

Henley Rowing Club

Three Year Plan

Period Ending 31st August 2005

1 September 2002

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Henley Rowing Club Three Year Plan Period Ending 31st August 2005

1 –Summary

1.1 Achievements

Over recent years the Club has seen a continual growth in its active membership and has been successful at all levels of competition in particular Junior where it is now considered to be a centre of excellence. It is one of the largest and most successful Clubs in the country. The challenge it now faces is to improve on this and to develop rowing at a senior level in a financially secure way. The purpose of this plan is to set out the Committee's proposals for the next three years in order that the membership will understand the approach taken and support the proposed strategy.

1.2 Objectives

As described in this plan, the Club has set its aim to be recognised as one of the premier competitive clubs in the UK. In order to achieve this aim the Club will be focussing on the following objectives:

- 1) To win a medal at Henley Royal Regatta and a senior medal at Henley Women's Regatta.
- 2) To develop a coaching structure which supports the Club in achieving its rowing objectives, identifies and develops talent within the Club and attracts new members to the Club.
- 3) To implement a replacement policy for its fleet of boats.
- 4) To obtain sufficient income to achieve the Club's rowing objectives.
- 5) To develop the clubhouse to provide excellent dedicated land training facilities.

These objectives are extremely challenging but not unachievable. Achieving these objectives will make Henley Rowing Club a stimulating and exciting place to be.

2 -Rowing Activities

2.1 The Present

Our website proclaims Henley Rowing Club to be open to all regardless of sex age or ability. Recent changes in legislation have set out a number of reliefs for Community Amateur Sports Clubs with open membership. Given the Club's effectively open policy on membership, we will be investigating what changes might be required to our constitution to benefit from the reliefs.

2.2 Rowing objectives

The committee see the key objective of the Club to become one of the premier competitive rowing clubs in the UK with men's and women's squads competing at all levels of the sport up to senior international level. As part of achieving this objective the Club should in the shorter term set as it's objective to win a medal at both Henley Royal Regatta and a senior medal at Women's Henley Regatta. Clearly this objective is not easily achieved, there is much competition for athletic talent in the local area and the financial resources required to fund such success are not insignificant.

Other interim objectives should be set eg positions achieved in the Fours and Eights Head Races on the Tideway, targets for wins at specific multi-lane regattas, in order to monitor progress towards our key rowing objectives.

The current levels of success at HRC should not be underestimated and this plan seeks build on the current achievement levels.

2.3 The Future

A club such as Henley seeks to be all things to all men (and women). In general terms this is the right policy to ensure a steady membership and continued financial viability. However, within a club which is guided by this ethos it is right to provide the necessary facilities, so that those with ability who wish to commit themselves to a competitive career in the sport can realise their full potential. Indeed it should be made clear to all those who join the club that the principle reason for its existence is to compete.

To achieve this aim it is necessary to consider the future organisation of the Club under the following headings :

