



FULHAM REACH BOAT CLUB

EST. 2014

## Update and Impact Report

September 2020 – August 2021



*“Rowing forces you to be in the moment and forget about anything worrying you”*  
- State school rowing participant

The 2020-2021 year has been like no other. Lockdowns shut us down but also opened us up to new ways of working, resourcefulness, reflection and reaffirmation of our mission and purpose. Through the uncertainty and unfamiliarity came resilience, community, charity in the very best sense of the word and clarity. We are so thankful to everyone that supported us over the last 12 months.

FRBC has a unique vision to improve lives through rowing by providing “Rowing for All”, which is now more important than ever, as we work to redress the decline in young people's physical activity levels and support their mental and social health through our state school rowing programmes, supporting those young people whom the pandemic has hit the hardest. The Covid-19 pandemic has heightened the existing deep-rooted inequalities in sport and physical activities and widened the margin between those young people that can access sport and those that cannot.

*“78% of parents said their children were doing less than the government’s recommended 60 minutes of activity a day, while 11% of parents said their children were doing no physical activity at all during the pandemic”*

The Youth Sport Trust

At FRBC we give access to rowing to a cross-section of our community, especially those who are most in need because of financial hardship or social circumstance and help them realise their full potential both on and off the water. Specifically, we aim to give every student in Hammersmith and Fulham state schools and surrounding area the opportunity to learn to row, we tackle “food insecurity” over the long summer holiday, help reduce the reoffending rate of serving prisoners and give the local community access to the river. Fulham Reach Boat Club is a rowing club in London with a difference.

Fulham Reach Boat Club, Unit A, Distillery Wharf, Chancellors Road, Fulham, London W6 9GX

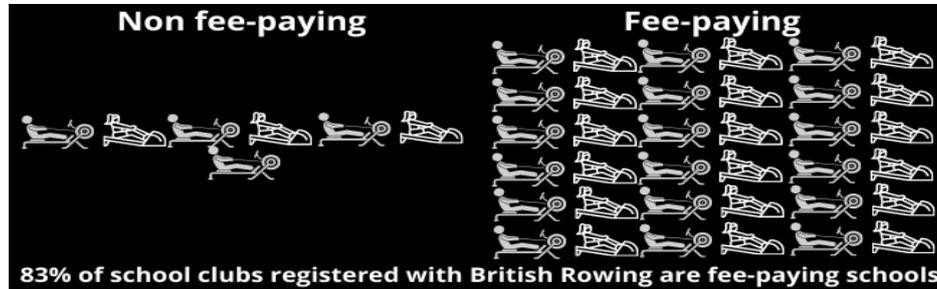
Company Number: 8900584 Registered Charity Number: 1161813

020 3356 7154 [info@fulhamreachboatclub.com](mailto:info@fulhamreachboatclub.com)



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Most young people don't get the opportunity to go rowing as demonstrated by 83% of school clubs registered with British Rowing are fee-paying schools.

93% of children in the UK attend a non fee-paying school. Children at non fee-paying schools are missing the opportunity, every single day:

- to discover a love of an active lifestyle outside of the traditional ball sports
- to be more active than non-rowers in a sport that uses 85% of the body's muscles
- to become water-confident and have fun on the river
- to build essential life skills such as teamwork, confidence, and focus, all of which rowing is a wonderful teacher of

FRBC goes above and beyond to level the playing field and make rowing accessible, particularly to those most in need, unlocking the true potential of young people through rowing.

*"Before the Covid-19 pandemic, we were achieving record levels of activity in England. Now we're working tirelessly to get that momentum back, and crucially, to reach people who've traditionally been excluded across the country"* Sport England

## How many took part?

The first school term of 2020/21 started in September with the endless possibilities of getting back to normal on the water and we were able to start delivering sessions for 3 of our schools.

