



## **SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

### **Introduction**

The Talent Club Partnership Programme was launched by British Canoeing in 2018 with the aims of strengthening the club development system, supporting every athlete to be the best they can be and supporting the development of more performance coaches within the British Canoeing pathway.

Eleven sprint racing clubs were involved in the first phase of the programme and some positive developments occurred;

- 34% increase in the number of junior athletes training 5X a week
- 26 new paid coaching roles
- 30 junior athletes (103% increase) achieving the performance standard to be considered for England Talent Programme qualification.

### **Proposals for Consultation - The Talent Club Partnership from April 2021**

This first phase of the Programme comes to an end on the 31st March 2021 and this document outlines the proposed changes to the programme together with key dates and next steps for the 2021-2025 programme.

**Consultation responses to these proposals will be considered until the 12th of October. The new programme will be relaunched later in October.**

The Talent Club Partnership (TCP) is evolving and will be a key part of the new Sprint Performance Strategy. The consultation within the Sprint Performance Strategy has outlined the need for stronger clubs, more paid coaching positions, for better links across the pathway and for clubs and British Canoeing to work more collaboratively to enable the sport as a whole to grow and to be successful on the world stage.

Whilst it is recognised that the timelines associated with relaunching the next phase of the Talent Club Programme are a little ahead of the launch of the strategy, it is also understood that now is a good time to review the programme and take steps to ensure its continuation from April 2021.

The proposals detailed in this document are subject to the continued funding support provided by Sport England. This is in place until March 2022, but next year we will have to bid for additional funding for the period between 2022-2025. These proposals are therefore subject to the funding being available beyond April 2022.

## **Developing the Talent Club Programme as part of the Sprint Performance Strategy**

The following commitments to develop the Talent Club Programme and to create Performance Academies are presented within the Draft Sprint Performance Strategy;

- Collaborating with racing clubs to define the roles and responsibilities at each stage of the athlete pathway
- Establishing the number, role and function of Talent Clubs, outlining the expectations, requirements (of coaching, athlete support, recruitment, facilities etc) and support that the clubs will receive
- Developing a framework of best practice for Talent Clubs that recognises, supports and rewards excellent racing club environments
- Creating a business planning pack and resources to aid the establishment and professionalisation of club operations and coaching
- Supporting clubs to develop full-time and part-time paid coaching roles
- Establishing the role and function of Performance Academies, outlining the expectations, requirements and support they will receive
- Determining the optimum number of Performance Academies considering the funding available, collaboration with racing clubs, and the resource and support required
- Developing an implementation plan to enable athletes to make decisions towards 2028
- Identifying potential Club and university partners with the resources and desire to be involved, based upon minimum requirements and standards
- Ensuring alignment and connection between the World Class Programme, the Performance Academies and the Talent Clubs

It is proposed that there will be three levels within the Talent Club Framework. This is summarised below:

**Talent Champion Clubs (Level 1)** - This category will be open to any affiliated racing club in England, with an interest in developing youth athletes in competitive race disciplines. Champion Clubs will be supported through club resources and workshops focussed on sharing good practice around developing talent within the club environment. There may be some limited grant support from British Canoeing to assist with coach development and athlete recruitment.

**Talent Club Associates (Level 2)** - This will be available to those clubs who apply for Talent Club Partner status (see below) but who are unsuccessful in this round. These clubs will be supported through a programme of athlete, coach and club development by England Talent Programme staff. Clubs at this level will be committed to exploring business planning and development opportunities with the aim of progressing to a Talent Club Partner status from 2025. Some small annual financial grant support may be available to assist these clubs in some development areas.

**Talent Club Partners (Level 3)** - Successful clubs at this level will be committed to working collaboratively with the England Talent Pathway to support the development of youth athletes. Up to 5 clubs will be selected as Talent Club Partners, with one specifically identified to develop canoe classes. These clubs will receive financial support from British Canoeing each year and engage in a programme of athlete, coach and club development with support from British Canoeing staff. This investment will support the acceleration of this process and support the appointment of employed full or part time head coaches.

Talent Club Partners will, as part of their responsibility, take on the role of a local talent hub, collaborating with all levels of the Talent Club Programme as well as local Racing Clubs. Talent Club Partners will support the development of young paddlers from other local clubs by providing access to training groups and coaching sessions, access to facilities and wider development support.

Talent Club Partners at this level will work towards the formation and implementation of a clear and progressive club business plan, which looks to make the club financially sustainable from 2025.

