



Rowing and Health

Change your world, one stroke at a time.



Amateur **Rowing** Association



Caroline Flint MP
Minister of State for Public Health

The unique appeal of sport and its ability to engage individuals, across generations and communities has been widely recognised. Sport can have a major impact on education, regeneration and most importantly physical and mental health. In 2004 the Department of Health launched Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier, a major strategy to help people make more informed choices about their personal health. Clubs are already demonstrating how sport can deliver health awareness alongside a range of community benefits.

The 2012 Olympics offer Great Britain a marvellous opportunity to get more people involved in sport and physical recreation. Over the coming years government departments aim to work with a range of sports and organisations to help secure a lasting health legacy following our successful Olympic bid.

This resource is intended for Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), Local Authorities and other local partners and describes how rowing can make a real contribution to the health and well-being of local communities. Case studies illustrate how rowing is making a difference to everyday lives across the country and demonstrate a range of partnerships across different settings.

Rowing is consistently one of the country's most successful sports, and with indoor rowing it is also one of the most accessible. Rowing is one of a number of sports that can offer both a recreational activity to improve fitness, overall health, well-being and competition at all levels.

The Amateur Rowing Association is evolving new programmes to respond even better to its existing participation base and attract new rowers from all communities and age groups. We commend their work and hope that wherever possible rowing clubs are supported by local partners in their quest to help people choose a healthy active lifestyle.



Richard Caborn MP
Minister of Sport

Background

The unique appeal of sport and its ability to engage individuals – be that as participants, coaches, volunteers or spectators – across generations and communities has been widely recognised. Between November 2005 and October 2006, the Department of Health will have delivered nine sports and health seminars across the English regions in order to strengthen the links between sport and health by promoting local partnerships between the NHS and Sports Clubs.

This resource is intended for Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), Local Authorities and other local partners. It describes how rowing can make a real contribution to the health and well-being of local communities. Case studies illustrate how rowing is making a difference to everyday lives and include a range of partnerships across different settings.

Rowing has never been more accessible – and whether you're inspired by Olympic Gold, the thrill of being out on the river or the convenience and sociability of indoor training, rowing has something for everybody.

Introduction

Di Ellis, Chairman of the Amateur Rowing Association

Rowing is determined to play its part in helping people choose a "Healthy Lifestyle". The ARA's programmes already support the action plans from the Government's "Choosing Health" White Paper.

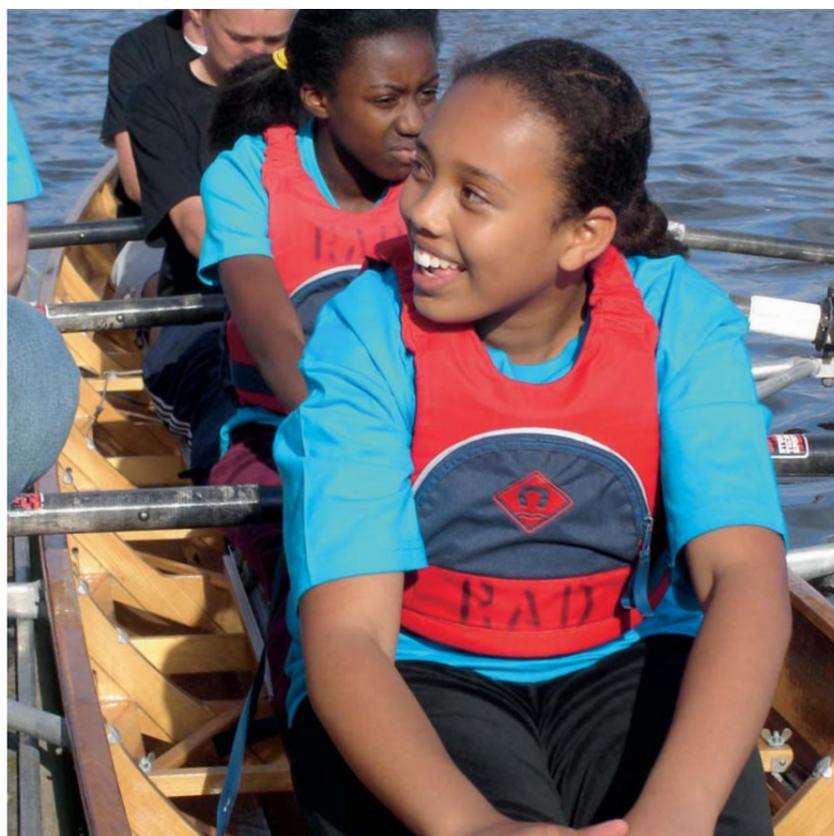
The Amateur Rowing Association (ARA) is the national governing body for all forms of rowing – including recreational, competitive, traditional, coastal and indoor. According to the "Active People" survey, around 80,000 adults regularly take part in water based activity with up to 4.7 million involved in gym based Indoor Rowing. Recent government figures for school sport indicate that over 500 schools are working with a rowing club to deliver activity to young people. We believe we have the power to influence a great number of people of all ages and socio-economic groups.

