

**NOTICE & AGENDA FOR THE 45TH BRITISH CANOEING
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Tuesday 18th March 2025
Virtual Meeting
7:00pm**

**ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING 2025**

The Annual General Meeting will be held remotely via Zoom using the LUMI Voting Platform

**BRITISH CANOEING
(Trading as Paddle UK)**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**TUESDAY 18TH MARCH 2025 AT 7PM
TO BE HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM
USING THE LUMI VOTING PLATFORM**

1. Notice is hereby given that the 45th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of British Canoeing will be held on Tuesday 18th March 2025 at 7pm.
2. British Canoeing is the registered legal name of Paddle UK.
3. The AGM will take place as a fully virtual meeting, as permitted under the Articles of Association and in line with our Environmental Sustainability Strategy. All Members are invited to attend, vote and participate in the AGM. Instructions on how to join virtually will be sent directly to members upon registration.
4. LUMI have been appointed to provide the platform to administer voting arrangements for the AGM, while the virtual meeting will be hosted on Zoom.
5. Members will be asked to consider and vote on the resolutions below. All items are ordinary resolutions, which may be passed by Members with a simple majority of more than 50% of the votes cast.
 - Item 2.1: To adopt the minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting held on 12th March 2024.
 - Item 2.2: To adopt the minutes of the General Meeting held on 25th November 2024.
 - Item 4: To adopt the accounts for the financial year 1.11.23 to 31.10.24.
 - Item 5: To re-appoint 'HaysMac' as the Auditors for the financial year 1.11.24 to 31.10.25 and to authorise the directors to fix their remuneration.
 - Item 6: To adopt the 45th Annual Report of British Canoeing for 2024.
 - Item 8: To approve the appointment of Ashley Hunter, Director nominated to the Board by Paddle Northern Ireland.
 - Item 9: To approve the re-appointment of Nick Donald as an Independent Director and his appointment as Chair of the Board of Directors.
6. Further details of the full business of the AGM, including the agenda, and how to register and vote by Proxy, are available on our website [here](#).



Ashley Metcalfe
Chief Executive

British Canoeing (trading as Paddle UK)
National Water Sports Centre
Adbolton Lane
Holme Pierrepont
Nottingham
NG12 2LU
<https://paddleuk.org.uk/>

BRITISH CANOEING 45TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – AGENDA

BRITISH CANOEING (Trading as Paddle UK)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 18TH MARCH 2025 AT 7PM

AGENDA

1. Welcome by Professor John Coyne CBE, Chair, British Canoeing.
2. To adopt the minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting held on 12th March 2024 and to adopt the minutes of the General Meeting held on 25th November 2024.
3. To consider matters arising from the minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting.
4. To adopt the accounts for the financial year 1.11.23 to 31.10.24.
5. To re-appoint 'HaysMac' as the Auditors for the financial year 1.11.24 to 31.10.25 and to authorise the directors to fix their remuneration.
6. To adopt the 45th Annual Report of British Canoeing for 2024.
7. To announce the appointment of Caroline Barnes, Director appointed by the English Membership pursuant to Article 47(c).
8. To approve the appointment of Ashley Hunter, Director nominated to the Board by Paddle Northern Ireland.
9. To approve the re-appointment of Nick Donald as an Independent Director and his appointment as Chair of the Board of Directors.

Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 19:00
Virtual Meeting

In Attendance:

Voting Members:

Matthew Allen; Michel Aslangul; Nicola Baird; Lee Barnett; Paul Bate; David Belbin; Howard Blackman; Neil Blackman; Paul Brazinskas; Iain Campbell; Robert Canning; Brian Chapman; David Clare; John Costello; Jonathan Cowdock; Stephen Craig; Michael Davies; Rob Davis; Jess Day; Mark-Jan Dielemans; Rebecca Downton; James Duffy; Alex Edwards; Sarah-Jayne Evans; Andrew Good; Chris Gordon; Derek Hairon; John Handyside; Dave Hastie; Dane Hitchcock; Lesley Hodge; Sue Hornby; Noel Humphrey; Emma Ince; Chris Johnson; Dean Russell Jordan; Steph Kleisser; Karen Kristiansen; Claire Lambert; Ivan Lawler; Andrew James Lear; Joseph Lo; Ian Mapp; Hazel McDonald; Sophie McElhill; Martin McGrath; Adam Miles; Charles Miller; Matt Mills; Stan Missen; Holly Mobbs; Andy Murray; Andrew Ostler; Andy Oughton; Dee Paterson; Nicola Pearce; Ross Pearton; Thomas Philbey; Miguel Ramalho; Samantha Rankin; Lorraine Rose; James Rossiter; Stefania Rosso; Clare Rutter; Greg Smale; Stuart Smith; Andrew Steel; Nick Taylor; Stewart Tedaldi; John Teuwen; Sarah Thomas; Louise Tinson; Andrew Train; Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder; Marc Wade; Tom Wade; James Wiggins; Deborah Wilkes; Cathy Wynne; Stephen Young.

British Canoeing Board Members:

Ashley Metcalfe, Chief Executive (AM); Richard Boreham (RB); Kerry Chown (KC); John Coyne, Chair (JC); Clare Dallaway (CD); Nick Donald (ND); Martine Kushner (MK); Zoey Rowe (ZR); Manpreet Sehmbi (MS); Greg Spencer (GS)

Staff Members in Attendance:

Charmaine Collins; Colin Dinshaw; Sandy Drummond; Chris Earle; Chris Furber; Susan Hicks; James Hives; Rob Knott; Andy Maddock; Ruth Norfolk; Lee Pooley; Rich Ramsdale; Mark Ratcliffe; Ben Sansom; Ben Seal; Nancy Squires; James Unsworth; Barry Wade; Gareth Wilson; Keir Worth.

Apologies:

Lisa Bryant; Alan Laws; James Miller; Steve Watts.

1. Welcome by Professor John Coyne CBE, Chairman, British Canoeing.

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

JC introduced himself, along with Ashley Metcalfe, Chief Executive Officer. He advised that Nick Donald, Director and Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee would join the meeting remotely. He also advised that several Board Members and officers were also present to assist in various parts of the AGM as required.

