



BRITISHROWING

British Rowing National Event Strategy and Venue Assessment

Consultant Tender

3 April 2023

TEAMWORK | OPEN TO ALL | COMMITMENT



The Project - Part 1

We would like to appoint a consultant/small company to assess how to create a British Rowing Senior Championships that is viable as an aspirational event that has real meaning – be it in terms of performance pathway or as an event itself for our senior club athletes. Once this is determined – to look at how this works within the framework of a coherent National Events Strategy.

Background

In 2017, a review of British Rowing's events was undertaken, and it highlighted several issues that were considered to be relevant to the overall development and sustainability of rowing.

These were:

i) *National Senior Championships Programming*

The repositioning of this event from July to October four years' ago (to allow attendance by elite rowers), whilst understandable at the time, was not viewed as being particularly successful. The date is not considered to be the best time in the rowing season and is unpopular with many rowers. The event does not provide a 'flagship' event offering of which BR can be proud. In addition, the desire for elite rowers to attend the event will not be achieved in the near future due to date clashes with the World Championships in 2017 and 2018 and changes to the 'requirement' for elite athletes to attend.

It added that:

...there is a lack of clarity regarding the role and purpose of the National Senior Championships. This event provides a key challenge given the nature of the existing rowing calendar and the aspiration for this to be a flagship BR event.

In conclusion, the key recommendations – all of which are yet to be undertaken – were:

- 1. Agree the events to be included in a new BR 'portfolio' of national events rather than separate standalone events, including clear rationale and purpose for each event (see also 2) supported by a clear communications plan.*
- 2. Set out clear goals and objectives for each BR 'portfolio' event, together with governance, management, positioning/timing and promotion responsibilities as per the "Strategic Event Rationale Checklist".*
- 3. Ensure these objectives are measurable to provide feedback on success and progress, linked to regular surveys. This could include questions on events in the annual membership survey to help monitor progress.*
- 4. Conduct further consultation with rowers/coaches/club representatives regarding a review and re-positioning of the National Senior Championships. For example, this could include the reinvention of the event as a club-focused pinnacle event linked to a league structure.*

5. *Produce a coordinated action plan with allocated responsibilities - to refine, agree and implement the agreed strategic recommendations proposed following this strategic review.*
6. *Ensure regular communication with stakeholders to inform and update on future strategic direction and progress.*

This is, therefore, the piece of work that we now wish to do and which we feel will position British Rowing's National Events in the best possible way for the future of British Rowing and all rowers and provide the base of the pyramid from which our national team develops, and international success is achieved.

Currently, most of British Rowing's water events take place at Holme Pierrepont Country Park, the National Water Sports Centre and occasionally at Strathclyde Country Park between April and September/October. The Virtual Championships were held in 2020 in June and 2021 in September and traditionally the Indoor Championships complete the year in December. (though cancelled in 2022)

The events are:

- British Rowing Junior Inter-regional Regatta
- British Rowing Masters Championships
- British Rowing Junior Championships
- British Rowing Coastal Championships
- British Rowing Virtual Championships
- British Rowing Indoor Championships
- British Rowing Senior Championships

There is also an aspiration to look at whether the GB Rowing Team's Final/Olympic Trials can be 'opened up' to spectators (in person and/or online)

Recently, however, with the increased presence and influence of Henley Royal Regatta in late June and early July due to the greater number of women's and club events, the British Rowing Senior Championships has struggled to find its position in the competition calendar and its purpose. Additionally, there is the desire to review the purpose and attraction of the national event portfolio.

Purpose of the Strategy

The strategy would:

Business operation

- Create a clear sense of purpose and identity for each event with the objective that they would then work together as a cohesive whole and as a series of events.
- Ensure the events are aspirational for participants.

- Further the British Rowing strategy of re-positioning the sport as open to everyone.
- Create financially sustainable events.

Performance

- To continue discussions with the Performance team as to whether a senior championship event can actually become part of the performance pathway.
- To consult with the Performance team on whether an event can be created out of the GBRT Final/Olympic Trials.
- Look at the positioning of a competition for ‘senior’ athletes - i.e., top level club athletes and assess what is required, whether an NGB-led competition is required, what the role of Henley Royal Regatta is as it relates to competition structures and whether a completely different approach is needed.
- The aim is to create a sustainable, viable and meaningful competition that could be run by British Rowing.
- If a new competition format were an option – scope and model what this could look like.