It is possible to participate in rowing on the water or indoors. Rowers range from 10 to over 90 years of age. Equipment is already in place across thousands of venues, we now need to join up the thinking between health and sport – to get more people active as part of their daily lives.



Olympic Legacy

Fit for 2012



Rowing is a major part of the Olympic movement and works very closely with London 2012, Sport England, UK Sport and the British Olympic Association. We are already involved with all these organisations to help deliver the Community Sport Legacy.

Much of the work has already started but we recognise that new ways of working will need to be developed. Partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors will be key to healthier lifestyle choices and sustainable changes in the public's health behaviour.

For more information visit the *Health & Fitness* area of the ARA website at www.oara-rowing.org/health

Rowing's proven record of working in the wider social agenda

Rowing already has a good track record in using sport as a driver to support the work of health, education and regeneration agencies. We continue to work closely with Sport England and have developed our own links with the Department of Health (DH), Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

Health – working to promote physical activity and 5 a Day

Across the country hundreds of rowing clubs already offer the opportunity for people of all ages to *Learn to Row* (L2R). Clubs offer learn to row programmes for individuals of all ages.

People, places and clubs – how rowing can change lives

Clubs offer people the opportunity to row on their own or as part of a team. Once basic skills have been learned, participants can choose to row recreationally or in a competitive environment. Many clubs also offer members the use of their gym-based indoor rowing machines.

Case Study: Antonia van Deventer 30 ciggies a day to GB Rowing Team...



During the summer of 2000, 5 foot 4 inches Antonia van Deventer's weight had risen to 13st 4lbs and she was having difficulty getting into size 18 clothes. She was binge drinking, smoking 30 a day and her eating was out of control. Today she has quit smoking, lost 5 stone and is a member of the GB Rowing Team.

To make lifestyle changes, Antonia began by going swimming twice a week and built slowly from walking to running. Her approach was simple; eat less and exercise more. She joined Southampton University Boat Club and lost her first few pounds – and, in her words, "started to have a ball."

By late 2002 she was only a few kilos over the lightweight category limit for the British Indoor Rowing Championships (61.5kg or 9st 10lbs) and this gave her an extra incentive. Antonia made weight for the race and her result was an encouraging tenth, but she wasn't completely happy yet. She increased her water-based activity fitting around her teacher training and the

school day. In August 2002 Antonia entered her first regatta and won. Her club, Rob Roy Boat Club, was very supportive and Antonia was selected for the GB Lightweight Team in May 2004.

Antonia says; "If I had one message for anyone who wants to make a change in his or her life, it would be this: Rome wasn't built in a day. Every day you can do something to help you achieve your goals, and it will be the small steps that make the largest difference. Start slowly, and go for it!"

Visit Antonia's website at www.dietandfitnesstoday.com

The Community Legacy Programme of the London 2012 Olympic Games includes a wide-ranging remit that aims to link the Olympics to five broad areas;

- Health and well-being programmes
- Technical training, guidance and support
- School and youth club programmes
- Active workplace programmes
- Marketing and media campaigns

Case Study: Monica Sutton

Type 1 Diabetes to Indoor Rowing Champion



Above: Monica takes to the water at Doncaster Rowing Club
Inset: Monica with her hero and fellow diabetic Sir Steve Redgrave

Monica Sutton, aged 58 from Sheffield, developed type 1 diabetes in her early twenties and this contributed to her becoming overweight, which in turn made her feel uncomfortable, unfit and less confident. Monica says; *"My life seemed to revolve around trying to lose weight. Diets and the gym were never far from my mind but they didn't do anything for me. I hated them."*

"In May 2003 I injured my foot on the treadmill and ventured onto the indoor rowing machine as it was non-weight bearing. At that time I was approaching 20 stone and wearing size 26 dresses. I was pretty despondent." It was suggested that Monica join the 'crew class' of rowers at the gym, but she remained extremely conscious of her size and worried about her ability. An inspiring and supportive coach, Vicky McDougall not only reassured her but also suggested that she had really found 'her' sport in rowing.