JC noted that it was the third fully virtual AGM held by British Canoeing which aligns nicely to the Environmental Sustainability Strategy. JC confirmed 209 members had registered to join

the meeting and that over 90 were online at the start of the meeting. He advised that this number may rise and fall over the course of the meeting as people leave and join online. He confirmed that an audio recording would be captured for the purpose of true and accurate minute taking. JC noted that it was the first time the AGM was being held on a weekday evening in response to a request from members to keep Saturdays free. He advised that the meeting would be a little less formal than in previous years to allow for members to speak openly.

JC stated that the voting platform in use during the meeting was provided by Lumi, an independent company who would ensure that all votes were recorded and presented correctly. JC invited Lumi to introduce themselves and to instruct members how to use the voting platform.

Two trial votes were conducted for the purposes of allowing members the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the voting system. JC confirmed that all votes would remain open for approximately 60 seconds during the meeting.

JC advised that the papers for the meeting were distributed via email beforehand. They were also available on the British Canoeing website and on the Lumi platform under the 'documents' tab.

JC confirmed that all but two motions on the agenda were classified as ordinary business requiring a simple majority of greater than 50% of the votes cast. He advised that the two motions classified as special business requiring 75% of the votes cast were item 07 (to approve the appointment of James Miller, Director nominated to the Board of British Canoeing by the Scottish Canoe Association) and item 09, to approve the proposed changes to the Articles of Association.

JC advised that a small number of proxy votes had been received and pre-cast in advance, and these would be included in the final voting results displayed on the screen for each of the motions.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Alan Laws, James Miller and Steve Watts.

2. To Adopt the Minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting held 11 March 2023.

There were no amendments proposed to the Minutes.

Votes for: 72 (100%)

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 13

The minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting were approved by Ordinary Resolution.

3. To consider matters arising from the minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting.

There were no further matters arising.

4. To adopt the accounts for the Financial Year 1.11.22 to 31.10.23.

JC invited the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, Nick Donald (ND) to present the accounts. JC advised that the summary financial report could be found in the Annual Report.

ND introduced himself as Independent Director and spoke to the finance slides presented to members, noting that it was his second year presenting the results.

ND summarised the financial position of British Canoeing noting that the organisation remains financially resilient, partly due to high inflation rates signposted at the previous AGM. He relayed that operating income had increased by 12% and this along with £234k earned interest income enabled us to achieve the surplus of £179k. He confirmed that the income and expenditure figures contained the financials from the Canoe Slalom World Championships (£1.1m) and towards which £35k had been invested by British Canoeing.

ND highlighted that grant funded income accounted for 57% of the total income, significantly higher than the previous year as to be expected over the final two years within an Olympic cycle. He reported that actual membership numbers had declined by 6% but that membership income in the year was virtually on par with the previous year, helped by the change in income recognition. ND highlighted that commercial income had remained steady through the success of the Slalom World Championships.

ND reported that operating costs in absolute terms had increased by 22%, although if the Slalom World Championships and phasing of World Class Programme costs are discounted, costs had risen by 10%. He remarked on the good cost control within a high inflation environment. ND confirmed that staff costs amounted to 40% of the total operating costs, noting that people are fundamental to the development of British Canoeing's work and had been rewarded in the year with a 5% wage rise and 1% in pension contribution. ND also confirmed that during the year we had invested into the Disciplines.

ND reported that the balance sheet remains healthy and that we continue to build reserves with net assets over £2m. He stated that British Canoeing had built up significant unrestricted funds and that the Board would now consider how to yield an optimal return on these funds. ND summarised that the organisation remains in a good financial position.

JC thanked ND for the presentation and invited questions from members.

David Belbin, Vice President asked how much had been incurred by the Stronger Together Fund. AM confirmed that £265k had been invested into projects to drive forward growth and development of the sport, particularly in areas of deprivation and inequality. He reported that a further £200k had been allocated to the Stronger Together Fund in this current financial year to strengthen the capital available.

The Chair expressed thanks and appreciation to ND for his work as Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee noting the robust set of accounts that benefit all members of the organisation.

The Chair opened the voting to adopt the accounts.

Votes for: 78 (100%)

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 5

The accounts were adopted by Ordinary Resolution.

5. To re-appoint 'Haysmacintyre' as the Auditors for the financial year 1.11.23 to 31.10.24, and to authorise the directors to fix their remuneration.

The Chair advised that the Board proposed to re-appoint Haysmacintyre as the Auditors for British Canoeing. JC advised that British Canoeing had undertaken a re-tendering process that was completed in August 2023. He reported that of the four firms that had submitted bids, Haysmacintyre remained the standout company in relation to value for money, level of sport expertise, support services (VAT and tax advice) and professional judgement. The Chair invited questions from members.

Ross Pearton asked whether the audit partner within Haysmacintyre would remain the same. ND confirmed that to alleviate any concerns over the length of our relationship with Haysmacintyre, we had requested a new Audit Partner who will oversee the 2023/24 financial year end audit and preparation of the financial statements.

The Chair opened the voting for the motion.

Votes for: 75 (97.4%)

Votes against: 2 (2.6%)

Abstentions: 6

The appointment of Haysmacintyre was approved by Ordinary Resolution.

6. To adopt the 44th Annual Report of British Canoeing for 2023.

JC reminded members that the Annual Report had been circulated to all members with the AGM papers.

JC stated that the report illustrated what a busy and successful year it had been for everybody involved with British Canoeing and thanked those across the community who had contributed to both the delivery of the work and the subsequent production of the Annual Report.

The Chair then invited the Chief Executive AM to present the Annual Report.

Focus on Sport

AM reflected that it had been an excellent year on the water for our national teams. He congratulated all our paddlers and support teams for their collective efforts in achieving successes over the past year. He noted that it was magnificent to see our paddlers win 9 senior World Championship titles in our core disciplines of Paracanoe, Slalom, Freestyle and Marathon. He stated that overall, our GB paddlers selected for World and European events delivered a total of 91 medals. AM highlighted the outstanding performances by our paddlers at the Slalom World Championships at Lee Valley in September 2023. He praised the passion and commitment of the 300 strong workforce that were involved in the successful delivery of

the event and thanked them for their huge contribution. AM congratulated the 4 slalom paddlers already confirmed for Paris 2024 and noted that we have 7 boats assured for the Paralympics, with opportunities to qualify a further 3. He hoped that British Canoeing would be confirming a full paracanoe team over the next few weeks, alongside a small number of sprint paddlers too.

