



To this end both qualitative and quantitative research was commissioned by AstraZeneca from TNS. We now have the outcome of the research and further work with a Brand development agency Brand(X). The ARA is providing opportunities for all levels of management and staff at AZ to engage with the ARA, as a successful sport at both world and community level, and with our desire to market and expand the sport even more effectively. Both organizations have found much synergy and common purposes in their joint objectives, and look forward to a close and productive relationship leading up to London 2012.

5.3 World Class Performance

Rowing continues to be one of Great Britain's most successful sports on the World Stage. In 2008 our athletes were overall winners of the FISA World Cup, and once again have been very successful at Olympic level, winning 2 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze medals at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, where we were the top rowing nation, and made a significant contribution to TeamGB.

The 2000 metre elite rowing training facility at Caversham plays a vital role in providing a dedicated still-water training site for our High Performance athletes, and it is operating in excess of predicted levels of activity for the athletes on our World Class programmes. We continue to regard this facility as crucial to our success at world level.

5.4 Clubs

Clubs are at the centre of the sport of rowing, and are a key factor in both recruiting and retaining people of all ages in the sport. They provide a community identity for their members and, where appropriate levels of investment and support for both volunteers and facilities have been made, have proved to be highly successful in delivering sustainable, long-term participation in rowing.

Clubs are also the base for developing our talented athletes to achieve their potential and we will continue to develop a strategic and systematic approach to increasing the breadth and depth of the talent pool.

Our aim will be to build the capacity of a substantial number of clubs, by supporting them in modernising and improving facilities and equipment, increasing the uptake of training and education, and forming lasting and mutually beneficial links with the local community, schools and universities.

Coaching will be an important ingredient of success at all levels, and our Coaching Action Plan, developed with SCUUK will drive the improvements needed to improve the experience of coaches and coaching at all levels.

We recognise the value of volunteers in delivering community sport, and it is crucially important for us to attract and retain more volunteers and to reduce the burden of bureaucracy that faces today's volunteer workforce and which can so easily detract from the satisfaction that volunteering brings to the individual.

5.5 Capital Investment

The club capital investment programme (through CCDP and CIF) has been highly successful in providing modern, efficient and welcoming places for people taking part in rowing. In most cases volunteers are entirely responsible for the ownership and management of their clubs, producing substantial savings in the running costs of the sport. Rowing has not in the main benefited from Local Authority provision of



sporting facilities, and the ARA and its clubs have taken on the responsibility of providing community facilities.

It is therefore extremely important that capital funding continues to be provided to develop facilities for our sport.

We will seek opportunities to develop new clubs where there is an existing water facility, as well as supporting proposals for sustainable new water and land based facilities. There are particular challenges in developing new clubs in urban areas where large rowing programmes are developed in schools, and where there is an insufficient local club network to provide on-water opportunities for many who want to take up the sport.

We will seek every opportunity to work with regional agencies, including SE regional offices, CSPs, RDAs, Environment Agency, British Waterways, mineral extraction companies and any other agencies with responsibility for development and planning of both urban and rural spaces.

Boats and equipment are basic 'tools of the trade' on both water and land, and need to be appropriate for the needs of the participants. The development of a wider range of boats, particularly those that are more stable, light, inexpensive and adaptable for use by all participants, suitable for both competition and recreation will be important to growing our participant base and retaining people in the sport.

5.6 Performance and talent pathways

Clubs have also played a vital role in providing a talent pathway through the performance continuum from the first experience of rowing in school or the community right through to representation at World and Olympic level. In England, the World Class programmes identify talented individuals who can be supported and nurtured to achieve excellence. Clubs will be supported and encouraged to develop talented individuals within the club environment to excel and to achieve their potential.

5.7 Major rowing water sites

In the past four years the ARA has successfully staged World Class events at the Olympic regatta site at Dorney Lake, and the World Junior Championships will be held at Dorney in 2011. Dorney Lake also provides a venue for some of the larger club run multi-lane regattas, that now attract a big club entry.