When Vicky showed Monica the results from the British Indoor Rowing Championships (for women aged between 50 and 59), she was amazed:

"I saw that already I was in the top 30 in Britain," says Monica. *"I discovered a competitive side to my personality that I never knew I had! I asked Vicky to draw up a programme for me and got an entry form."*

Being a highly skilled oarsman herself, Vicky coached Monica in the correct rowing techniques that are crucial for effective and safe rowing. Through rowing regularly, the weight fell away (she is now a fit size 12/14) and Monica's rowing times got better and better. In November 2003 Monica achieved a Bronze medal at the British Indoor Rowing Championships, it was presented by Sir Steve Redgrave.

"I wore my medal around Sheffield for days, I even wore it to the supermarket!" remembers Monica. Since then she frequently competes at indoor rowing competitions and has a mantelpiece of medals to prove it.

Once she lost sufficient weight Monica was inspired to try outdoor rowing too and is now an active member of Doncaster Rowing Club starting in 4s and 8s and more recently trying

I wore my medal around Sheffield for days, I even wore it to the supermarket!

her hand in a single. For a person whose balance was so awful she never progressed from a tricycle to a two-wheel bike, this is some feat. As Monica's passion for rowing has grown, so has her confidence:

"My self esteem has grown hugely," she says. *"This impacts on every part of my life; in my work and at home. Many women in their fifties may feel that taking up sport isn't for them. I say find the sport that's right for you, that makes you tick. Then go for it! It may mean you have to put yourself higher up the list of priorities, but family and friends will soon get used to the idea that you're no longer a doormat! Indoor and outdoor rowing are now a very important part of my life. They have brought fitness, improved self-esteem, weight loss and a huge circle of friends. Rowing is a very sociable sport!"*

Managing her type 1 diabetes, which involves juggling insulin and diet, is a challenge even with her training as a diabetes nurse specialist. But nothing stops Monica from enjoying her rowing. She is particularly keen to stress the benefits for people with type 2 diabetes (many of whom are overweight): *"Sport and exercise can really make a terrific difference to these people as it helps with insulin resistance which is a key feature of the condition."* www.sth.nhs.uk/news/5-3-rowing.php

Case Study: Coaching for Health

Directorate of Health Promotion (North Staffordshire)



The sport of rowing has a network of over 6000 volunteers working in the community. The sport is one of five selected by the DCMS to pilot the new United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC). Elements of the UKCC include physical activity and nutrition.

Rowing also employs many Community Sports Coaches. These are paid coaches working exclusively at grass-roots level. Our coaches receive training to deliver programmes that support health promotion, facilitate behavioural change and incorporate multi-activity – i.e; provide access to other sports alongside rowing. Much of their work is focussed in areas of deprivation.

Case Study – Stoke on Trent Partnership

"The Community Rowing Programme in Stoke-on-Trent is a very successful physical activity initiative contributing greatly to our 1% year-on-year Local Public Service Agreement [LPSA] target. This Programme has caught the imagination of all age groups from a wide demographic area and is assisting us in addressing the sport, health, education and regeneration agendas." Carl Bennett, Directorate of Health Promotion (North Staffordshire).

The Stoke Rowing Association is a partnership developed to increase physical activities levels in a deprived community from secondary school children upwards. The Programme was established by Staffordshire University and Stoke on Trent City Council Children's Services Department. This scheme has resulted in the development of a whole new annual activity stream.

- **Physical Activity** – 1000 children taking part in health and fitness programmes.

- **Water Activity** – 600 people involved in recreational rowing activity.

- **Volunteers Trained** – 30 adult and students in the first year.