Focus on Recreation

AM reported that despite the challenges associated with the continued cost of living crisis, the weather at times, and the difficulties faced in growing the number of willing volunteers, recreationally it was a further positive year with the number of affiliated clubs remaining stable in England at 388. He reported further growth in the number of delivery partners (496) across the UK and established partnerships with over 20 retailers to distribute safety information at the point of sale. AM confirmed that over 27k individuals undertook personal performance awards throughout the year.

Focus on Campaigns

AM reported that membership peaked at 94,730 in June 2023 but due to the extended period of wet weather in July and August, the year finished at 87,396, which although disappointing was understandable and in line with our forecast. AM noted that in June we relaunched our Access and Environment Charter at a successful reception at Westminster and the Big Paddle Clean Up continued to gather pace with over 2600 paddlers helping to clear plastic pollution from local waterways. AM reported that through the Stronger Together Fund, we invested £265k into 48 projects that helped our sport and recreation grow, particularly in areas of inequality and deprivation.

Focus on Operations

AM reported that we remain on track to deliver against the latest Stronger Together Strategy. He noted that British Canoeing remains a profitable organisation having posted a financial surplus of £179k which helped bolster our reserves to just over £2m. AM confirmed that we had worked closely with our funding partners to ensure compliance with the revised Code for Sports Governance. AM relayed that British Canoeing are committed to reinvesting a further £400k into our disciplines and clubs via a new Paddle England Fund.

Our People

AM recognised the good individuals, coaches and volunteers that form our passionate and willing paddling community that help drive the future of our sport. In particular, AM thanked all of our volunteers for their continued commitment, expertise and passion.

Time to Evolve

AM emphasised that we remain totally committed to our Stronger Together 2 Strategy and its vision to encourage more people to go paddling. However, AM also highlighted that there is now the opportunity to evolve to become a more modern and relevant organisation, whilst remaining totally committed to the environment, EDI, health, wellbeing and safety.

AM highlighted the big tickets items that British Canoeing [soon to be Paddle UK] will face over the next year as an NGB;

Rebrand

AM stated that following initial review and consultation, we firmly believe that a new name,

look and feel will help us to be more inclusive, contemporary and ensure we are truly relevant and reflective of our current and untapped paddling communities. He appealed to the membership to bear in mind that a rebrand for any organisation is hugely subjective and to be bold and open-minded in their support of why we need to do this and understand the future benefits it may bring.

Workforce Governance Review

AM relayed that in light of the Government's concern that the sports sector remains unregulated, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport have commissioned an industry wide Workforce Governance Project and National Registration Scheme that is being led by the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) to ensure those involved in any physical activity have and maintain a minimum standard for deployment. He confirmed that British Canoeing is committed to tackling these challenges and taking every possible step to ensure that harm, abuse and neglect of responsibilities is prevented, as well as ensuring all our coaches and clubs are best protected. AM reported that British Canoeing will launch its Standards of Deployment Policy shortly and that we are thankful for the feedback received during an extensive consultation process with discipline committees and clubs.

Constitutional Review

AM reported that a consultation process with members and stakeholders would begin shortly to review the role and purpose of the English Forum. He advised that we will seek to establish a process to appoint directors that are fully representative of our membership that will also ensure the Board is diverse in skills, background and experience of paddling and paddlesports. He confirmed that consultation will begin in the spring and any formal constitutional change recommended following the consultation would be brought back to members for approval at a future date.

SUP

AM confirmed that since being awarded joint NGB status for SUP, we have focussed on building key relationships within the SUP community and in particularly listening to and learning from those who have extensive SUP experience. AM noted that we have identified four key areas where we can add support; safety, effective competition and events pathway, improved marketing and communications and greater governance support.

Paris Olympics and Paralympics

AM noted that with just 135 days to the start of the Olympics, there remains work still to do for our para-canoeists and our sprint paddlers. He wished all our paddlers every success as they seek to find the necessary form to guarantee qualification and success in Paris.

AM in closing, thanked all our clubs, partners and members for the warm welcome he continued to receive. He especially thanked JC and the Board for their support, time and expertise to ensure on behalf of the membership we remain focussed and on track. Lastly, AM thanked his operational team both in Nottingham and Lee Valley who work exceptionally hard to deliver excellent results across the organisation.

The Chair thanked AM for the presentation and invited questions about the Annual Report.

JC noted that there had been a number of pre-submitted questions in advance as shown on

the slide deck. He invited AM to address these first.

Q1. How much is the proposed name change going to cost and has there been a survey of members as to whether this is considered good value for money? (Ken Scott-Clegg, British Canoeing)

AM thanked the members for their questions. AM responded that British Canoeing had been through a robust process to commission a brand agency, in which cost-effectiveness and value for money was a major factor. He highlighted that not everything would change overnight and that a phased approach would be adopted to ensure the roll out is both sustainable and cost effective.

Q2. British Canoeing is a member's organisation. Please could BC explain why its members were not consulted about such an important change as the proposed re-brand to Paddle UK? And, how we as members can oppose the plans? As a life time member, I feel very aggrieved about how these plans are being rail roaded through without any wider consultation. Every other governing body has its sports descriptor in its title. Please explain how the general public would identify the sport of canoeing through a name change to Paddle UK? (PUK !!) (Neil Blackman, British Canoeing)

Q3. Please explain the details of the consultation process conducted in order to arrive at the decision to change the name from British Canoeing to paddle UK. Also, has any consideration at all been given to the admittedly minority, but hugely important views of elite and seriously competitive representatives of our sport's disciplines? Or is this purely an intention to appeal to the widest possible audience of recreational and leisure participants, with no consideration of the impact on those who strive to represent their sport and country? I paddle a Kayak and I have never been anything other than proud to be connected with the name British Canoeing, despite the fact that I don't paddle a Canoe. Hence I feel this name change is entirely unnecessary, as well as being a terrible suggestion! (Adam Miles, British Canoeing)

AM explained that in 2022, we invited members to attend focus groups to discuss the brand proposal, including clubs, delivery partners, SUP and competition disciplines. He advised that the competition disciplines had been consulted and supportive throughout the process and hoped that they would join us in the next phase of the rebrand roll out in 2025.