The National Water Sports Centre at Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, is the venue for the majority of our major national championship regattas, including the National Championships, National Schools Regatta, Junior Inter-regionals, National Schools Regatta, British Universities Regatta and the National Veterans Regatta, as well as providing the only 2,000m lake with on-site accommodation to support training camps for young athletes. We look forward to working with Nottingham County Council in developing rowing at the NWSC when they take over responsibility for its operation in 2009.

The London Regatta Centre provides an important 2,000 metre regatta course, as well as running large scale participation and development schemes for young people in East London and as a base for London Youth Rowing (LYR) to develop both indoor and on-water rowing in schools and youth clubs throughout London. The ARA works closely with LYR to support delivery of these programmes. The Centre is also at the leading edge of development for adaptive rowing in the UK including the Paralympic programme.

The ARA works closely with colleagues from the SARA and WARA and their respective regatta courses at Strathclyde Park and Cardiff Bay, to provide both international and national regattas.



The ARA supports the development of new regatta courses, including the development of a specific rowing lake at the Cotswold Water Park, where the first rowing event was organized by BUCS (previously BUSA) in 2008.

5.8 Competition

The core activity for many club members is the ARA's annual calendar of competitions that are run throughout the country and throughout the year, with regattas in the summer months and head of the river races in the winter. The major competitions such as the National Championships, National Schools and Veterans regattas, the BUCS Championships, multi-lane regattas, and five Tideway Head of the River races attract many thousands of competitors and are run by a large contingent of volunteer organisers, umpires and officials. These are supplemented by many and varied traditional river events, that are part of the history and culture of our cities, towns and villages, and are very much valued and supported by their local communities.

We expect these events to flourish, and the recent review of competition status points aims to ensure that the structure of the system encourages and enables rowers to progress, and to gain satisfaction and rewards, to carry on competing. The system also underpins the athlete pathway for talented individuals to achieve their potential and reach regional, national and international representation.

We will ensure that we develop easy entry and exit pathways from the competition structure from and to other competitive and non-competitive rowing activities.

The volunteers that work so hard to organise ARA competitions are crucial in providing a highly trained and technically competent workforce to run all aspects of international rowing events in the UK. The 2006 World Rowing Championships at Dorney Lake was organized almost entirely by 600 volunteers who gave their time and expertise over the 2 weeks of the event. The Event was also very successful in providing substantial economic impact, c. £2.5M to the South East. Capturing and developing this expertise will be crucial to the success of future events in the UK, including the Olympic regatta in 2012.

5.9 London 2012

The 2012 Olympic Games, London 2012, provide an unprecedented opportunity to showcase our sport through our GB Team and to provide a lasting legacy for rowing for future generations. We will be developing programmes in the East London Olympic boroughs and in adjacent areas to the Dorney Lake Olympic regatta course where the profile will be highest, and will ensure that our clubs throughout the country benefit from the increased interest in sport in general and rowing in particular.

5.10 Indoor Rowing

Indoor rowing has grown in popularity, with many participants in schools, rowing clubs and gyms using rowing machines to keep fit, for training for rowing and other sports, and for competition. The ARA's Project Oarsome scheme, launched in 1999, provided a systematic programme to link schools and clubs through indoor rowing in schools, and many schemes throughout the country have built on this success.

To date there has been no quality technical training for teaching and coaching indoor rowing, and this has led to many indoor rowers using bad technique. The ARA has now launched new UKCC endorsed Level 1 and Level 2 coaching qualifications for indoor rowing coaches and fitness instructors. The qualifications will be made widely available through trainers being employed through ISPAL and EFDS.



Additionally a new training course for teachers of indoor rowing, in line with the new PE curriculum – Indoor Rowing in Secondary Schools, was launched in July 2008.

The ARA will continue to work with ISPAL, EFDS and other partners to support indoor rowers of all ages and to encourage them to further participation in sport.