- Structure
- Coaching
- Equipment
- Competitor Support

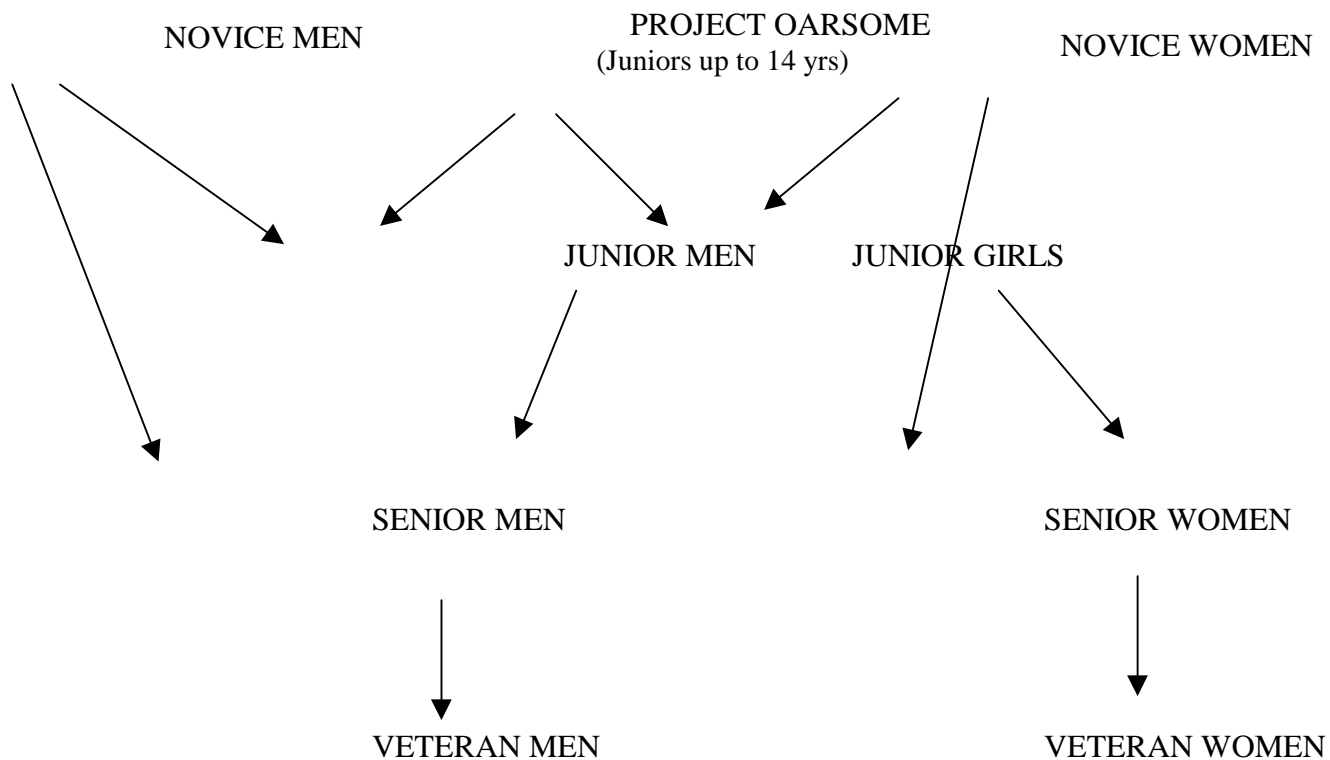
2.3.1 Structure

At least in the first instance, it is unrealistic to expect ready-made top class rowers to simply turn up on our doorstep. A structure has to be set up that enables the Club to develop its own talent but also to progress its athletes through the sport.

It has proven very difficult to attract inexperienced athletes at anything above junior level to the club in recent years, this being mainly due to lifestyle changes and the cost of living in the immediate area. Therefore HRC should maintain its strong junior rowing squads and try to convince as many as possible to return to the club post education or to take gap years in order to row as seniors prior to University.

It is clear that at the present time the real strength in British Senior rowing lies either in the national squads where talent is being identified earlier and earlier, or in the Universities. The club should therefore be pro-active in promoting the ARA's talent identification schemes and in forging links with Universities.

The model detailed below provides the overriding structure for Henley Rowing Club.



Project Oarsome

The Club committed itself to Project Oarsome in 1999. The scheme is now up and running and it is hoped that it will provide the basis for continuing success at the club. During the initial phases of the programme we have encountered some difficulties which must be overcome in

order for the scheme to progress and provide HRC with athletes capable of progression to higher levels within the club. The Club should seek to take on additional schools and running talent search competitions in order to bolster both the number and quality of athletes joining the scheme.

It is a matter of priority to find some additional schools and to run a scheme within these schools to attract their best athletes to the sport. It will be necessary to enlist the help of the ARA, and to ensure that the schools are ready to commit their own resources to the scheme.

Junior Women

Within the last few years Junior Women have been the most successful group within the club, winning gold medals at Women's Henley, the National Championships and with individuals representing national teams. It is essential that this area of the club remains strong and the club will take adequate measures to ensure that coaching levels will be sufficient to cater for the needs of an increased level of membership.

Junior Men

The current crop of junior men has also been very successful however they will leave the club for further education in 2003 unless they take a gap year in order to row. We must develop new talent behind them through Project Oarsome in the longer term, as well as implementing some shorter term measures to attract new members to the club.

Novice Women

In recent years the club has attracted a number of women to the club eager to learn to row, unfortunately we have not received the same enthusiasm when searching for a coach and this area has not developed sufficiently. If the Senior women's group is to be successful then this section of the club needs to be strengthened and a coach needs to be found for the year commencing 2002/3.

Senior Women

In 2001 a senior women's group was established with athletes previously in the women's junior section and a few individuals who were previously without coaching at the club. It is hoped that this group with some proven international standard Juniors will achieve sufficient success to attract other oarswomen to the club.

Novice Men

From time to time, the club attracts groups of novice men wanting to learn to row. We have had some limited success in developing these individuals and integrating them into the senior men's squad but this is another area of the club where strengthening of the coaching structure is required, although this is seen as less of a priority at this time.

