



Minutes of 62nd Annual General Meeting of the Yorkshire Rowing Council

19 January 2026

Attendees

Dr Celia Hickson	Bradford (BRD)	Chair
David Cottrell	Leeds (LEE)	Treasurer
Meri Middleton	City of Sheffield (CSH)	Coaching Representative
Chris Polack	York (YRK)	Safety Adviser, Competitions and Yorkshire Head
Jessica Edgar-Harris	St Peter's School (SPY)	Outgoing Junior Representative
Megan Jones-Gerrard	Bradford Grammar (BRG)	Incoming Junior Representative
Liz Porte	York (YRK)	Masters Representative
Karen Millar	City of Sheffield (CSH)	Recreational Representative
Michael Senior	York (YRK)	Communications Lead
Jamie Fisher	York St John (YSJ)	
James Maiklen	University of York (UYO)	
Samuel Candy	University of Sheffield (SHU)	
Steve Gunn	St Peter's York (SPY)	
David Raine	Scarborough (SCA)	
Steve Mould	Bradford (BRD)	
William McIlroy	Doncaster (DON)	
Louise Hammond-Wray	Hull (HUL)	

Summary of Agreed Actions

	Action	Person responsible
1	Update and circulate new Constitution	DC
2	Agree dates for 2026 Meetings	DC

1. Apologies

Ameilia Browne, University of Leeds; Adrian Taggart, Doncaster; Ron Drake, Braford; Fiona Pollock, York; Abbie Gifford, University of Leeds)

2. Minutes of AGM held 13 January 2025

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed as correct
- 2.2 All actions had been completed

3. Review of YRC Constitution

DC briefly presented the rationale for change, following which there was a lively discussion during which several further changes were suggested, largely to clarify terminology.

All changes were unanimously agreed by those present.

ACTION: DC to make the necessary changes and circulate the final, agreed constitution



4. Reports from Committee Members

4.1 Chair (Celia Hickson)

The last year has been a successful one for YRC. An excellent well run Yorkshire Head replenished our bank account which enabled us to support those across our region who were adding to their skill set for the benefit of the wider rowing community; trainee launch drivers, coaches and welfare officers all supported by YRC. Others will report on national and international representation at competitions, but I must add that our local athletes show real Yorkshire grit and determination in gaining selection to compete and win at these impressive heights.

4.2 Secretary

No report, position vacant

4.3 Treasurer (David Cottrell)

See Appendix at end of minutes for the Accounts

DC reported that the council funds remain healthy. As of 30 September 2025, the balance carried forward was £13,341.28, compared with £9339.56 at the start of the financial year.

Total expenditure was £5133.29, of which £1666.15 related to the Yorkshire Head.

Total income for the year was £9135.01 and, as usual, was mostly from Yorkshire Head entry fees (£7865.51), which remains our main source of income. The Yorkshire Head made a surplus of £6199.36. this explains the overall increase in funds despite continuing expenditure on training grants.

We ran a second successful coaching Conference at St Peters School, with costs subsidised by the Council.

As long as the Yorkshire Head continues to run, the council's finances are likely to remain healthy, and we will be able to continue to make training grants to club members across the Region.

The accounts were accepted unanimously.

4.4 Coaching (Meri Middleton)

A quiet year from a rep perspective with very little interaction from/to BR since May. Aware of lots of great work going on within the region. Would like to thank Jess for her hard work on organising another fantastic Coaching Conference in September, and to everyone who participated. Awaiting news from BR on delivery of coach development training; would ask all clubs to please encourage awareness of the Yorkshire Council Grant scheme that can support candidates to complete this. Further free regional seminars in the pipeline.

4.5 Juniors (Jess Edgar-Harris)

2025 was a successful year for Yorkshire, improving on previous years' results across the board, locally, nationally and on the international stage seeing qualified crews in 3 HRR events and 1 HWR event from the region and 3 GB vests. 11 A/B finals were reached at NSR, and at many at BR Club Champs. The introduction of The Gorse Boat Club should offer more local competition moving forward and hopefully will support the JIRR Team in future years. The 2025 team was heavily populated by Yarm School and Leeds RC - coaches across the region would like to see



more breadth and depth in 2026 with more clubs represented. We will look to run a training day ahead of the 2026 regatta to support this.

