlete development. Furthermore, the club will support the development of the Caledonian Canal as a prime location for Scottish Rowing's Youth Development Project and for training camps by visiting clubs.

IRC will also support the development of separate RAF/UHI and schools clubs if interest in the sport of rowing in the Inverness area grows at a rate where creation of such separate clubs becomes a realistic option.

Club History and Highlights

- Founded March 1988
- Approximately 50 active members (ages 12 to 76)
- Two World Champions and one Olympian
- World Masters Champions
- British Junior and Masters Champions
- Many Scottish Champions

- Run largest and most successful “Head” Races in Scotland in November and February each year
 - 500 boats racing over 4.5km from Dochgarroch to Inverness over 4 divisions and 2 days
 - 600+ visitors for these weekends
- Strong junior squad developed over past 10 years
 - One athlete selected to compete in GB Junior trials in 2017/18
 - Two athletes winning for Scotland at the Home International Regatta in 2018
 - One athlete winning for Scotland (as Captain of the Junior Women’s team) at the Home International Regatta in 2019
 - Many others using their experience with the club as springboard to take responsibility for development of their University clubs
- Majority of members learnt to row at the club which provides a unique opportunity to improve the health & wellbeing of people in the Inverness & Highland community.

SWOT

The table below has been compiled from a series of workshops and surveys conducted over the past 5 years:-

- Club development forum - Spring 2014
- Club membership survey - Summer 2016
- Scottish Rowing organised “mindset” and follow up workshops - Winter 2018
- Club membership surveys - Spring and Summer 2019
- Board review - Summer 2019

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Best rowing water in Scotland” • Well maintained boat fleet • Value for money membership fee • Organisers of the two major long distance events in the Scottish Rowing Calendar • Membership enthusiasm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New Level 1 coaches ○ Support for regatta weekends • Have produced several high performance athletes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ University Club Captains ○ University Club Coaches ○ Represented Scotland at HIR ○ Represented UK at World Championships and Olympics • Sustained growth over 30 years • Financially strong • Waiting list (word of mouth) • Coaching of Juniors • Only fine boat rowing club in the North of Scotland, closest other clubs are in Aberdeen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor facilities (not equipment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No heating / lighting ○ Boat shed not boathouse ○ Land training not possible ○ Insufficient capacity to deliver growth in membership even though there is strong demand • No social hub to develop club culture • No common club vision • Overly reliant on key individuals • Undocumented processes & procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New member induction ○ Member competence assessment ○ Boat usage • Compete as individuals not as a club <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fragmented junior/male/female sections • Confused squad culture • Retention rate (new members) • Availability of coaching for all members • “Dumbbell” membership age profile • Too many (uncontrolled) social media and web based communications channels • Volunteer fatigue

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council’s West Link Project has delayed previous plans which are no longer affordable
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Link project - contractor can provide significant assistance with groundworks • Club and invitational events • Scottish Rowing’s youth development project provides strong community link to encourage juniors and their parents to take up the sport • Recreational / less competitive rowing • Weekday rowing • Release of golf course land adjacent to club • Sports hub • Scottish Rowing youth development project • Corporate team building - fundraising opportunity • New developments nearby will put the rowing club in “sight” to more people - will bring interest and enquiries • Release of golf course land allows additional growth by formation of separate clubs/sections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UHI ○ Armed Forces ○ Schools 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in external funding to aid purchase of new equipment • Changing safety requirements • Competition with other sports • Ageing membership profile • Additional charges levied by council / Scottish Canals (e.g. water use / car parking) • Failure to deliver boathouse project may damage club morale and cost us members • West Link project timescale may not match funding / planning / land transfer timescales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Time is of the essence” to deliver the boathouse project by end 2020 • Other community projects may wish to claim the golf course land that we wish to build on • Regulatory change (e.g. child protection)

Key Actions

Communications / Advertising

Name	Owner ¹	Timescale	Detail	Measure of success
Internet Presence		Q2 2020	Define club's approach to effective use of internet and social media, segmenting according to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External communications (e.g. regatta organisation, new member advertising, sharing club successes) • "Official" club communications • Other communication between club members (note GDPR and PVG compliance) 	Agreed plan
		Q4 2020	Move to single internet domain name & website / facebook page etc. Ensure club not individual members have ownership of these official sites.	New sites / pages set up
Waiting List		Q3 2020	Define target balance in membership numbers using categories of a) Age and b) Recreational/performance aspirations	Membership growth plan
			Determine preferred approach to seek new members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passive approach allows steady/manageable growth from current waiting list • active approach (advertising) may be appropriate in later years 	Waiting list not to exceed 10 people at any point in time from 2022 onwards
Ex Member recruitment		Q2 2021	Email / social media campaign to let ex-members know that new facilities are available and encourage them to come back now that a revised recreational/squad culture may be more attractive for them.	10 lapsed members re-joining the club
School Liaison		2021/2024	Provide support required by Scottish Rowing for their schools development officer project	Ongoing liaison
		2024+	Look to make this project permanent and an IRC project from 2024 onwards	Funding in place to continue project after 2024

¹ This column will be completed in 2020 with the name/role of the person responsible for each action so everyone in the club knows who is co-ordinating its completion.

