

Club development and fundraising

Yare Boat Club – funds for the physical improvement of its facilities

Overview of financial position 7 July 2023			Grants	Club funds
New lightweight boatshed	£130,000			
Grant		£80,000		
Club funds				£50,000
Misting system	£17,000			
Club funds				£17,000
Conversion of existing boathouse to clubhouse	£48,000			
Club funds committed				£8,000
Grants to date		£14,000		
Total raised/committed to date	£169,000			
Balance to raise	£26,000			

Background



Our aim is to grow the rowing club on the north side of the River Yare and to make it distinctly different to the Norwich Rowing Club on the south side of the river by focusing less on high level competition and more on engagement, fun and an increasingly diverse membership able to enjoy our unique wetland landscape.

Yare Boat Club (YBC) is based just to the east of Norwich in Thorpe St Andrew. The club is a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) offering recreational and

competitive rowing opportunities, run by a voluntary committee and a committed membership.

The club is a CASC and a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. The club, founded in 1911, has been on its current site since 1915. It owns its property and has low running costs, which have always been covered by fee income with the ability to purchase new boats as and when required.

We have had a plan in place since May 2020, with planning permission, for physical changes to our facilities. This plan was delayed by the Covid pandemic but is now being implemented.

We aim to

- Improve the physical infrastructure to bring it up to date and make it a pleasant place to be

- Reach out to our local community working to increase the diversity of our membership

We plan to do this by

- Building a new boatshed to accommodate the boats currently stored in a small boathouse and others stored outside, to allow for the conversion of the existing boathouse to a club house.
- Improving the outdated indoor facilities in the structurally sound brick and block-built boathouse to provide three toilets, two changing rooms each with a shower, rather than just one shower as at present, an indoor training area and a small kitchenette and social space
- Implementing an outreach programme to reach, in the first instance, 18–24-year-olds in the lower socio-economic areas within our catchment area

We have now completed the first phase of our club improvement plan - the new boatshed. This phase of the project was promoted by Broadland District Council to the local Infrastructure Investment Fund through which we obtained a capital grant of £80,000 in addition to £1,500 trust funds. This was supplemented by £50,000 from club reserves and a substantial amount of voluntary work from club members.



We have also secured funding for our outreach programme to increase the diversity of our club focusing, in the first instance, on young people aged 18-24, including those leaving care. We have started work with local youth-focused teams in both the district and county authorities and with Sprowston Youth Project. We have been awarded a revenue grant of £3,525 by Active Norfolk, supported by Sport England, to run this programme starting in the Spring.

The club has full ownership of the property, which gives greater confidence to any investment, and a membership fully behind the plan. The club has some very skilled, knowledgeable, committed and active members able to lead and support the development and the support of British Rowing. In 2022 our Club Captain was awarded 2022 Volunteer of the Year at the British Rowing National Awards.

Our funding needs

We are now raising funds for the **final phase of the project** to make our premises a pleasant place to be with much improved changing and showering facilities, a training area and the social facilities that are expected in a modern thriving club. The club has very outdated physical facilities – one toilet, one shower and very cramped changing rooms, no kitchen and no training nor social area.

YBC has grown in the last 2 years. In February 2020, Broadland Boat Club, unable to renew its lease, merged with YBC. At the start of 2020, YBC had 38 members and Broadland BC 25. Since then, YBC, as the combined club, has gained several new members from learn to row courses and from new experienced rowers. Total membership is now over 80, meaning that participation has increased on the north side of the River Yare by 30% and facilities at **YBC now need to cater for a 115% increase in membership in relation to the facilities on the site.**

The club offers rowing at a **very reasonable level of membership fees** in order to make it accessible. The maximum fee for an adult for 2023 is £280. For any novice, once they have attended a learn to row course, they will be supported through coaching in a development group and, once competent, they can have free access to the boats and facilities of the club all year round.

We have applied to several trusts so far and **been successful in gaining a contribution** of £5,000 from The Geoffrey Watling Trust with the money to be transferred once all monies have been secured to complete the project, £3,000 from the Kip and Alison Bertram Trust, £2,000 from the Paul Bassham Charitable Trust, £2,000 from the John Jarrold Trust and £2,000 from the Norwich North Alpha Lions Club.

The club will need to raise £48,000 altogether to complete this capital part of phase 2 of our project. The club can allocate £8,000 from its 2023 fee income to this part of the work. **We hope that other trusts may be able to contribute some £5,000 each** for this last phase of improvement work.

The club hopes that funds will be secured as soon as possible to ensure the work can go ahead later this year so that by next winter there are indoor facilities for training, socialising and keeping dry and warm.

The Club Captain, a voluntary role will take the lead in overseeing the work on behalf of the Club Board of Directors. The work will be undertaken by three tradespeople – builder, plumber and electrician - with club members supporting in unskilled activities with careful oversight. This worked well for the first phase of the project.