Senior Men

The introduction of a paid coach in 2001/2002 paid gave the club a much better position at the Head of the River in March 2002. The 1st crew finished 39th – a significant improvement on

recent years. In order for Henley Rowing Club to gain the recognition it deserves it is essential that we continue to progress the Senior Men's group to the level necessary to win an event at Henley Royal Regatta.

Winning a medal at this level is as difficult as ever and if it is to be achieved it requires commitment and dedication across the club from the committee, to coaches, to the crews themselves and their supporters.

Veteran Rowing

There is an increasing demand for facilities for competitive veteran rowing. The Club has a good record of success in veteran rowing and this section will continue to be supported. It is hoped that some of these rowing veterans will assist in providing coaching for other sections of the Club.

Recreational Rowing

In recent years the Club has seen an influx of recreational rowers (those who row only for fun and fitness with no ambition to compete).

The Club has been happy to encourage this trend, but this should not be to the detriment of competitive rowing. The Club will provide facilities to all rowing members and will do so by maintaining a fleet of good quality boats including boats designated for recreational rowers, although it may not be possible to provide top class racing boats to recreational rowers. When allocating boats it will be necessary to explain to the recreational rowers the resources available to them.

2.3.2 Coaching

A system of good club wide coaching is an essential ingredient for the continued development of the Club's competitive rowing. Whilst coaching has historically been conducted at the club by volunteers and on occasions by paid coaches for limited periods, it is envisaged that the next logical step may be the appointment of a professional Director of Rowing. It will be necessary for the Club to define the role of this individual but clearly the candidates will need to have recognised ability within the sport, be able to demonstrate excellent organisational and motivational abilities and be able to attract athletes to the club. Volunteer coaches will be required to provide the bulk of the coaching and the club should encourage and assist these individuals wherever possible.

The appointment of a Director of Rowing would almost certainly result in change in the captain's role at the club, and an examination of the constitution and a need for forward financial planning would be necessary.

The Club may also actively encourage the development of rowing skills by the following means:

- i) By holding coaching clinics within the Club where the more experienced and successful Club coaches pass on information on coaching and training methods to the less experienced.
- ii) By inviting guest coaches of National or International repute to give talks at the Club.
- iii) By encouraging and sponsoring selected individuals to obtain ARA Instructors and higher coaching awards, subject to a commitment to coach at the Club.

2.3.3 Equipment

Good equipment planning is essential to the future success at the club. Historically the club has tended to purchase equipment as and when needed and then keep it until its value has reduced to zero. Despite significant expenditure on maintenance, this has led to the club having to use some very old and outdated equipment or to have to spend some substantial amounts on replacing a number of old boats.

Consequently a system of equipment management should be implemented such that boats can be replaced before they become fully depreciated.

The clubs ability to cater for the land training requirements of all its athletes is under some strain due to the size of the room provided and the need to use the room for other activities. The proposed extension to the clubhouse, discussed later in this plan, is key to providing adequate land training facilities.

2.3.4 Competitor Support

As the Club becomes more successful in all sections, more and more athletes will be involved in residential training camps and international selection. This involves considerable expense to both athletes and coaches. Where possible the club should provide financial assistance with these costs.

Implementation

The above plan is designed to provide a foundation for the future success of all competitive sections of the Club.

Its success depends upon the willingness of individuals to subject themselves to a structured programme of training, crew selection and competition.

3 Premises

3.1 Introduction

The current premises were erected in 1986, and extended in 1996 as a second phase of development. The Club is now ready to advance to a third phase of development of the boathouse with much needed additional land training facilities and improved and extended changing facilities. There will also be some more routine maintenance required to the boathouse during the plan period.

3.2 Development of the boathouse

It is proposed that there will be a two storey extension on the back of the original section of the clubhouse to provide a dedicated ergometer room, dedicated weights room and a dual purpose aerobics and function room. Toilet and changing facilities will also be extended to meet demand. Architectural drawings for this extension have already been prepared and a copy of the latest drafts are attached to this plan.

The club has commissioned a structural engineer to produce foundation drawings to allow a detailed costing for the proposed extension to be made. On the basis of this costing, applications for lottery and grant funding will be made. Other fund raising activities will be initiated both within the club and with potential external sponsors.

The development of the clubhouse is seen as key to achieving the rowing goals of the Club.

3.3 General Maintenance and renewals

Decoration – a number of areas in the clubhouse will need to be decorated during the plan period including: the main function room, changing rooms, bar and exterior of the clubhouse. (The entrance lobby, stairs, landing, and upstairs toilets have recently been decorated).