Innovation

- The study would stress that it is vital to look at innovation in both the existing events – what they might be and whether there are clear gaps for new formats to be developed. (Any detailed development as a result would then need further feasibility work – once approved by the British Rowing Board)
- The events would be attractive to spectators both in the existing rowing market and, importantly, to new markets.
- The strategy would look at modernising the proposition for all participants, spectators, volunteers and sponsors both at the events, online and on screen. (via live streaming and/or broadcast)
- It would assess incorporation of British Rowing’s work in the area of diversity and inclusion.
- It would include recommendations on how the events would be sustainable. (in the widest sense – environmental, social, governance)

Outcome

- A detailed proposal for a meaningful, attractive and aspirational national events programme - to include a senior-level competition - that ensures all the events have their own purpose and identity but crucially, form part of a logical and cohesive event series, owned by British Rowing and that is aligned to British Rowing’s strategic objectives.
- The event series proposal would contain an outline budget and resourcing plan and would be financially sustainable. (There could be a couple of options of what this might look like.)
- A succinct presentation of the National Event Series for Board to be presented at the September 25th 2023 board meeting.

The Project - Part 2

We would also like the consultant/company to undertake venue research on our current multi-lane venues and to work with our facilities coordinator on assessing potential for any future multi-lane venues that could host World Championship events in the future, reflecting the desire to host future World Rowing events, as outlined in the 2019 Major Events Strategy.

Background

Venue research was undertaken and an assessment conducted in preparation for a potential World Rowing Cup 2025 and World Rowing Championships 2026 bid, however British Rowing withdrew in January 2022 as the budget could not balance.

It is the aspiration of British Rowing to bid for World Rowing multi-lane events in the future and it is felt prudent, at this stage to undertake a thorough venue assessment – SWOT analysis of the current multi-lane facilities. Additionally, the work would include an overview and recommendations of any future venues that might be feasible, liaising with British Rowing’s facilities development manager on any venues that are or will be in development.

Existing venues are:

- Dorney Lake
- Holme Pierrepont
- Strathclyde Country Park

Output

- SWOT analysis of existing international venues – Dorney Lake and Strathclyde Park.
- Assessment of potential future international venues – in particular Holme Pierrepont. (and any other venues that might have plans underway)
- Assessment of stakeholder appetite at each venue.
- Recommendation for future bids on venue during varying timescales e.g.
 - Now until 2028
 - 2029- 2032
 - 2033 onwards

Process and Timelines for Projects 1 and 2

National Events Strategy

- ASSIMILATE KNOWLEDGE
 - Consultant starts – briefings
 - Assess previous work undertaken on Senior Championships and British Rowing events
 - Assessment of other UK Sports' national event strategies
 - Assessment of other nations' rowing national events programmes internationally
- CONSULT
 - Talk to key personnel within the rowing community – as identified by British Rowing
 - Rowing community engagement on strategy
- CREATE
 - Initial outline of strategy
 - Financial modelling
- REVIEW
 - Work through feedback and revise
 - Board papers drafted and option A, B, C identified
- REFINE
 - Review and final strategy
 - **25 September – Board meeting**
- LAUNCH
 - Prepare for press and PR announcement for the 2024 -'25 season

Venue Feasibility

- Assess previous work undertaken in respect of the 2025 and 2026 potential bids.
- Set up outline of strategy for work and key meetings.
- Feasibility work including
 - Meetings at all venues
- SWOT analysis and report for **25 September 2023**

Consultant Attributes

We envisage that the successful consultant/small company will possess the following attributes and experience:

- Creative thinker
- Strategy creation
- Methodology of delivering on strategies
- Knowledge of national sports and international governing bodies and their working practices
- Bidding structures
- Event management
- Commercial structures of events
- Both international and national events
- Fast-learning
- Agile
- Excellent written and verbal communication
- Able to find direction through complicated stakeholder landscapes

Budget

- A guideline budget for the project is £30k including VAT plus expenses.

Tender Process

- Friday 21st April at 17:00 BST - proposals to be sent to: eventsreview@britishrowing.org
 - Please submit a short document that outlines:
 - Your background
 - Relevant experience
 - Approach to this project
 - Estimated days for project 1 and project 2 with timeline
 - Quote
- Wednesday 3rd May and Thursday 4th May - interviews
- Tuesday 9th May - decision on successful applicant

If you have any questions please contact: James Lee or Rachel Dulai at eventsreview@britishrowing.org

We would be grateful if you could let us know whether you intend to submit a proposal.

ENDS