4.6 Students (Abbie Gifford)

This year, the student rowing community in Yorkshire have gone from strength to strength, competing in BUCS Head and Regatta events as well as British Rowing events across the country. A new cohort of beginners across the universities are learning to row, having started in September 2025. Some notable successes from the previous year in the region include Sheffield University's Mens 8+ qualifying for the Temple Challenge Cup at HRR, Edwin Van Lopik of York University winning silver for team GB at the World Rowing Beach Sprints, and Louise Brooks from University of Leeds winning the Chairman's Trophy for Aspirational 4x at HWR. As we look ahead to 2026, it is an exciting time for student rowers in the region and I wish them all the best in the remainder of the season.

In addition, Jamie Fisher (York St John), James Maiklen (University of York) & Samuel Candy (University of Sheffield) presented brief reports on progress at their respective clubs.

4.7 Masters (Liz Porte)

Liz noted that there were three principal issues affecting masters rowers and the subject of discussion at both a Regional and National level.

1. The organisers of Henley Masters have not changed the date, and this is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future. However, the cancellation of the Henley Swim, an event that used to take place the Sunday after Henley Masters, has enabled the extension of the event to three days, including the Sunday. Mixed doubles have been added to the timetable of events.
2. Water quality was a major factor in the decision to cancel the Henley Swim. Water quality is a source of major concern for the Masters Committee, as it is for all rowers (and others!)
3. Handicapping of events. Changes within British Rowing have contributed to slowing of progress.

4.8 Umpires (Ron Drake)

Ron was unable to attend but sent a report:

1. We welcomed 6 newly qualified Umpires to our roster during 2025, and though we lost one other to retirement and another who moved Regions, we welcomed back a returnee. All became fully engaged in the Regatta season, hitting the ground running.
2. We hope to train and admit upto 6 more Umpires this year.
3. We will be having an annual training Seminar for all existing, new and aspirant Umpires on a date to be fixed before April.
4. Further amendments to Rules of Racing will come into effect 1 April, which is a good reason for having the Annual Seminar before then. The content of the amendments is not yet fully determined, but a change in Rule numbering is expected much to the collective dismay of many of us who have mastered the existing numbering through hard memory training!
5. We would welcome more recruits especially from under-represented Clubs - I won't name names!
6. YRUC has supported the affiliation of and running of a new coastal event at Whitby and is asked to offer advice on other suggested events which are not as yet fully developed.

4.9 Safety, Competitions and Yorkshire Head (Chris Polack)

Chris reported on three areas.



Yorkshire Head of the River Race 2025

Held Saturday 1st March 2025, 184 crews accepted.

Barbara Edwards trophy for the fastest women crew - University of York (Ford)

Terry Edwards trophy for the fastest crew - University of York (Wood)

Entries up significantly on the previous year, which probably linked to offering a shorter course (3K). However, some grumbling from big boats that they wanted a longer course.

2026 Competition - Saturday 7th March. It is proposed to revert to the 4.5K course and offer a shorter 3k course for a limited number of boat classes (8x+, 4x+ and some 4x-). Chair of Race Committee - Liz MacDonald, Competition Welfare Officer Deborah Webb.

Volunteers required from all Regional clubs to help put on the competition, which is the main source of funds for the region.

Competitions

The BR competition calendar is being updated regularly, with dates agreed for Yorkshire competitions until December 2026, and proposed dates for 2027. South Yorkshire Head has moved to late March (28th March 2026).

York Autumn Head has unaffiliated.

Proposed East Riding head (7th February 2026) has been cancelled.

If clubs are interested in organising inter club private matches or new affiliated competitions, and would like advice or assistance, please get in touch.

Safety

Safety audits

Audits accepted for all clubs. The Safety Audit process has become progressively more demanding over recent years, which requires a higher standard of document. Clubs need to demonstrate processes for assessing and recording competencies. Regional clubs should recognise this in preparing submissions for the 2026 audit, as I will be looking for a further improvement in the documents submitted.