AM reported that in the 2022 and 2023 membership satisfaction survey, we asked members which word they most associated with their on the water paddling activity and only 10% referenced "canoeing". He also noted that surveys were conducted on the Go Paddling and members' hub platforms in which again less than 10% of respondents referred to their paddling activity as canoeing. The most commonly used terms included kayaking, paddling, paddle and paddle sport. AM confirmed that membership feedback and insight had been a pivotal part of the rebrand.

AM affirmed that Paddle UK is far more inclusive of the diversity of members we represent. He thanked members for the positive feedback received since the rebrand was announced.

Q4. Does the Board of British Canoeing have it in its powers to change the name of the Company, without a members' vote on a special resolution at a general meeting? (Paul Harrington, CANI)

AM confirmed that the company name is not changing at this point, rather that as of 13 March, British Canoeing will be trading as Paddle UK. He stated that the company name may change in the future to align with the trading name and that we would keep members informed of any planned changes as and when required.

Q5. How are policy making decisions formulated when there is a limited representation from the regions? E.g. 3/11 Regional Development Teams are functioning effectively (John Teuwen, British Canoeing)

JC referred to the Annual Report presentation whereby AM confirmed that a constitutional review process would commence in the spring which he hoped would address concerns regarding regional representation.

Q6. What is the percentage make up of the current British Canoeing membership? (John Teuwen, British Canoeing)

JC pointed to the chart shown on the screen.

Active Memberships	Count - Total	Count - Linked to a Club	Count - Not Linked to a Club
Club Associate	1,690 (1.8%)	1,538	152
On the Bank	82 (0.1%)	23	59
On the Water	73,354 (77%)	7,505	65,849
On the Water Young Person	3,525 (3.7%)	540	2,985
On the Water Youth	11,041 (11.5%)	860	10,181
Sign Up	6,048 (6.3%)	211	5,837
Total	95,740	10,677	85,063

Ivan Lawler (IL) asked whether the Annual Report accurately informs the membership about what happened in the World Class Sprint Programme during the year, since there was no mention of the World Championship and Olympic Qualifier results in the Report. He questioned whether the report meets the company value of Always with Integrity and being open and honest in communication.

JC reassured the membership that there had been no deliberate attempt within the Report to omit or under-represent the work or lack of progress that had been made. AM recognised that the results at the World Championships in Duisburg had been hugely disappointing for all. He reflected that it had given us an opportunity to refocus and look forward to ensure we improve results to not be in the same position again. He assured members that we are very honest within our own World Class Programme team.

IL felt that it had been an extraordinary and somewhat deliberate omission. JC acknowledged that it is important that the Annual Report truly reflects all of the work that we do and suggested that if any further information needs to be circulated, it will go out to members.

Alex Edwards (AE) asked how volunteers will be supported in the next 12 months, given the coaching scheme has started to become more expensive for volunteers, particularly in light of the standards of deployment. He noted that the barriers for volunteers appear to be increasing.

JC deferred the question to Lee Pooley, Director of Coaching & Qualifications.

LP shared that a club and coaching bursary would continue into 2024, and hopefully into 2025 to support the Standards of Deployment project. He confirmed that British Canoeing are reviewing the pathways to potentially remove the pre-requisites and to enable free access to eLearning and risk management for Clubs.

AM re-emphasised how volunteers are the bedrock of any organisation and that he wanted to help and support them as best we can. He stated that £80k had been invested into a coaching bursary scheme in 2022 that had continued into 2023.

JC assured members that the Board would be mindful of clarity, simplicity and cost in the review of coaching education.

AE questioned how members' views are currently represented given that there is currently no SUP Committee and the English Forum and Regional Committees are not active.

JC emphasised that this is precisely why we need a constitutional review. He explained that as the newly recognised joint governing body for SUP, the process of forming a SUP committee may have to be a little different than if we were the sole NGB for SUP. He assured that both of these items were a high priority. He advised that the Board expected to receive an update on the constitutional review at its meeting in September.

Stephen Young (SY) asked whether there were structures in place to support volunteer coaches as there appears to be no support in the regions at all.

JC acknowledged the important question sharing that at the moment, there was no immediate answer. He assured members that the Board would be alert to these issues and would encourage the sport to deliver at the grass roots level.

SY noted that in the report under Ambition 2 the membership target was 125k by 2026, whereas in the slide presentation, a 3 year window had been stipulated.

Andrew Good (AG) noted that there is a huge lack of juniors in clubs. He asked whether there was a plan to address this, given it is an Olympic year and there may be an uptake in participation. He stated that clubs are folding due to a lack of volunteers.

AM thanked AG for the question and assured him that there is a plan in place. AM reported that British Canoeing are trying to encourage young people to join clubs and to provide entry level competitions. He shared that we will continue to support the coaching bursaries. He noted that this is a common problem shared across most sports, partly due to a change in Sport England strategy whereby investment is no longer prioritised by region. AM confirmed that British Canoeing would be creating a new Volunteer Strategy as a matter of urgency.

Iain Campbell asked why GB freestyle appears to be operating independently from the British Canoeing Freestyle Committee, with no cohesive messages.

AM shared that we rely on our Discipline Committees and volunteers to help grow and develop each individual paddle sport. He reported that we invest £200k into our disciplines each year and work with them to produce development plans and strategies. AM assured members that we do not favour any particular discipline, although we have a naturally closer relationship with the Olympic and Paralympic Programmes due to the funding arrangements through UK Sport.

The Chair opened the voting for the motion to adopt the Annual Report 2023.

Votes for: 65 (87.84%)

Votes against: 9 (12.16%)

Abstentions: 5

The Annual Report was adopted by Ordinary Resolution.