Kitchen – continue to review and update kitchen facilities to ensure they meet Health and Safety standards.

Clubhouse equipment – additional chairs and stools are required to replace those that have been damaged.

Security – a review of security arrangements at the Club should be made to recommend and implement adequate crime prevention measures.

Services – the Club will continue with the services it has contracted for:

- i) maintenance of fire extinguishers and fire/smoke detectors,
- ii) sewerage disposal
- iii) pest control

Grounds – regular maintenance of the trees and hedge between the Club and Hobbs boatyard is required to keep maintenance costs at an acceptable level. Consideration should be given to making the fence around the lawn permanent, rather than using a temporary one during the summer.

4 Social Activities

4.1 Summary

There are essentially two types of social activity associated with a club such as ours.

Firstly there is the "Club Function" which is a social event in the Club's calendar designed to provide entertainment for the members and promote club spirit. Secondly, there is the fund-raising function designed primarily to raise additional general funds.

Both activities are essential to the well being and future expansion of the Club and should be promoted with equal importance.

Below is set out an outline of how this should be addressed during the next three year phase of the club's development.

4.2 Club Functions

Purpose.

The prime aim of such social activities should be to provide social contact between members. Amongst the benefits of such activities are:

- Development of club spirit
- Better use of Club facilities
- Acceptance into the Club of non-rowing members who may have much to offer, such as coaching and fund raising
- Increased membership, particularly non-rowing
- Promotion of the Club's activities

Examples of such activities are the Club Dinner, Boxing Day Eights and the river boat trip, all of which are currently successful events.

Finance

These events should be organised such that members would pay a realistic contribution to ensure that, as a minimum, the event covers its costs. Additional income should also be raised from bar profits, raffles and other activities.

Events

To be successful, club functions should be based on what the members want, should be at times of the year appropriate to the type of function, should not be held too often and in the main held at same time each year. This is important in order to ensure good attendance.

There are opportunities to organise other events on a one-off basis to celebrate special occasions such as anniversaries and Henley Royal Regatta wins.

The present list of events will remain in place as follows:

- Club Dinner
- Summer Barbeque
- Royal Regatta Club Night
- River Boat Trip
- Club Regatta
- Boat Christenings
- Summer Ball

Organisation

The co-ordination of events and the organising of the above functions is led by the Social Secretary who is a member of the main committee and regularly attends Management Committee meeting as a guest, this role is currently held by Val Spatcher. Members are encouraged to organise events in conjunction with the Social Secretary who is also happy to look at alternatives and additions to the current list of events

4.3 Fund Raising Events

Purpose

Fund raising events primarily provide a means of raising funds for club purposes. Whilst certain events may be held in order to fund a specific project, it is necessary to raise funds towards maintenance of facilities, the acquisition of new equipment, purchase of boats, regatta sponsorship and entry fees.

Organisation

The organisation of such social events is not seen to be the prime responsibility of the Club's fund-raising officer. His role is to obtain funds from such sponsors and grant-aiding organisations as may be appropriate.

5 Capital Expenditure

5.1 Boathouse

In 1997 the Club completed an extension to the boat storage facilities with a single storey extension added to the side of the boathouse giving 2 additional bays of boat storage. This was the first phase of the intended extension and improvement to the boathouse with enhancement to the land training and changing facilities now seen as the next priority.

5.2 Equipment

The club is fortunate to possess an extensive fleet of competitive racing boats which has been added to in recent years. However the need to maintain a highly competitive fleet for top-level competition requires substantial investment. This would be best achieved by the setting up of a replacement policy for club's top flight competitive boats where boats are purchased new and disposed of after 2,3 or 4 years depending on usage. There is still a place for training and recreational boats which may have a longer lifespan (say 5 to 8 years) but for the club to achieve its goal of a sufficiently diverse range of top flight racing boats (Lightweight, Heavyweight, Mens, Womens, Juniors, 8's, 4's and 2's) investment in equipment each year would need to be £20,000 to £25,000 with current membership levels.

6 Financial Plan

6.1 Financial strategy

Available funds – the club is fortunate in that it received a substantial legacy in 1997. Part of these funds have already been invested in new equipment and Project Oarsome (including boats, ergometers & coaching/safety boat). However these funds are not thought to be sufficient to meet the cost of the next stage of the boathouse improvement and will therefore be used to provide funds that can be matched by grant application, sponsorships, donations and other fund raising.