A Community Development Officer was appointed after a successful funding application was submitted to the local Single Regeneration Board (SRB). This enabled the project to draw in investment from the Department for Culture Media and Sport, County Sports Partnership and the ARA. The Officer has successfully engaged with local schools and St Modwens, a Midlands based land developer, to establish rowing activity on the lake at Trentham Gardens. To date over 30 adult and student volunteers have been trained to support the delivery of the project in schools and at the lake. The lake forms the centrepiece of a £100m regeneration project.

www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/health/she/partnerships
www.csd.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/leisure/swimming-and-watersports/rowing

Case Study: Building for Health

Dover Rowing Club East Kent PCT



The Community Club Development Programme (CCDP) is designed to support the network of community clubs in England. During the period 2004-2009 rowing will have invested £2.7million in community schemes. Each project will have links to schools or adult community groups. Projects are being delivered in locations as far apart as Bradford, Fowey in Cornwall, Bideford in Devon, Southampton and Burton on Trent. Half of all investment will be in areas within the top 20% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

Community Groups & Health – Dover

Dover Rowing Club has successfully implemented a plan to get more people physically active in this harbour town. Since 2001, regular participation in rowing has gone up significantly;

- Under 18 years 280 %
- 18-50 year-olds 125%
- 50+ year-olds 140%

The Club has worked with the Dover Harbour Board to tackle anti-social behaviour and promote both community and general water safety. Working with key partners (East Kent Health Trust Primary Care Trust and Dover District Council) the Club has appointed a Community Development Officer funded by SRB, Sport England and themselves.

Key aims of this project include the delivery of health promotion messages relating to food and health, smoking and physical activity. The project also has the objective of

demonstrating sustainable increases in physical activity. The project is delivered within school partnerships, at a number of watersport sites and at community venues and events.

Dover Rowing Club was one of the first sports clubs in England to achieve Clubmark, the national cross-sport club accreditation system. The Club is very highly rated by both the Kent County Council Sports Development Unit and Kent Youth Services.

Project co-ordinator Lee Stampton believes that sport can work with health for mutual benefit: *“Whilst promoting rowing we have successfully worked to integrate key messages on physical activity and healthy eating. In a deprived area such as Dover we feel this has great importance not only to young people but also to the population as a whole. Our club has the power to influence a wide range of people and enable them to lead healthier lives.”*

www.doverrowingclub.co.uk

Case Study: Healthy Schools

Doncaster Schools Rowing Association East Doncaster PCT



Rowing helps raise self-esteem, self confidence and physical activity levels..

Rowing is part of the DFES / DCMS PE, School Sport and Club Links Programme (PESSCL). Hundreds of schools now use indoor rowing as part of their healthy lifestyle programmes. This includes *Healthy Schools*, PSHE and work in the community through citizenship. Rowing coaches have developed links between hundreds of clubs and schools. These schools are benefiting from the *ARA Indoor Rowing for Schools* programme.

The ARA is also working with Youth Active, the new umbrella organisation for the youth sector delivering activity ‘outside of the schoolgate’. This work is closely aligned to Youth Matters. The management group of Youth Active includes the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS), 4Children, Clubs for Young People, UK Youth and YMCA England.

Special Schools & Health – Doncaster

Within Doncaster over 3000 young people from 9 secondary and 3 special schools have taken part in regular activity organised by the Doncaster Schools Rowing Association (DSRA). The DSRA was formed in 1995 with the aim of broadening the opportunities for young people in Yorkshire.

Re-established in 1989, Doncaster Rowing Club is the key partner to DSRA – located in the deprived Hexthorpe area of the city, it offers indoor and water activity to young people and adults and has an active programme for the over 50s. The club works closely with a range of local agencies to promote sport, physical activity, education and healthy living.

Three levels of support are provided to schools. Firstly, health and fitness equipment is placed into school sites with staff and leaders trained in its safe and effective use. Secondly, schools are assisted by volunteers and a full time Community Sports Coach, part funded by

East Doncaster PCT. Thirdly, pupils are invited to take part in water-based activity at Doncaster Rowing Club, which has recently been redeveloped through the Community Club Development Programme. In this way a large number of people can take part in physical activity at a level that suits their interest and skill level.