7. To approve the appointment of James Miller, Director nominated to the Board of British Canoeing by The Scottish Canoe Association.

JC relayed apologies on behalf of JM for not being able to attend the meeting due to a prior work commitment. JC shared a statement received in advance from JM that outlined his passion and commitment to the organisation and our sport.

JC explained that the Board were pleased to receive a nomination from the SCA in September 2023 and subsequently appointed JM early. In so doing, his appointment now requires a majority of 75% of the vote.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 7.

Votes for: 75 (97.40%)

Votes against: 2 (2.6%)

Abstentions: 3

The appointment was approved by Special Resolution. The Chair congratulated James Miller on his appointment to the Board.

8. To re-appoint Martine Kushner, Independent Director, to the Board of British Canoeing.

JC confirmed that MK had served on the Board for the last four years and had been a highly valued Director, also serving as Chair of the Governance Committee, a member of the Nominations Committee and Board Champion for Anti-Doping and Safety and Welfare.

JC invited MK to say a few words.

MK paid tribute to the staff who have assisted her over the last 4 years in post, particularly Nancy Squires, Director of Governance and the Governance team. MK emphasised that the Governance Committee continues to analyse risk and consider organisational culture. She affirmed that it is her belief that a high level of welfare is strongly embedded within the whole British Canoeing system which is a credit to all. She also noted the Committee are cognisant of the challenges faced round the Standards of Deployment work, particularly the tension between acknowledging experience and the need for formal regulation. MK thanked the membership for the past 4 years and looked forward to continuing her work over the next 4, subject to the members vote.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 8.

Votes for: 66 (90.41%)

Votes against: 7 (9.59%)

Abstentions: 4

The appointment was approved by Ordinary Resolution. The Chair congratulated Martine Kushner on her re-appointment to the Board.

9. To approve the proposed amendments to the Articles of Association

JC referred to the proposed change to the Articles of Association as set out in the papers circulated in advance. He explained that the changes proposed are to the objects section of the Articles, which describe the purpose of the organisation. He noted that the previous drafting would have potential to limit the growth of the support we provide members from emerging disciplines, such as with the support we are providing to those members interested in SUP. He explained that the proposed changes simplify the purpose of the organisation. He also alleviated any concerns from members in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that these changes indicate an overreach of our geographical reach, stating that we remain committed to the UK Agreement.

The Chair invited questions from members.

Martin McGrath (MM) asked whether in light of the rebrand, the proposed wording in Paragraph 3.2 of the revised Articles actually reflects the community that we are now representing, and should not the word “canoeing” be replaced by “paddling”.

JC acknowledged that the first stage was to simplify the objects as a priority, with further work required to look at the Articles for consistency and contemporary language, to align to the new trading name, Paddle UK. He explained that the correct interpretation for now was that

the use of the word “canoeing” references any form of paddling, explained in the definition. JC invited members to work with us on the inclusive language in any revised set of Articles.

MM thanked the Chair for his response.

Jim Rossiter, Vice President expressed concern that activities such as dragon boat racing and Va'a boats on the sea are not excluded in the revised definition of Paragraph 3.1 “any activity which may involve paddling a craft propelled by a paddle”.

JC emphasised that British Canoeing is not an NGB declaring that it will govern anyone else, but neither are we excluding working with other NGBs should they wish to approach us.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 9.

Votes for: 61 (88.41%)

Votes against: 8 (11.59%)

Abstentions: 8

The motion was passed by Special Resolution.

10. Acknowledgements

The Chair in closing the meeting, thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution and for their continued work as part of British Canoeing. He noted that he was now moving into his final year as Chair and that the process to appoint a new Chair would commence shortly. JC especially thanked the British Canoeing Board for their time and commitment over the past year, noting that they too are volunteers who are valued enormously. He then invited members to remain on the call if they wished to partake in the branding session.

Monday 25 November 2024 at 19:00

Virtual Meeting by Zoom

In Attendance:

Voting Members:

Jeffrey Allen; Anthony Armstrong; Matt Banks; Robert Bates; Neil Blackman; John Chamberlin; Brian Chapman; Margaret Chapman; Ed Christian; Stephen Craig; Matt Crowhurst; J Del Rio; Mark-Jan Dielemans; Maureen Dresler; Matthew Garvey; Leigh Gething; Andrew Good; Cathy Hilton; Sue Hornby; David Hughes; Owen Inglis Humphrey; Marek Janiel; Adam Jasko; Paul Jeffs; Paul Jordan; James Kesavan; Amanda Kitchen; Alan Laws; Peter Li; Graham Mackereth; Jordan Martyn; Andy Maxted; Stephen Missen; Barbara Monda; Andrew Oughton; Anna Partenheimer; Ross Pearton; Jim Rossiter; Stefania Rosso; William Sharpe; Kris Siosyte; Greg Smale; Colin Smith; Katrina Smith; Stuart Smith; David Spencer; Andrew Steel; Reuben Sweetman; Nick Taylor; John Teuwen; Andrew Train; Rob Umfreville; Colin Woodgate; Cathy Wynne.

British Canoeing Board Members:

Ashley Metcalfe, Chief Executive (AM); Richard Boreham (RB); John Coyne, Chair (JC); Clare Dallaway (CD); Nick Donald (ND); Zoey Rowe (ZR); Manpreet Sehmbi (MS); Greg Spencer (GS)

Staff Members in Attendance:

Bernadett Chromicsek; Charmaine Collins; Colin Dinshaw; Phillippa Dudley; Susan Hicks; Joy Johnston; Rob Knott; Ruth Norfolk; Rich Ramsdale; Ben Sansom; Phil Scowcroft; James Unsworth; Barry Wade.

Apologies:

Martine Kushner; Howard Blackman.

1. Welcome by Professor John Coyne CBE, Chairman, British Canoeing.

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

JC introduced himself, along with Ashley Metcalfe, Chief Executive Officer. He advised that several members of the Paddle UK Governance team were also present to assist in various parts of the General Meeting as required. He summarised that the purpose of the meeting was to amend our Articles to deliver some important changes to the process of appointing English nominated Directors and the role of the President, which follows the culmination of an extensive period of consultation whereby nearly 2,000 members responded with their views.

