

DSBC Five-Year Development Plan

This document is a collaboration between DSBC, Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation and PODs.

Introduction

Durham School Boat Club is one of the oldest Boat Clubs in the world. In 2023 the Club celebrates its 185th anniversary – based on its first records pupils racing a boat named the Argo in 1838. Durham School is a Founder Member of Durham Regatta, which remains the main showpiece event for the club, though we regularly row in competitions across the region, and beyond.

With nearly two centuries of rowing expertise, DSBC is proud of its heritage and ambitious for its future. It is keen to build on its reputation for both participation and performance. The Club is the largest it has ever been with 100+ pupils taking part on a weekly basis. This success comes with its own issues, with increased demand for boats, wear and tear, and coaching.

At an elite level, Durham has traditionally punched above its weight with pupils and Old Dunelmians at the heart of the sport both in the UK and overseas. Its elite coaching is attractive to both domestic pupils and international students, particularly in Y12 and Y13. Again, this places a demand on coaching time and equipment.

The Club is managed by the Director of Rowing, Mr Eddie Bryant, and four coaches support him in delivering 12 rowing lessons in Games and PE and 12 co-curricular sessions each week. The club also deliver sessions every Saturday morning at the club or attend regular events in the region and nationally.

DSBC is supported by the Parents of Durham School Boat Club, affectionately known as PODs. The PODs currently exist within the auspices of the Foundation. The evolution of the PODs is such that the Club, though not wealthy, manages its stock of boats and coaching time to deliver great outcomes for pupils, parents and the school. The Foundation is truly proud of DSCB, its history, reputation and future. This plan is designed to communicate the direction of the club in the next few years, allowing Governors, Parents, Old Dunelmians and pupils to get behind DSBC and help it to achieve its aims.

Aims of the Plan

Sustainable Membership Growth

The rapid growth of DSBC since the pandemic has been pleasing but has put additional strains on the club. We need to ensure future growth is targeted, with specific plans across all age groups. We must also not rest on our laurels. There are over 100 different clubs and activities for pupils to take part in across the Foundation. Rowing is one of the most all-consuming of these options, and not one many pupils will have previously experienced. Therefore, we also need to market ourselves to pupils and parents to ensure high levels of participation in the sport. To do this we will:

- Reintroduce Y6 Rowing Club
- Increase presence of Rowing in Y7 & Y8 games and PE sessions.
- Develop targeted recruitment strategies for each age group.

Progression Pathways

High levels of participation provide a broad base for our rowing pyramid. For those that want to take their rowing further, we need to be able to offer a range of pathways that allow our top athletes to develop their potential. To achieve this, we will:

- Create a clear development pathway from beginners to senior squads.
- Establish mentorship programs to support junior rowers.
- Introduce a Rower Development Guide for Y7-Y9
- Continue to offer scholarships and means-tested bursaries to talented athletes.

Facilities and Equipment

Although DSBC focuses above all else on the pupils involved with rowing, the sport requires a large and varied amount of specialised equipment. Training boats for younger pupils need to be stable, resilient and easy to maintain. Increasingly the technologies in our high-end race boats share more with racing cars than the wooden boats of old. Ensuring we have the right mix of equipment is essential for us to meet our performance and participation goals. We will achieve this by:

- Conducting a thorough assessment of current facilities and identify areas for improvement.
- Up grading equipment based on a regular replacement cycle.
- Seeking funding for upgrades through fundraising initiatives.
- Developing a plan to optimise space utilisation in the boathouse.
- Exploring the possibility of acquiring additional space if needed.
- Further developing the indoor facilities available to DSBC.

Coaching Team

Our coaches are at the heart of our rowing programme. We work with a wide variety of volunteer, part-time and full-time coaches to deliver our rowing programme. Over the course of this development programme we will:

- Continue to recruit experienced coaches to enhance the coaching team.
- Work with the sport governing body to provide professional development opportunities for all our coaches.
- Foster a collaborative coaching environment to share best practices.
- Establish a mentorship program for new coaches.
- Recognize and reward the efforts of the coaching team.

Marketing and Social Engagement

- Increase the club's presence on social media platforms.
- Organize regular social events to foster a sense of community.
- Create a club newsletter to keep members informed on a half-termly basis.
- Regular PODS meetings on a termly basis to encourage parent involvement.
- Development of PODS as a separate charity.

Involvement of Old Dunelmian Rowers

- Work with the Development Office to utilise and connect with former DSBC rowers.
- Work with the Development Office to organize alumni events to foster engagement and support.
- Continue to recognise and celebrate the achievements of former rowers.

Fundraising Strategy

- Work with the Development Office to create a long-term funding strategy for DSBC that involves parents, alumni and the Foundation.

Durham Regatta

- Continue to collaborate with the organisers of Durham Regatta to enhance the club's involvement.

- Use the regatta as an opportunity to showcase the club's achievements.
- Work with the Foundation's Development Team and Marketing Team to improve our presence at the Regatta, improving our ability to use the space we have for DSBC, our pupils, our parents and as a recruitment tool.