Incident reporting

186 (173) reports submitted by 15 (15) clubs, (2024 figures in brackets) although a few clubs did not submit any incident reports.

All clubs will have experienced incidents during the year, and everyone is encouraged to report these so that we can identify trends and actions to further improve the safety of the sport.

I would like to see more engagement by clubs once a report has been submitted. What investigation has taken place, what measures have been put in place to prevent reoccurrence etc?

The most frequent causes of incidents are failure to keep a good look out and not following the navigation code; and clubs need to improve education in these areas.



4.10 Communications (Michael Senior)

Michael was co-opted onto the Executive committee in 2025 and has re-taken the role of Comms lead. Since coming back, he has focused on social media through promoting the Coaching Conference and AGM, as well as the regional club organised events: York Small Boats Head and Head of the Don. There has been some good engagement with these posts and growth in followers.

With support of other committee members, we've been resharing things from other club accounts. Looking forward we'll be sharing about Yorkshire Head, regional events hosted by clubs in the region, and our region's entries going to national events. Keen to cover community clubs, students and juniors.

With that in mind, if your club has a bank of photos or someone who does take photos at your events who'd be willing to share, or even just information you'd like shared more widely, this really helps, notwithstanding any permissions etc. Please share via email at yorkshirerowingcouncil@gmail.com.

4.11 Recreational Rowing (Karen Millar)

After contacting Rowing clubs within the Yorkshire region, Doncaster, City of Sheffield and Leeds (Roundhay) have subsequently organised social rowing visits between their clubs in 2025. This allowed rowers to experience new locations, with the focus being recreational rowing, rowing socially in new mixed crews and different boats. Afterwards each hosting club provided lots of cake and drinks afterwards and allowed time to socialise, with opportunities to find out about recreational activities and events that they could take part in. All groups who took part really enjoyed the experience and said they would like this to be regular activity.

The Recreational squad at CSRC takes part in the North West and Yorkshire Explore league and other tours across the country.

Doncaster RC does not have a recreational squad but some of the women members after taking part in events with CSRC want to pursue more rec events in 2026.

UOLRC has now expressed an interest in rowing at Sheffield and possibly other clubs if this can be arranged.

There is a wider conversation ongoing between some clubs looking at how they can engage recreational rowers and keep them involved in their clubs. They recognise the need for those members to feel valued and stay interested in the sport and are questioning how they can prevent them from drifting away.

It is also apparent that not all recreational rowers wish to race and are looking to take part in rowing experiences or challenges of varying degrees. I am keen to hear any ideas on how other clubs promote recreational rowing and start a discussion if anyone needs encouragement or support.

5. Election of Executive Committee

Chair	Celia Hickson - re-elected unopposed
Secretary	Michael Senior – elected unopposed
Treasurer	David Cottrell - re-elected unopposed
Masters Representative	Liz Porte - re-elected unopposed
Student Representative	Abbie Gifford
Junior Representative	Megan Jones Gerrard - elected unopposed
Coaching Representative	Meri Middleton - re-elected unopposed
Rowing Safety Advisor	Chris Polack - re-elected unopposed
Yorkshire Head Organiser	Chris Polack - re-elected unopposed



Umpires Representative
Recreational Rowing Representative
Communications Officer

Ron Drake – in post as chair of Umpires Committee
Karen Millar - re-elected unopposed
Michael Senior - elected unopposed

The Council's thanks were extended to Jess Edgar-Harris who is stepping down as Junior representative.

6. Any other business

William McIlroy noted the expenditure on megaphones and asked about the YRC radios which he understood were old and close to the end of their useful life. Anne Homa is apparently looking into the at York. William suggested that YRC consider hiring radios in future rather than purchasing them.