JC noted that hosting the General Meeting remotely aligns nicely with our Environment Strategy and promotes greater access to all our members. He shared that closed captions had also been enabled for members to follow should they wish during the meeting.

JC confirmed almost 200 members had registered to join the meeting and that over 60 were

online at the start of the meeting. He advised that this number may rise and fall over the course of the meeting as people leave and join online. JC also advised that several Board members and Paddle UK Staff had also joined the call tonight. He advised that the meeting would allow for members to speak openly and raise their hand to ask a question in relation to the motions presented. He further explained that any other questions that were unrelated to the motions would be responded to outside of the meeting. He confirmed that an audio recording would be captured for the purpose of true and accurate minute taking.

JC stated that the voting platform in use during the meeting was provided by Lumi, an independent company who would ensure that all votes were recorded and presented correctly. JC invited Lumi to introduce themselves and to instruct members how to use the voting platform.

Two trial votes were conducted for the purposes of allowing members the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the voting system. JC confirmed that all votes would remain open for approximately 60 seconds during the meeting.

JC advised that the papers for the meeting were published on the Paddle UK website beforehand and were also available to download from the Lumi platform under the 'documents' tab.

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Martine Kushner. He invited others to share known apologies to Charmaine Collins at Paddle UK.

3. To approve the proposed amendments to the Articles of Association

JC referred to the proposed change to the Articles of Association as a matter upon which we consulted and that the changes were as set out in the papers circulated in advance. JC confirmed that motions to approve the proposed changes to the Articles of Association are classified as special business requiring 75% of the votes cast. JC advised that a number of proxy votes had been received and pre-cast in advance, and these would be included in the final voting results displayed on the screen for each of the motions.

JC explained that Item 2.1 was to approve the amendments to the Articles of Association proposed by the Board which would facilitate the appointment of Directors by the English membership and the establishment of Paddle UK's Paddle England Assembly.

JC invited questions from the members in relation to the motion presented. No questions were received.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 2.1.

Votes for: 173 (94.54%)

Votes against: 10 (5.46%)

Abstentions: 9

The motion was passed by Special Resolution.

4. To approve the proposed amendments to the Articles of Association

JC referred to the proposed change to the Articles of Association as covered in the consultation and as set out in the papers circulated in advance. He explained that Item 2.2 was to approve the amendments to the Articles of Association proposed by the Board which would replace the current Presidential role with that of a Patron.

JC invited questions from members in relation to the motion presented.

Mark-Jan Dielemans asked why we would still have Vice Presidents if the role of the President is removed. He also questioned whether the President would need to live in England and be a British national. JC confirmed that the Board and the Executive had discussed the role of Vice Presidents at length and determined that we would leave those roles as they are given that we currently have a number of valued active Vice Presidents in situ. He recognised that there may be a linguistic inconsistency in having Vice Presidents of an organisation, without a President. JC highlighted how the role of a Patron might vary from that of a President and confirmed that it is intended to raise the profile of our entire organisation in a much more ambassadorial way. JC confirmed that there would be no nationality or residency requirements for the appointment of the Patron, but rather the appointment would be determined by the best person to carry out the role.

Alan Laws, Vice President asked why there could not be two roles; a President and a Patron. JC replied that it is to create clarity and to avoid ambiguity and conceptual duplication between a President and a Patron, and avoid confusion as to who acts as the figurehead for the organisation. JC confirmed that currently the President is elected for a term by the members and the President attends Board meetings as an observer, who may speak in meetings but is not a Director of the Company. He relayed that the intention with the previous motion is that with three directly represented members from England on the Board, there would be a direct democratic input from the membership to the Board, which the role of the President had sometimes sought to do from a position which constitutionally was a little ambiguous.

JC confirmed that following this meeting, it might be a good time to work with our community to reconsider the role of Vice Presidents, since during the consultation there was a proposal to establish supportive ambassadorial roles that some of our Vice Presidents might conduct on our behalf that would also contribute, alongside the Patron, to raise the profile of the work that we do, such as Clear Access Clear Waters. JC indicated a clear intent to ensure that the role profiles are as precise and meaningful as possible in promoting the work that we do.

Alan Laws stated that he did not disagree with appointing a Patron but that he believed the role of the President does not conflict with that of a Patron, and that it should be possible to have both.

Reuben Sweetman shared that he was struggling to envisage the role of a Patron and asked whether Paddle UK had a preferred candidate, or type of person, for the role. JC responded that Paddle UK do not currently have anybody in mind for the role. He recognised that other NGBs do have Patrons, or the power to appoint a Patron without yet appointing one. JC shared the intention to work with the community in regards to appointing the kind of figure that would be an appropriate and well received Patron to represent the organisation. JC

confirmed that suggestions had been received in regards to the Patron, such as high profile celebrities who happen to be paddlers, as well as people of good standing including distinguished past members of our community whose reach and profile extends beyond the paddling community.

Brian Chapman recalled the AGM in 2017 when there was a very similar motion presented to remove the position of President as an elected representative of the membership, which was resoundingly beaten. He shared that he did not believe the world had changed significantly since then to warrant an echo of that motion being presented tonight. JC responded that he felt the world had changed since that time and that the role of a senior key figure at the head of an organisation as an iconic symbol of that organisation is a very positive role to have in any organisation. He shared his recollection of the meeting in 2017 that as the role of President was the only role on which the members had a direct vote, the removal of the President at that time was seen to be challenging the democratic imperative at the heart of a membership organisation. He highlighted that what is different this time is that in setting up a new Paddle UK Paddle England Assembly in consultation with the membership, we are looking to strengthen the member voice. JC further stated that by then seeking to directly elect three Board members from the membership against our skills matrix, this provides a very direct link from the membership to the Board which was not in place eight years ago.

BC stated that he can see a role for both positions of President and Patron and that the President was, and should remain, the only direct election link from the membership to the Board to sit in on those important discussions that take place within the organisation. He felt that the elected English Directors would be subject to a review and potential veto process as the other Board Directors are at the moment, so it is unlikely that somebody with well-known and well understood contrary views would ever get an opportunity to contribute to those important discussions.