5.11 Corporate Governance

Good corporate governance and effective good practice policies including Equality, Child Protection, Water Safety etc. will continue to be developed and will underpin all our activities.

The ARA will be examining its professional and staff structure to ensure that our currently well regarded management structure, can respond to the challenges of our ambitious plans for the future, and in particular to look to broadening our financial base.

We will also examine our volunteer and committee structure to ensure that we retain our ability to progress and implement our Strategic Plan in a timely and effective way, and to ensure that the views of our members, the clubs and competitions, and the individuals who participate at all levels of the sports are represented.

5.12 Central Administration

Our administrative offices will continue to provide support for our programmes, our members, and committees in the areas of governance, finance, HR, IT, research, communications, PR, monitoring and evaluation, and liaison with our partners.

5.13 Invest in more Success

The ARA acknowledges the excellent support it has received from Sport England, UKSport and other partners, and believe that *with the appropriate investment, it can deliver ambitious targets to develop rowing and to make a significant contribution to the development of a world-leading community sport system for rowing and to a world-class system for success on the world stage.*

6 Our Strategic Targets in line with Sport England Outcomes

6.1 Outcome 1 – Excel

Increasing the breadth and depth of the talent pool

The ARA has had notable success in the past with all of its world medal-winning athletes being developed through ARA affiliated clubs. We were however aware that some potentially talented individuals were being missed as they did not attend schools with a rowing programme, or did not go on to further or higher education institutions where rowing was offered.

The World Class start and potential programme has sought to address this by concentrating on identifying talented individuals through an extensive testing system for schools and through working closely with the HE sector. This strategy has proved successful with a number of young athletes now coming through to compete as GB team members in international events, including the Beijing Olympic Games.



Clubs have been central to achieving these successful outcomes, as it is the clubs that nurture and support talented rowers. If we are to remain the top rowing national, it is essential that we continue to find ways to assist clubs to widen both the breadth and the depth of the talent pool.

Coaches are critical to this process, and the new UKCC L3 and L4, together with tailored programmes of CPD and mentoring will be developed to support club competition coaches.

We will measure our success through the progress of rowers through ARA competition status points, and by narrowing the gap between the winning crews and other finalists at leading national regattas, i.e. National Championships, BUCS Championships, National Schools Regatta and other major multi-lane regattas.

We will be seeking to substantially increase the number of Adaptive rowers competing regularly and achieving success.

6.2 Outcome 2 – Sustain

Our aim will be to Increase the satisfaction of all who take part in the sport of rowing, at whatever level, whether as an active rower, a volunteer, race organiser or official, coach, parent or supporter.

If this is to be successful clubs need to be well resourced and well organised, with the appropriate support and recognition for their work.

The ARA's core membership has continued to grow at a steady rate in the past 8 years at a time when there has been a decline in overall sport participation. The support in recent years through investment in club facilities, coaching and volunteering has been crucial in achieving this. We need to continue this investment in facilities, equipment, coaching and volunteers to maintain services to our current members.

Research shows that we could do even better particularly in providing a wider range of competitive and non-competitive activities for a range of potential participants for whom our existing competition programme is too demanding in terms of training, time, commitment and cost, in particular we will target

- Parents, friends, indoor rowers and others who are attracted to the sport but are discouraged by the demands of the existing competition programme.
- 35+ participants from other team sports, e.g. rugby, hockey, netball – research shows a substantial drop out from these sports starting at 35+ and which accelerates rapidly at 45+; these people enjoy sport and look for sport and personal challenges that will fit in with a busy lifestyle and are low impact
- 'lapsed' rowers who enjoyed the sport but dropped out because of competing commitments for their time #
- Higher education students

We will be developing proposals for a new series of more flexible non-status competitions and other activities that will be more suited to individuals who do not wish to train intensively or travel substantial distances to competitions. The latter is increasingly important with increasing costs of travel.