



# Impact Report

2024-25





# Executive Summary

Our Impact Report for 2024-25 demonstrates the range of successes achieved by HRRCT-funded projects this year. The Trust continues to invest in the training and deployment of coaches in underserved communities. Thousands of young people have been involved in rowing over the past 12 months through the support provided by the Trust.

The geographical reach of the Trust has expanded this year to include a new project in Inverness, marking our first venture in Scotland.

Coaching schemes are continually evolving and improving what they do, how they do it and how many young people they reach. Demand for the programmes shows no sign of slowing. We continue to work in close partnership with project leaders, who are best placed to identify the most effective community partners and pinpoint where the greatest needs lie - in short, where HRRCT funds can make the most difference.

Participation in a rowing programme continues to deliver life-changing opportunities, helping children build the tools they will need to live happy, healthy and fulfilled lives. Trust-funded rowing programmes are giving thousands of young people a window to a world that many of them would not otherwise have had.

**Rowing has long been perceived as elitist and inaccessible to many. Through our coaching programmes, this perception is being continuously challenged and changed. Rowing is becoming more widely supported in mainstream schools, with regular engagement benefiting the sport in general.**







# About the Trust

## Our Mandate

“To assist in the provision of facilities and resources to enable and encourage children and young persons in the United Kingdom to participate in activities related to rowing or sculling, thereby helping to ensure that due attention is given to the physical education and all-round development of such persons.”

## Our Trustees

Chris Baillieu (Chair)  
Adam Freeman-Pask  
Dick Lester  
Steve Redgrave  
Richard Stanhope  
Sarah Winckless

## Our Investments

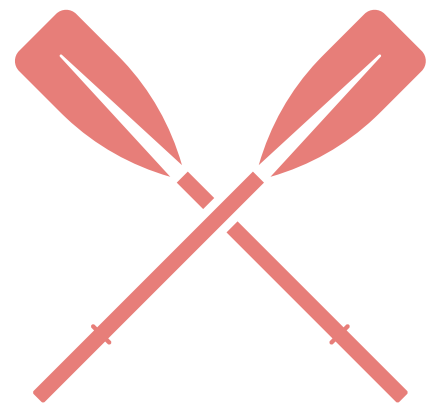
Over the past 37 years, the Trust has invested £6.5 million into grassroots initiatives.

The Trustees are actively investigating fundraising initiatives to extend the reach of the Trust.



# 23

Projects  
operated by  
15 Organisations



# 10,000

Participants attending regular coaching and events reflect the diversity of their local communities, in areas such as gender balance, pupil premium, SEND and ethnic minorities.

# 200

Schools involved



# £486,000

Grants awarded





# Our Projects





# Where we operate

The geographical reach of the Trust has grown again this year, with the inclusion of our first Scottish project at **Inverness Rowing Club**, while **Tyne Rowing Club** runs England's most northerly project.

**All Aboard Youth Rowing** covers a large area in the north west, including Merseyside, Manchester, Macclesfield and Runcorn, with the **Ball Cup North** being staged at Runcorn.

**East Anglia Youth Rowing** has projects in Norwich, Cambridge, Ely, Sudbury and Huntingdon.

Two academy groups provide coaching programmes: **Gorse Academies Trust** in Leeds and **Castle Mead Academy** in Leicester.

Projects in the south include **Henley Rowing Club, Henley Regatta for the Disabled, Oarsome Chance** at Portsmouth, Gosport and Havant, and the **Ball Cup South** at Dorney Lake.

**London Youth Rowing** runs projects in Bristol, Nottingham, Leeds and Islington, with **NJIRC** providing a country-wide competitive arena through virtual and in-person events. In addition to the LYR Islington project, London also has coaching programmes in Hounslow and Barn Elms, run by **Hounslow Community Rowing Trust** and **Enable**, respectively.

Funds are awarded to the **Rowing Foundation**, which provides small grants for equipment.





# What other people are saying

“The Inverness outreach programme, made possible by the HRRCT investment, is already delivering measurable growth in rowing's reach, relevance, and community connection in the Highlands.

The programme has opened up new experiences, broadened horizons, and provided a positive outlet that supports wellbeing, attendance, and engagement with learning.

Lee Boucher, CEO Scottish Rowing

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“Our rowing programme has had a transformative impact on both our school and our scholars, particularly given that 47% of our students are pupil premium. Scholars are developing technical skills, teamwork and resilience in a setting outside the classroom.

In leading this work, Inverness Rowing Club is helping to change outdated perceptions of the sport and demonstrate that rowing can be enjoyed by everyone.

Sam Lee, Head of Rowing, Castle Mead Academy

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# Supporting our Communities



- Between 31% and 92% of participants in each project have a **SEND** diagnosis, which means they have been identified as having special education needs and disabilities. These may include difficulties with communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and health issues; and sensory or physical needs.
- Projects include a broad demographic mix, with between 35% and 62% of participants being from **ethnic minorities**, broadly representing their local communities. For comparison, ethnic minorities made up 19% of the population in England in 2021, according to the Census in that year.
- **Gender balance** is roughly equal, and some projects run all-female groups.
- The proportion of participants on **Pupil Premium** is between 20% and 68%. These pupils are from disadvantaged backgrounds and receive free school meals.