JC responded that there is nothing in the process by which prospective Board members (derived now from the whole membership, not just the Paddle England Assembly) are scrutinised in relation to any – controversial or otherwise – views that those members may or may not hold within the sport. He outlined that the skills matrix assessment enables the Paddle UK Board to satisfy our other obligations that we have as a limited company registered at Companies House and as an organisation which is in receipt of Government funding, contracted through a UK code of sports governance. JC advised that as a Board, we are expected to take every measure to ensure that the composition of the Board reflects fully the diversity to be found in the paddling community. He welcomed diversity of views on the Board as a strength of good governance and during his tenure, he shared that there had been vocal, challenging and divergent views within the Board but all delivered with high integrity and a commitment to the organisation and community.

BC shared that the current President had not enjoyed their term as they had felt that their views had not been listened to during Board meetings. He reiterated that he saw no reason why it is not possible to have both a President and a Patron performing different duties and responsibilities.

JC clarified that the role of the current President does not have a vote at our Board and that although they have the right to speak, for good governance, a challenge for the Chair is to ensure that somebody that attends meetings with the right to speak, does not act as a shadow

director of the company without formal constitutional authority. JC shared that he would have been more than happy to have a discussion with the current President had they reported their negative views directly to the Chair.

Alan Laws, Vice President expressed that he fully agreed with the views expressed by Brian Chapman.

Ross Pearton commented that he could see a role for both a President and a Patron and supported the views expressed by both Brian Chapman and Alan Laws.

Jim Rossiter, Vice President expressed his discomfort at not being given the opportunity to vote for both a President and a Patron, and that he was in a position where he had to choose one or the other. JC recognised and showed appreciation for the comment, stating that on balance, the proposal presented was a consequence of the views obtained through the consultation process.

Brian Chapman restated that there was nothing requiring the creation of a Patron to be enshrined in the Articles of Association, noting that it would be in the power of the Board to appoint a Patron.

Jeffrey Allen commented via the chat function why is it not possible to have both a President and Patron.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 2.2.

Votes for: 145 (81.01%)
Votes against: 34 (18.99%)
Abstentions: 11

The motion was passed by Special Resolution. JC reassured members that the Board and the Executive would duly note the comments raised during the discussion and ensure they are dealt with sensitively in the appropriate implementation of these Article changes.

10. Acknowledgements

The Chair in closing the meeting, thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution. JC especially thanked Lumi for facilitating the meeting and for their role in providing the voting platform. He also thanked the almost 2,000 members who took part in the consultation process, noting it was the most extensive response the organisation had ever had. He emphasised there is now work to be done with the community in order to ensure the appropriate and sensitive implementation of these decisions. He vowed to communicate with members and the community in the short time he had left as Chair of Paddle UK to work to implement these changes and report back one final time at the AGM in March 2025.

BRITISH CANOEING 45th AGM – Item 03

To consider matters arising from the minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting held on 12 March 2024

There are no matters arising from the minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting which are not otherwise covered by the Agenda.

To adopt the accounts for the financial year 1.11.23 to 31.10.24

The Financial Accounts are included as a separate document within these papers and are presented for adoption by the members at the AGM.

Recommendation

The Board recommends the adoption of the accounts for the financial year 1.11.23 to 31.10.24.

Voting

This item is proposed as an Ordinary Resolution and requires a simple majority of more than 50% of the votes cast to be passed.

To re-appoint HaysMac as the Auditors for the financial year 1.11.24 to 31.10.25 and to authorise the directors to fix their remuneration

The appointment of auditors is regularly discussed at the Finance and Audit Committee, with the outcomes relayed to the Board. In addition, a full re-tender process was completed in August 2023. Four firms submitted bids, but of these the standout firm remained HaysMac (formerly known as Haysmacintyre) notably in relation to value for money and level of sport expertise, support services, such as VAT and tax advice and professional judgement.

HaysMac is a large firm whose expertise in the NGB/sport sector was not replicated by the other bidders in the re-tender process. They also provided an added value proposition including seminars, webinars, newsletters and special interests group meetings to support not only the work of Paddle UK but professional support and continuous professional development for members of the Finance department more generally.

To alleviate any concerns over the length of our relationship with HaysMac, we requested a new Audit Partner for the 2023/2024 financial year end audit and preparation of the financial statements. The new Audit Partner, David Cox, is Head of Audit Services for HaysMac and will remain in place for the 2024/2025 financial year.

Voting

This item is proposed as an Ordinary Resolution and requires a simple majority of more than 50% of the votes cast to be passed.

Recommendation

The Board recommends the appointment of HaysMac as auditors for the financial year 1.11.24 to 31.10.25 and recommends that the directors are authorised to fix their remuneration.

To adopt the 45th Annual Report of British Canoeing for 2024

The Annual Report is included as a separate document to these papers and has been posted on the website with the AGM pack.

The Annual Report presents British Canoeing's (trading as Paddle UK) report to members documenting its activities in the previous financial year.

Voting

This item is proposed as an Ordinary Resolution and requires a simple majority of more than 50% of the votes cast to be passed.

Recommendation

The Board recommends the adoption of the Annual Report 2024.

To announce the appointment of Caroline Barnes, Director appointed by the English Membership pursuant to Article 47(c)

Following the changes to the Articles of Association agreed at the General Meeting on 25th November, applications were sought from individuals who wished to stand as a Board Director elected from the Paddle UK (England) membership.

For these purposes “Paddle UK (England) membership” was to be interpreted as “all Full Individual Members whose National Association membership is held with British Canoeing (trading as Paddle UK).”

Six applications were received. In line with the British Canoeing Articles of Association, the Paddle UK Nominations Committee assessed these applications against the identified desirable skills outlined in the Board member role profile and with reference to the Board Skills Matrix. All six candidates were deemed to meet the desirable skills and were presented to the membership in the electronic ballot.

The ballot was held of the Full Individual Members entitled to vote in the election in accordance with the regulations set by the Board, pursuant to Article 48. Using an online and paperless voting system (intended to maximise member engagement), the Paddle UK (England) membership were invited to vote online for their preferred candidate from 29th January 2025. Online voting closed on 17th February 2025.