Financial Plan

Having undertaken a preliminary overview of our current equipment, there is a great deal of which remains in good condition and is more than serviceable. However, we have identified the following items that are needed to replace existing equipment that is coming to the end of its life and to enable us to sustainably grow Rowing at the Foundation.

This plan assumes that the Foundation will continue to meet the core costs of running the Boat Club, including coaching costs, repair and maintenance of the boat house, and repair and maintenance of the fleet of boats.

Proposed Expenditure

	Item	Cost	#	Total
Blades				
	Concept C2 Blades	£2,200.00	4	£8,800.00
Boats				
	Wintech Cobra 4x- (LW)	£23,500.00	2	£47,000.00
	Wintech International 4x (LW)	£17,400.00	3	£52,200.00
	Wintech Cobra 2x	£15,000.00	1	£15,000.00
	Wintech International 2x (LW)	£10,800.00	2	£21,600.00
	Wintech International 4x+ (SLW/LW)	£17,400.00	2	£34,800.00
	Wintech International 1x (LW)	£6,499.00	4	£25,996.00
Gym				
	Concept 2 Erg Bike	£1,060.00	2	£2,120.00
	Row Perfect Machine	£2,500.00	2	£5,000.00
	Sub Total			£212,516.00
Contingency*	33%			£20,984
	Five-Year Fundraising Target			£233,500

*The 10% contingency is needed because prices are currently unstable and are likely to increase significantly over the next few years, and because there may be opportunities to develop further facilities to support the boat club towards the end of the 5-year programme. In addition, DSBC already has around £15,000 reserves, which will enable some purchases to be made within Y1.

Generating the income to match the expenditure

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5Y Total
Membership	£9,000	£9,750	£10,500	£11,250	£12,000	£52,500
PODS events	£5,000	£5,000	£5,500	£5,500	£6,000	£27,000
Raffle/Lotto	£2,000	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£12,000
Gifts via DCSF	£8,000	£9,000	£12,000	£13,000	£14,000	£56,000
DCSF Capital Budget	£6,000	£6,500	£7,000	£7,500	£8,000	£35,000
Holiday Camp	£4,000	£4,250	£4,500	£4,750	£5,000	£22,500
Sale of Assets	£5,000	£5,500	£5,500	£6,000	£6,500	£28,500
Total	£39,000	£42,500	£47,500	£50,500	£54,000	£233,500

Assumptions about generating income:

- Membership – 100 members at £30 per term, increasing by £2.50 a term every year.
- PODS run two or three significant fundraising events each year. Recent Quiz Night raised over £1000.
- Raffle/Lotto – Proposed by DBSC and promoted for all sports. This would be a proportion of the money raised.
- Gifts collected through the Development Office to allow collection of Gift Aid.
One way these figures could be achieved is, for example, by attracting 21 regular donors giving £25 per month in Y1, an additional 4 in Y2, and 5 in Y3-5. Other patterns of giving could also be used to achieve this funding.
- The Capital Budget is already part of DCSF's rowing expenditure
- Day Rowing Camps at Easter & Summer. 4 weeks in total, each week with 16 children and two coaches. At £200 a week pp. this would generate a surplus of £4,000 per year.
- Sale of Assets – Each year DSBC has been able to sell off older equipment and make a significant surplus. This figure is based on previous years activity.

Time Line

Assuming funds would be raised and spent in the year we would expect to follow this proposed timeline:

Start Year 1

Wintech Cobra 4x (LW), Row Perfect x 1, C2 Blades (1 Set) (cost £28,200)

End Year 1

Wintech International 4x+ (LW) , 2 x Wintech International 1x , C2 Blades 1 set (£32,598)

End Year 2

Wintech International 4x (LW) . Wintech International 2x ,2 x Wintech International 1x (£41,198)

End Year 3

Wintech International 4x+ (SLW), Wintech Cobra 2x, 1 x Rowperfect (£34,900)

End Year 4

Wintech International 4x , Wintech International 2x, C2 Blades (2 Sets) , 2 x C2 Erg Bikes (£34,720)

End Year 5 (and only if all targets are met)

Wintech International 4x+, Wintech Cobra 4x (£40,900)

Conclusion

The development plan is a collaboration between DSBC, Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation and PODs, and we are grateful to all of those stakeholders who have been involved in shaping this plan.

DSBC is a key part of the Foundation's sport and co-curricular offering. As such the core costs of providing sufficient coaches, the maintenance of boats and the boat house are all covered by the Rowing part of the Sports Department Budget.

The parts of the plan around coaching, membership development and progression pathways can be created as part of the ever-increasing professionalisation of coaching and delivery in the Sports Department. This will ensure club membership will remain high.

By further diversifying the income sources for DSBC (Membership Fees, a re-energised PODS, Sports Lotto and Fundraising in partnership with the Development Office) this plan makes it possible to achieve the Rowing development goals without the need for the Foundation to find additional resources at a time when fee income may be put under significant pressure.

This plan has clear aims, a time scale and a clear plan to gather the resources needed to meet the outcomes for the Club over the next five years.