Annual Membership Drive		2022 onwards	Annual marketing campaign (local press, social media) inviting people to come for a taster session Annual frequency is an assumption that needs to be validated as a result of the Induction and Retention workstream	75% capacity achieved for each new come & try session
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Achieving Growth - "One Club Culture"

Name	Owner	Timescale	Detail	Measure of success
Come and Try		Q3 2020	Review approach to get new members started in the sport and the pathways to become self sufficient	Club induction plan for new members Waiting list not to exceed 10 people at any point in time from 2022 onwards
Company Rowing		Q2/3 2021	Trial a company rowing course/regatta that has proved to be successful in other areas (e.g. Aberdeen) and develop plan to make it annual event	First company rowing event Lessons learnt to ensure future success of project
Club Recruitment		Q4 2021 Q2/3 each year	Based on experience gained from Come & Try and Company Rowing, determine most effective way to recruit and retain new members Hold annual recruitment sessions in line with this process	Club recruitment plan 40% renewal rate of new members after their first year
One Club Culture		Q2 2020	Series of workshops to define agreed club culture and values - common standard of best practice including good and unhelpful behaviours	Published set of behavioural standards agreed by club members

Squad Structure		2020	<p>Define appropriate segmentation of members (e.g. Junior/Senior, Recreational/competitive/performance) to ensure that everyone has a “home” within the club.</p> <p>Align club outing times according to this segmentation and define commitment required by individuals who wish to move from Recreational -> competitive -> performance</p>	<p>Club forum to establish common understanding</p> <p>Revised outing times established</p>
“Club first” Racing Mentality		2020	<p>Consult with other successful Scottish Rowing clubs (e.g. Stirling / St Andrew) to determine what works elsewhere and develop best practice for IRC in to competition and crew formation - a “club first” racing methodology would seem to be a good strategy to adopt.</p> <p>Create an annual list of regattas to support (including some aspirational/performance events that the club has not attended regularly, e.g. Henley) and training expectations</p> <p>Aspire to win the club title at the Championship of the Dee / be in Top 5 for Head of the Calendonian Canal</p>	<p>Good practice guide established</p> <p>List created in September each year and training plan circulated to all members</p> <p>Annual improvement in position in these annual competitions that reward participation and performance</p>
Land Training		Q1 2021 onwards	<p>Arrange weekly strength and conditioning sessions open to all members</p> <p>Competitive squads to aim for 1 or 2 sessions per week during the winter (depending on performance aspirations)</p>	<p>Sessions set out on club calendar and attended regularly by 10 members or more</p> <p>Squad sessions on club calendar</p>
Social events		2021 onwards	<p>Annual Christmas social event</p> <p>Annual Boat Naming Ceremony</p> <p>Monthly “Fun” rowing events during the summer (e.g. skills demonstration, scratch regatta) with BBQ to increase social activity engagement and strengthen club culture.</p>	<p>Events held</p>

Club racing events		2020 onwards	<p>First Saturday afternoon in the month, for example. Mixture of scratch crews and competitive crews training for events - note with sensible handicapping different boat classes and gender/age categories can race each other.</p> <p>Consider quarterly invitational event with other regionally based clubs.</p>	Events held
Membership Engagement		2020 onwards	<p>Members photo board</p> <p>Monthly club forum (as agreed at AGM) as main organisational management meeting to give everyone the opportunity to find somewhere where they can use / develop their skills & ensure there is common club agenda.</p>	<p>Q1 2020</p> <p>Meetings held</p> <p>ToR for specific projects emerging</p>

Processes / Procedures / Governance

Name	Owner	Timescale	Detail	Measure of success
IT		2020	<p>The club has developed several tools (mailing lists, common outing calendar, on line boat booking) that will be needed to improve communication and reduce conflict over boat usage as membership numbers increase.</p> <p>Usage of these is inconsistent and the club should start to encourage / enforce their use (following a review of the best way to make use of the technology) through better communication. New members should be encouraged to use them from the start as they would reduce the administrative burden of organising Come & Try sessions / Learn2Row courses</p>	<p>Club members regularly advise when they are going to attend club sessions</p> <p>Club members start to advise their ad hoc outings on the members website</p>
Club Rules		2021 2023 2025	Review the club's rules and procedures documents (i.e. Carla's 2016 work) to reflect changes needed because of additional membership numbers and changing regulatory environment- suggest this is done every 2 years	Updated versions published and agreed with membership

Member competency		2020	<p>Aligned to the British Rowing 4 level framework, create club's assessment framework to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide an objective assessment of each member's competency in each boat type and • clear development routes to improve 	<p>Simple assessment table produced</p> <p>Members assessed against this framework and members develop training plans to move up through the levels (should they wish to do so)</p>
Boat usage		2020	<p>Based on membership competency and in collaboration with the membership, set out clear guidelines on boat usage to remove "Captain's discretion" from the equation. Communicate this effectively to members.</p>	Revised list of boat usage guidelines
		Q3 2021+	To be updated annually	
Regulatory compliance		Ongoing	<p>Work with Scottish Rowing to implement PVG rules etc.</p> <p>Note lead should be Scottish Rowing in most cases</p>	As needed / directed by Scottish Rowing