

Annual Report 2016



Annamarie Phelps CBE, Chairman of British Rowing

'It is hard not to start by mentioning the success of our international crews at all levels, not just for their medal successes but also for being such amazing ambassadors for our organisation. I am immensely proud of each of them.

This first year of the cycle with Olympic and Paralympic Games is one where we have become rather used to celebrating unprecedented successes - but we should not take it for granted.



The depth and breadth of investment to get our team and the whole of ParalympicsGB and TeamGB to the Games has been one small part of a long journey and Rio was a challenging political and economic environment in which to do it.

In addition, our younger teams at Junior, U23, Senior World Championships, the Coupe de la Jeunesse and GB-France matches as well as the Home International's England Team, all put in stunning performances. Well done to each of our athletes with particular thanks to the National Lottery without whom this success would not have been possible.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise the support from the clubs and schools and their coaches across the country. This support has brought these athletes into the sport, taught and inspired them, and got them hooked. It was very moving to see the tributes paid by so many of our athletes to their original clubs in the lead up to Rio and afterwards.

In addition we must thank our GB coaches who have converted these talented and enthusiastic youngsters into finely-tuned athletes by meticulous preparation; and to their families, parents, siblings and spouses who have given up time with them and tracked them across the world to support them.

I would like to recognise the work of all the support staff and administrators and our two Team Leaders Sir David Tanner and Louise Kingsley for their superb leadership of these teams, as well as the BOA and BPA Chef de Missions, Mark England and Penny Briscoe, whose energy, overlays and planning were put to the test more than ever before.

I must also pay tribute to the superb media coverage, an area that is so important in promoting our sport. The BBC excelled at the Olympic Games and Channel 4 not only continued to break new ground in delivering its Paralympic coverage but also went out of its way (and a few of you will appreciate the lengths they had to go to get permissions to film) to get cameras and bodies there, and to get broadcast permissions for the rowing to be covered live. Over one million people watched our para-rowers compete at Lagoa and top the table with a phenomenal three golds and bronze.

We should not however take any of this for granted. We need to keep moving forward and to keep challenging ourselves to be better and to do things differently. The environment both inside sport and where sport meets the outside world is continually evolving at an alarmingly rapid rate.

If we want to thrive in this new environment we need to change the way we look at the world around us; continually evolving and re-inventing and influencing. Never before has sport been under such close scrutiny from funding partners, media and athletes and good governance has to be a focus. Never before have our values of teamwork, commitment and open to all been so important.

We have committed to growing our sport, across all disciplines, and we need to understand how we can do that; where the people are coming from, and perhaps more importantly where they are heading. I am delighted that our clubs have some incredible new facilities across the length and breadth of the country this year, from Norwich and Lea RC to Stratford upon Avon; from Tyne ARC to Slough, Moseley BC and Putney High School, as well as others where there is a proven commitment to expand. Entries to Junior events continue to flourish with over 2,500 competitors each at the Schools' Head and the Scullery Head in one weekend alone.

During the year our standing committees have embarked on an ambitious review of their objectives and work plans. Volunteers and staff have been working together in an unprecedented way across the sport and with external partners continuing to develop the new Competition Structure: in the important area of water safety; in delivering national events and in supporting the delivery of coach education and training, amongst others.

Looking overseas our staff and volunteers continue to support the work of FISA in developing rowing, extending our international influence, across Africa and the Commonwealth and in support of the IOC's Agenda 2020 and the Commonwealth Games Federation's Transformation 2022.

In particular I would like to thank all our staff, based at Hammersmith, Bedford, Caversham and in satellite offices across the country, led by our CEO, Andy Parkinson, for their patience and loyalty during this period of re-structuring which will ensure we are fit for purpose, efficient and above all effective in supporting and facilitating the membership and partners to deliver against our five strategic objectives as one team.

Thank you to you our Council members for your continued work and advocacy at regional level, supporting clubs and events and providing advice and guidance on key decisions and direction, in addition to the many club and event roles many of you have.

I would like to thank the Board and those who have supported work of the Board committees for your diligence and challenge, and your commitment to making inclusion a key part of all our planning and investment.

Last, but certainly not least, thanks to those partners and stakeholders who support and invest in so many of these projects: UK Sport and Sport England, the National

Lottery, the Rowing Foundation, The Stewards Charitable Trust, Help for Heroes, Row2Recovery, London Youth Rowing, the BOA and BPA, our commercial partners and those across the coastal and fixed seat rowing communities, as well as Scottish Rowing and Welsh Rowing.

In an extraordinary year for the sport four Medals of Honour were to be awarded to;

- Martin Humphrys, Chairman of the Thames Regional Rowing Council, in recognition of his long service to the development of the sport and the success of the Junior Inter-Regional Regatta.
- Ray Mallett, Chairman of the West Regional Rowing Council, in recognition of his long service and his work with WEARA and fixed seat rowing.
- Katherine Grainger CBE, British Rowing's most successful female athlete, ambassador, chancellor and Henley Steward.
- Maggie Netto, Assistant to the Performance Director, for her outstanding support to the high performance programme over a period of 20 years.

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