Fund-raising – while this topic has been discussed elsewhere in this plan, the future success of the club cannot be financed by members' subscriptions alone. It is therefore essential to ensure that:

- 1) Amounts due to the club are collected promptly and in full.
- 2) Costs are controlled tightly and equipment is well looked after.
- 3) Some long term sources of funding are obtained through partnership or sponsorship from local or national businesses or associations.
- 4) Available government, local and sports council grants and funds are applied for and obtained.
- 5) The club is consistently enterprising and seizes opportunities to generate profitable income.

6.3 Cashflow forecast

An estimated cashflow forecast is attached at Appendix 1 to this plan. The club has been squeezed by recent losses of rental income and cost sharing in respect of a sub-lease and the cessation of an arrangement sharing car park monies from Henley Royal Regatta. This has left the club under pressure to break even on predicted income and expenditure. The challenge to members and the committee is to innovatively raise funds within the club, from outside the club membership and from commercial and governmental bodies to allow the club to grow to meet its rowing aims.

Highlights:

The key elements and assumptions of the forecast are:

- 1) investment in boathouse improvements (£150,000 to be funded at least 50% from external sources) will reduce interest income.
- 2) subscriptions and rack fees will increase by 5% per annum (a prudent estimate allowing for fluctuations in membership and increases in the level of subscriptions).
- 3) expenses will be subject to 3% inflation
- 4) cashflows are split between operating cashflows and investment & financing of assets
- 5) Without additional fundraising the plans for investing in boats and facilities will consistently leave the club facing a net outflow of cash.

The forecast predicts that with good management of receivables (particularly subscriptions) and with well controlled costs, the club should show a small operating surplus in the next 3 years. However the overall picture is bleaker when we also consider investment and financing activities. This is indicative of the challenge the club faces if it is to develop its facilities or even maintain them at current levels (range, standard and condition of facilities).

6.4 Fund raising

There is a committee position of fund raising manager that has been vacant for a number of years. It is important that this role is filled. It is preferable to find a willing club member with suitable expertise, however given the importance of this role it may be necessary to contract a professional fund-raiser, subject to agreement of appropriate terms.

Types of fund-raising

- 1) A fund raising manager would be expected to focus on generating longer term income for the club from building relationships with business sponsors and potential sponsors, applying for grants and other sports or government funds, as well as generally promoting and marketing the club.

The other type of fund raising income is centred around the bar and social activities of the club. Whilst this should not be seen as a key source of income (much of it is likely to come from members who have already paid a subscription), the club should benefit financially:

- i) from the effort of the individuals who run these activities, and,
- ii) to compensate for the investment risk in providing working capital and equipment to run events, a bar or catering.

Targets:

Some estimates of income have been included in the attached cashflow for bar, social and room hire. These could be developed further to give targets for these activities which can then

be measured and appraised. Similarly a target of £75,000 for sponsorship/grant income has been included for the year ended 31 August 2003 in order to realise the building project that the club is committed to.

No targets have yet been set in respect of sponsorship and other revenues to help develop the coaching structure, regular replacement of racing boats and general competitiveness of the club.

APPENDIX 1

FORECAST CASHFLOWS
3 YEAR PERIOD COMMENCING 1 SEPTEMBER 2002

Year end	31-Aug-03		31-Aug-04		31-Aug-05	
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Operating items						
Income						
Subscriptions	31500		33075		34729	
Rack fees	5250		5513		5789	
Bar	1000		1000		1000	
Room Hire	1000		1000		1000	
Social	500		500		500	
Insurance	900		900		900	
Rentals	4500		4500		4500	
Car Parking	3000		3000		3000	
Open events	1000		1000		1000	
Donations	1000		1000		1000	
		49650		51488		53418
Expenses						
Rent and rates	9270		9548		9834	
Utilities + building maintenance	6180		6365		6556	
Administration	16000		16000		16000	
Equipment repairs	7210		7426		7649	
Insurance	5871		6047		6228	
Legal and professional	2500		2500		2500	
Tax	1000		1000		1000	
Sundry	1000		1000		1000	
		-49031		-49886		-50767
Operating surplus/(loss)		<u>619</u>		<u>1602</u>		<u>2651</u>
Investment and financing activities						
Income						
Equipment sales	1000		2000		2000	
Bank interest	3000		3000		3000	
Sponsorship/other funding	75000		0		0	
		79000		5000		5000
Expenses						
New equipment	10000		20000		20000	
Boathouse improvement	150000		0		0	
Loan repayment	3200		3200		3200	
		-163200		-23200		-23200
Investing and financing surplus/(loss)		<u>-84200</u>		<u>-18200</u>		<u>-18200</u>
Overall surplus/(loss)		<u>-83581</u>		<u>-16598</u>		<u>-15549</u>