Project Co-ordinator Dudley Fletcher says that the staff working with special needs pupils *“really appreciate the rowing programme, they say it helps raise pupil self esteem, self confidence and provides long term benefits by introducing the principles of active recreation and healthy living in a fun way. Using the ARA Indoor Rowing in Schools Programme, pupils with special needs also take part in competitions with young people from the DSRA.”*

The Programme is supported by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, East Doncaster PCT, County Sports Partnership and Sport England

www.doncaster-rowing-club.org

Case Study: Youth Groups & Health

London Youth Rowing



*Rowing is wicked!
Rowing is something new that I haven't done before...*

16 year-old Abdul Ahmed of the MBS Youth Project



London Youth Rowing (LYR) is a project aimed at increasing the level of participation in the sport of rowing in youth clubs, schools and disabled organisations, primarily in deprived areas of London. The project is a partnership between the Federation of London Youth Clubs, The Man Group, ARA, London Boroughs and Sport England.

By combining the resources of local youth clubs, schools and specialist rowing centres LYR provides a first time exposure for young people to a community organised physical activity programme. By providing high standards of coaching and encouragement LYR offers recreational rowing and opportunities for those that want to compete.

The project began when the London Regatta Centre (LRC) began working with participants from Newham and Tower Hamlets. These East London boroughs are amongst the most deprived and ethnically diverse areas in the country. The East London region is home to approximately 22,000 London Youth members in 200 Youth Clubs. The project has now expanded into Wandsworth and Hackney proving to be

extremely popular with a wide range of young people, youth leaders and schools. 16-year-old Abdul Ahmed of the MBS Youth Project has summed up the success of the scheme:

"Rowing is wicked! Rowing is something new I haven't done before and going on the river by ourselves is exciting. Being involved in regattas is good fun too. I'm glad I had this opportunity to do this, as normally I wouldn't have been able to try out any of this or learn all the new things I did. I would recommend it to everyone, I'm sure they would enjoy it too."

www.londonyouthrowing.com

How PCTs, Health Service Providers & Rowing Can Work Together



(1) Community Rowing Clubs

Rowing clubs are at the heart of their communities in towns and cities throughout the UK, offering a wide range of rowing programmes including use of their gym facilities. Clubs working with young people are recognised by Sport England with the 'Clubmark' status. They provide permanent and sustainable bases for people to get involved and stay involved in physical activity. By working more closely with community-based health professionals these clubs can become more accessible to those who need help and support in improving their health and may complement existing exercise referral programmes.

(2) Health Champions

Rowing has a number of well-known champions including household names such as Sir Steven Redgrave, Sir Matthew Pinsent and James Cracknell OBE. Rowing, as a sport, has many highly successful male and female athletes – a number of whom are World or Olympic medallists, including those from our Great Britain Adaptive Rowing Team. Rowing also has access to a number of 'health champions' such as Antonia Van Deventer and Monica Sutton as featured earlier. Rowing clubs across the country have individuals who can act as 'Health Champions' for local projects.

(3) Promoting Indoor Rowing to Adults

The ARA Indoor Rowing Programme can be used at home or any location where there's a rowing machine. Our online services provide advice on appropriate levels of physical activity and sensible eating. By linking the ARA website to your PCT and other health partner websites, rowing can support health organisations to address and support their physical activity aims. Rowing is a very efficient way of burning calories. It is non-weight bearing and once good basic technique has been learned, rowing can provide an ideal way to help people manage their weight.

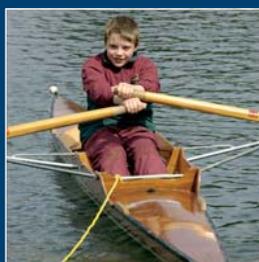
(4) Promoting Indoor Rowing for Schools

The ARA's *Indoor Rowing for Schools Programme* is being delivered through school sport partnerships across the country and will support the DH / DfES *Healthy Schools Scheme*. The links through the Schools Programme are made into the PSHE, healthy eating, physical activity and healthy body / healthy mind agendas. Investment and staff support by PCTs or local authorities linked to supporting the purchase of equipment and the employment of community coaches trained in basic health promotion can produce excellent outcomes.

(5) PCTs Working with County Sports Partnerships (CSPs)

Forty-nine county-based partnerships have now been established, bringing together local authorities, sports bodies, schools and other strategic partners. The key aim of the CSPs is to drive up life-long participation and help deliver strategic investment in sport and physical activity. PCTs can play an important role within these partnerships, establishing the vital links between sport and health agenda.

For more information:
www.ara-rowing.org/rowingandhealth



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