**It has shown me there is so much more to life than just sitting in my room on my X-Box.**

It's not just about rowing.

Young people learn life skills, confidence, social skills, resilience and independence by attending one of our rowing programmes.





# Evaluating what we do

**Measuring value for money consistently and fairly presents an ongoing challenge.**

We could count total participants, annual coaching hours, the number of indoor and outdoor sessions, and measure success in competitions. But the most impactful feedback focuses on the less tangible outcomes: the benefits of participation in a rowing programme contribute to improved attendance, behaviour, academic engagement, and overall well-being.

School Heads report a reduction in truancy rates, better concentration in class and a general improvement in attainment in those who participate in a rowing programme.

**“The positive changes in student motivation, school culture, and aspiration demonstrate a strong return on investment. This funding has been absolutely pivotal in what we have managed to achieve and deliver. Without it, we would have been unable to pay for the coaching and supervision required for the sessions.”**

Castle Mead Academy







# Placing Rowing on the Curriculum

“I thought rowing was only for kids from privileged backgrounds. My own view has been challenged and changed.”  
Head of PE, Bishop Young Cof E Academy, Leeds

**All Aboard Youth Rowing** uses funding from their participating schools to provide team kit, featuring the logos of HRRCT, AAYR and their school. It not only equips pupils for the programme but also fosters a sense of pride, belonging and team spirit. A willingness to use their funds in this way illustrates only too clearly the value that the 43 schools place on the coaching provided by the Trust.

At Chiltern Edge School, part of the **Henley Rowing Club** programme, the ergo and rowing clubs have strengthened the school community, both for students and parents, with the result that they have made rowing part of their sports curriculum for the next academic year, with all students learning to row indoors.

In September 2023, there was no rowing at Bluecoat Trent School, but with the help of **London Youth Rowing** they acquired some ergos. The buy-in from staff and students has been high; rowing is now part of the Bluecoat sports day, and rowing is on the curriculum for all students for the long-term.



# Participant Voices

“ I have a hearing impairment and my cox has learnt to give me hand signals when instructing the crew, so I feel included and understand what to do. ”

“ I love rowing, because I am pretty darn good at it. ”

“ I have found that rowing has made me a lot more active, as in the past I have not exercised. ”



# Parent Voices

“My daughter has increased in confidence, self-esteem and fitness. Her wellbeing is directly impacted by her participation in sessions.

It has helped her to sleep and to focus, especially during what has been a very difficult year for her, and as someone who struggles a lot with building friendships, it provides a safe and inspiring setting for her to mix with others.”



“Rowing has greatly improved my child’s mental health, offering focus and calmness beyond the water. Unlike traditional school sports, rowing provides a unique mix of skill, discipline, and teamwork, which they’ve embraced wholeheartedly.

They often share how it has enriched their school life, building resilience and fostering strong connections with peers. Personally, it has boosted their confidence and taught them the value of perseverance and collaboration.”

“My son has enjoyed rowing and has a sense of pride from doing it. He enjoys coordinating with a team, being at the bow and coxing.

He likes the outdoor 'on the river' nature of the sport, and it’s a real privilege to try during school time. It's so nice that he can take advantage of the river. Most watersports are expensive. We didn't even know he could try rowing free, so this has been amazing.”







# NJIRC

**8,023 participants made this the UK's largest indoor rowing event**

This year, LYR responded to the pressure on school PE budgets by running NJIRC virtually. With support from HRRCT and British Rowing, the online event was more affordable for schools, clubs and individuals to attend, increasing the reach, inclusivity and accessibility of the UK's largest indoor rowing event, matching the objectives of the Trust by encouraging young people to engage in rowing activities.

This one-week event had hubs in Leeds, Nottingham, Bristol, London and Kent, with the bulk of the entries coming from online participation.

Plans for next year include a hybrid competition with a virtual element and live events in London and the North of England.



# The Trust at HRR 2025

The Trust enjoyed an enhanced presence at this year's Regatta, with large-scale photographic displays in both Enclosures depicting rowing activities from many of our projects, raising awareness of the Trust's work.

We welcomed 40 project leaders and coaches who joined us for a networking event on the first day of racing. This gave them a forum in which to share their experiences and issues, to discuss ideas and to forge valuable working relationships together. It also provided an opportunity for many of them to connect with the Trustees in person for the first time, and for the Trustees to hear first-hand about their progress.

A presentation was made by Chris Baillieu and Steve Redgrave in the Sodexo hospitality marquee, raising awareness of the Trust.

New for this year was the inclusion of a professionally produced video promoting the work of the Trust, featuring clips and interviews from participants and coaches. It was shown every day on the live broadcast during the lunch and tea breaks.

An income of £27,500 was generated at the 2025 Regatta through fundraising initiatives, including private donations, an auction of artwork, donations at the HRR Shop and the Sodexo silent auction.





# Thank you for your support