After Lockdown 2, December started well with a return to the water for a few weeks before London succumbed to Tier 4 just before Christmas. Despite these incredibly testing times, we are delighted to have made quite an impact between September – December 2020:

- 3 schools attending
- 138 state school students on the water
- 158 coached sessions delivered
- 1,640 participant hours rowed

January 2021 saw Lockdown 3 and the FRBC team jumped into action delivering more than 160 online sessions to schools and members. As well as this, we ran another online Strava Boat Club involving 25 Boat Clubs from across the UK and even had the honour of our own club Q&A session on Zoom with Sir Matthew Pinsent. From 29th March we could reopen and start delivering state school rowing sessions again.



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At the end of our first full half-term on the water since opening up again, we were supporting 7 of our schools including one new PRU school too. We were able to survey our state school students after six weeks to see what impact the sessions were having on them and the results were very encouraging:

- 200 students from local schools took part
- 848 school participant attendances on the water
  
- 98% enjoyed being on the river
- 94% learned to work as part of a team
- 75% learnt to focus more
- **100%** felt more confident on the river
- 90% would like to compete
- 90% would like to keep rowing
  
- There was a 7% drop in young people who were active for less than 30 mins a day
- There was a 17% rise in young people who were active for more than 60 mins a day
- Overall feelings of anxiousness since the ending of lockdown had dropped by 50%
- Overall feelings of satisfaction were up by 10% at the end of the rowing course

During the summer term (after lockdown ended) we made the following impact:

- 256 students from local schools took part
- 1,401 school participant attendances on the water
- 207 school sessions on the water

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, we had achieved record levels of rowing participation in 14 different state schools across LBHF and RBKC. We are now back to working with 8 schools altogether (6 main stream state, 1 PRU and 1 Independent).

### Describe your experience at FRBC in one word!



### What else would you like to tell us about FRBC?

- Rowing is cool!
- Just a big thank you to the instructors
- I had fun
- Nice coaches
- Thank you
- Rowing has helped my productivity
- Rowing is great
- Love this course



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## Highlights

- Opening up the club at the end of March and returning to “Rowing for All”
- Being honoured with British Rowing’s Charity of the Year and Project of the Year in December.
- Sacred Heart High School sent a Girls Double to the National Schools Regatta for the first time ever and narrowly missed out on Henley Women’s Regatta qualification.
- Kensington Aldridge Academy Year 10 Curriculum sessions started. Kensington Aldridge Academy is the school that stood in the shadows of the Grenfell Tower. Pupils started to row with FRBC not long after the tragic fire.
- Schuyler, our young rower who gained a scholarship to Eton College after rowing at FRBC, and Jake, Tashi and Pamela from Kensington Aldridge Academy, who appear in our “Friends of Fulham Reach” film, returned to volunteer this summer imparting their knowledge and rowing passion to a new generation of rowers, whilst also developing their leadership skills.
- In July we had our first FRBC Junior win of the year with J18 Moe winning the J18 single scull at Molesey Regatta.
- We were once again hugely grateful to be recognised by the sponsors of The Boat Race who donated £25,000 to FRBC to support 36 junior members next year as part of an extended Bursary Scheme that we established with Oxford University Boat Club in 2020.



*“Thanks so much to you and your team for the brilliant sessions this term and we look forward to starting up again in September.” West London Free School teacher*

## Thank you and the year ahead

National lockdowns and Covid-19 have shown us the importance of good health and physical activity and underlined how this is linked to our mental wellbeing. During the last difficult year we have learnt that FRBC is so much more than a place to learn to row. Our community lies at the heart of everything we do and we have become stronger together. We have created a place for young people to belong, grow and build resilience through the power of sport at a time when they need it most. The year ahead will see us get all our state schools back to the water and extend our reach to more schools and those in need.

We are extremely grateful to all the students, teachers, governors, parents, members, donors, trustees, coaches, volunteers, friends, family and everyone else that has helped us over the last 12 months. Your support enables us to continue to rebuild our charity, reach more young people, build, and strengthen our community and continue to provide “Rowing for All”.