7. Next meetings

Of Executive Committee Monday evenings, April, July and September
Of AGM, Monday 19.00, Monday 18 January 2027

ACTION: DC will circulate Executive Committee dates to Executive Committee



Appendix 1: Accounts

Yorkshire Rowing Council

Annual Accounts: 01 October 2024 to 30 September 2025

		2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Balance carried forward	01/10/24	9339.56	11013.62	9636.56	11474.55	19281.94
INCOME						
Refund for megaphones						
Lottery						
Yorkshire Head Entry Fees				126.00		
Yorkshire Head Entry Fees from BR	20/03/2025	7865.51	4510.95	3842.89		
From BR	18/11/2024	769.50	719.50	851.00		566.00
Conference fees	Aug-Sep	500.00	550.00			
Total Income		9135.01	5780.45	4819.89	0.00	566.00
EXPENDITURE						
Coaching Course fees						
Gorse Academy BC						
BARC			500.00			
			83.00			
			83.00			
			83.00			
UoLBC				160.00		
LBU			83.00		167.00	



LRC			83.00		83.00
YCRC			83.00	83.00	
York St John			250.00		
Doncaster - Slade, Hague, Webb	23/05/2025	249.00	249.00		
			83.00		
			83.00		
Scarborough			166.00		
St Peters (Conference)	17/10/2024	650.00			
Trailer Driving Course fees					
Sheffield University RC					
RYA 2 Power Boat Course fees					
Sheffield University RC - Creighton, Reason, Critchfield	11/12/2024	160.00	150.00		
BARC				40.00	
YCRC - Hardwick	30/07/2025	48.33		160.00	
YCRC				46.67	
YCRC			50.00		
YCRC			50.00		
YCRC			50.00		
City of Sheffield - Tann	21/10/2024	53.33			
City of Sheffield - Duncan	24/10/2024	53.33			
City of Sheffield - Garnett	11/12/2024	53.33			
City of Sheffield - Coles	05/03/2025	83.00			
Safeguarding Course Fees					
Sheffield University RC					10.00



YCRC			190.00			
Leeds RC			76.00			
Leeds RC	12/03/2025	42.00	13.00			
Coaching & Courses Sub-total		1392.32	2408.00	489.67	250.00	10.00
JIRR Entry Fee	31/07/2025	1958.00	1914.00	1743.00	1350.00	
IMAS						
Phase 1 BARC Accreditation						1000.00
Phase 2 Online Yorkshire event						1500.00
Yorkshire Event Completion						750.00
National Event Preparation						2115.00
Final Payment						1400.00
IMAS Sub total					0.00	6765.00
Miscellaneous						
Annual Report Printing						
Web Hosting				60.00	114.00	114.00
Megaphones	12/10/2024	44.17	1525.20			1379.39
Umpiring Bell	11/05/2025	17.65				
Domain Name renewal				30.00		30.00
Bank Charges, to:	02/08/2025	55.00	60.00	60.80	45.00	
Miscellaneous Sub-total		116.82	1585.20	150.80	159.00	1523.39
Yorkshire Head Expenditure						



Medals	10/01/2025	268.79	297.59			
Cups/ Engraving						
Medical Cover	05/03/2025	416.55	416.55	414.77		
WiFi top up				20.00		
Business Radio Licence						75.00
Toilet Hire	05/03/2025	297.60	297.60	297.60		
Printing & Numbers	10/01/2025	21.28	45.67	29.49		
Printing & Numbers	27/02/2025	27.00				
Refreshments for Volunteers & Petrol				50.00		
Refreshments for Umpires						
Car Parking	04/05/2025	279.36	267.36	240.00		
British Rowing, Competition fee/ Event Insurance					61.00	
Miscellaneous	19/02/2025	187.17	55.12	7.50	17.99	
Miscellaneous - petrol	05/03/2025	54.40	53.42			
Event License	05/01/2025	114.00	114.00			
Yorkshire Head Sub-total		1666.15	1547.31	1059.36	78.99	75.00
Total Expenditure		5133.29	7454.51	3442.83	1837.99	8373.39
Surplus within year				1377.06	-1837.99	-7807.39
Restricted Balance at 30/09/25		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unrestricted Balance at 30/09/25		13341.28	9339.56	11013.62	9636.56	11474.55
Total Balance at 30/09/25 carried forward		13341.28	9339.56	11013.62	9636.56	11474.55