Caroline Barnes received the highest number of votes in the ballot. Her biography is included below, and in accordance with the Articles, her appointment will be formally announced at the AGM on 18th March 2025 and her first term will be deemed to run from the 2025 AGM until March 2029.

Item 07 - Appendix 1 – Director Biography

Caroline Barnes (English Membership Director)

Caroline fell in love with paddleboarding in 2019, captivated by the challenge, joy, and sense of achievement it brings. Now, as a qualified SUP instructor and transformational coach, Caroline uses paddling to create unique outdoor learning experiences—helping beginners build confidence on the water and supporting corporate teams to explore resilience and connection. She has witnessed how paddle sports can unite people, enhance mental and physical health, and foster personal growth.



Alongside this, Caroline also has over 15 years of senior leadership and HR experience, currently as Director of People & Performance, where she has consistently delivered strategic initiatives that prioritise inclusivity and positivity. Caroline’s achievements include driving 93% employee engagement, securing four consecutive Great Place to Work certifications, and embedding values into organisational cultures. She specialises in learning and development, creating supportive high-performance environments, and fostering inclusivity—all of which align with Paddle UK’s mission to grow participation and build an accessible, thriving paddling community.

Caroline is deeply committed to environmental sustainability and would champion strong environmental values within Paddle UK. As the driving force behind her current employer’s B Corp certification—one of the highest standards of ethical and environmental practice—Caroline understands the importance of balancing growth with responsibility.

Paddle UK’s values resonate strongly with Caroline. She believes every person matters and is passionate about supporting others’ growth and celebrating success as a team. She is proactive in driving excellence, learning from challenges, and promoting integrity through honesty and fairness. Caroline embraces the power of collaboration, sharing knowledge, and working towards common goals. She believes her professional expertise, love for paddling, and alignment with Paddle UK’s values position her to effectively support growth and inspire more people to enjoy the transformative benefits of paddlesport, making her an excellent choice for this position on the Board.

To approve the appointment of Ashley Hunter, Director nominated to the Board by Paddle Northern Ireland

1. Paddle Northern Ireland, Paddle UK Director Nomination

- 1.1. Paddle Northern Ireland has the right to nominate one Paddle Northern Ireland Member to become a Director of British Canoeing (trading as Paddle UK). The position has been vacant since the departure of Gareth Mahood as Director in 2024.
- 1.2. Paddle Northern Ireland has nominated Ashley Hunter who would commence his initial four-year term following this AGM. A short biography of Ashley is contained below within Appendix 1.
- 1.3. This nomination requires AGM approval.

2. Voting

- 2.1. In accordance with Article 47a this item is proposed as an Ordinary Resolution and the appointment requires a vote with a simple majority of more than 50% of the votes cast to be passed.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1. The Board recommends the appointment of Ashley Hunter, Director nominated to the Board by Paddle Northern Ireland.

Item 08 - Appendix 1 – Director Biography

Ashley Hunter (Director nominated by Paddle Northern Ireland)

Ashley enjoys outdoor sports and has been lucky to have been employed in outdoor education, youth work, sports development and operations for over 25 years.

Ashley is a regular recreational participant of paddlesport and is a member of his local Kayak Club. Ashley enjoys all recreational disciplines, in particular stand up paddleboarding, sea kayaking and river paddling when conditions allow.



Ashley was the Chief Officer for the Canoe Association for Northern Ireland (Now Paddle NI) for twelve years. During this time, he was involved in governance, club development, performance development and coach / leader development. Ashley also worked alongside the other home nations on UK developments.

Ashley's current employment is in the strategic transformation and performance improvement team of a Northern Ireland local authority. Ashley's role is to provide project management support to internal services for performance improvement, development and change initiatives.

Ashley has been a director and trustee on boards including the Canoe Foundation, the Waterways Community and the Northern Ireland Sports Forum where he was the secretary and then chairperson. Ashley is looking forward to joining the Paddle UK board to contribute to paddlesport at a UK level and represent the interests of Paddle NI and its members. Being a member of the board will enable him to contribute to the work of the board and the executive team and to also gain a greater understanding of sports governance at a UK level.

To approve the re-appointment of Nick Donald as an Independent Director and his appointment as Chair of the Board of Directors.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Board is seeking the re-appointment of one Independent Director, Nick Donald and confirmation of his appointment as Chair of the Board of Directors.

2. Independent Director & Chair

- 2.1. On 30 November 2024, following a thorough recruitment process, the Board approved the nomination of Nick Donald as Chair for a 4-year term and for this to be presented to members for approval at the AGM on 18th March 2025.
- 2.2. Nick has been on the Board of Directors since March 2022 and is Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee. He is also a member of the Finance Commission of the International Canoe Federation.
- 2.3. This nomination requires AGM approval.

3. Voting

- 3.1. The membership is invited to approve the re-appointment of Nick Donald as an Independent Director and his appointment as Chair of the Board of Directors.
- 3.2. In accordance with Article 47a this item is proposed as an Ordinary Resolution and the appointment requires a vote with a simple majority of more than 50% of the votes cast to be passed.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1. The Board recommends the re-appointment of Nick Donald as an Independent Director and his appointment as Chair of the Board of Directors.

Item 09 - Appendix 1 – Director Biography

Nick Donald (Independent Director & Chair of the Board)

Involved in sport all of his life, as a player, a volunteer and as a parent, Nick has been successful in bringing to his roles in sports governance the benefit of his professional experience and his personal passion.

Nick was previously the senior independent director of England Squash for six years and is a former director of Leicester Tigers rugby club.

He is currently Chair of Table Tennis England which delivers the GB Table Tennis programme and he sits on the board of the joint venture company, which together with World Table Tennis, is delivering a series of major events, including the world team championships in London in 2026. Nick will step down from his roles in table tennis to take up the position of Chair of Paddle UK.

A chartered accountant, Nick spent nearly 30 years in a customer facing role with the HSBC Group. As head of UK Equity Capital Markets, he provided corporate finance advice to many of the UK's leading companies.

Nick is looking forward to deepening his engagement with the paddling community to lead an effective Board and drive purposeful governance.