Clubs who wish to partner with British Canoeing as Talent Club Partners will share the ambitions within the Sprint Performance Strategy and focus on several key identified areas including; coaching, athlete development, safeguarding, governance and wellbeing, business planning and facilities. Further details of the assessment criteria are presented within **Appendix A**.

It is proposed that the **Sprint Performance Academy** programme will be introduced from 2023. This programme has still to be further developed, but it is planned that Clubs will be recognised as Sprint Academies once they have achieved the minimum criteria (similar to Talent Club Partnership criteria) including having a training group of international level U23 or senior athletes and at least two of these athletes will be receiving Academy level lottery funding and are being coached and training in the club on a daily basis.

**Fig 1: DRAFT England Talent Canoe Sprint Pathway**



### Talent Club Future Funding

British Canoeing will invest into the Racing Talent Club Programme between 2021-2025, to support clubs to develop their talent programmes.

This investment will include an annual investment of up to £15,000 in upto 5 Talent Club Partners to support the appointment of paid coaches in these clubs and a small grants programme to support agreed projects within Talent Club Associates.

## **SECTION TWO: VISION, PRINCIPLES, VALUES & OBJECTIVES**

### **Vision**

A united and inspired community delivering unprecedented athlete success

### **Our Philosophies**

#### *Values-driven*

Our values will drive how our staff, coaches, athletes and volunteers behave and operate on a daily basis. They will guide us when there are difficult decisions to make, and they will help shape the culture within which athletes are developed.

#### *Athlete-centred*

We will be athlete centred, recognising that athlete development and progression is nonlinear and that athletes can be late developers or late adopters of the sport. Athletes will be encouraged and empowered to take ownership of their own learning to maximise their ability to develop ideas and skills, and to make informed decisions in training and racing. Clubs will cater and meet the individual needs of the athlete and will be aligned to the development principles laid out in the discipline specific athlete development frameworks. Any and all decisions will have the long-term interests of the athlete at heart.

#### *Coach-led*

Our clubs will be underpinned by excellent coaching, recognising that athletes have the greatest amount of contact time and exposure to their club coaches. We will support the development of club coaches to help them provide the best provision and experience possible for their athletes. Coaches will be responsible for leading, supporting and challenging athletes to improve and will motivate, empower and inspire them to be the best that they can be.

#### *Performance-focused*

We will be clear on what influences athlete success and continuously strive to provide environments and people that can enable athletes to thrive, recognising effort as well as achievement. We will encourage club environments in which participants at every level are thriving, are safe and are supported, whilst being appropriately challenged and stretched in order to progress and achieve their potential.

### **Our Values**

#### *Every Person Matters*

We will build a culture that is people-centred and inclusive, and offers support to all of our people based upon their individual needs. We understand that an athlete's development and performance will depend upon their mental, physical and emotional wellbeing, and that medals are an outcome of a system that prioritises looking after athletes as people first. We will strive to achieve a better gender balance and to recruit more girls and young women into the sport as athletes, coaches and within key club roles. We will be inclusive and clubs will be safe places for young paddlers, where the

highest standards of safeguarding are understood and observed by athletes, parents, coaches and volunteers.

#### *Striving for Excellence*

We will set and expect high standards of athletes, coaches and practitioners striving towards success on the world stage. We will focus on continuous growth and improvement through the sharing of knowledge, expertise and philosophies, creating a thirst for learning and curiosity. Success at junior level will be measured not only through performances and medals, but also by athletes loving the sport, collecting all the tools to continue on the journey, and developing life skills for their benefit within and outside the sport

#### *Always with Integrity*

Our culture will be built on the foundations of mutual trust, respect, honesty and transparency.

#### *Enjoying the Journey*

We will provide stimulating, challenging, positive and supportive environments that enable athletes to have the best possible experiences in the sport. We have a responsibility to all those involved to not only identify and nurture promising athletes, but also to make the experience positive and rewarding for all. It is hoped that some paddlers will become world class performers, however, for those who do not, we hope that in supporting their development we will have helped them to find a sport for life.

#### *Individually Committed*

People will be inspired and empowered to pursue their passion for the sport, and their efforts and contributions will be recognised and valued.

#### *Stronger Together*

There will be a strong sense of team and community, where volunteers, clubs, coaches and support staff work together in an inclusive, open and collaborative partnership, aligned behind a long-term strategic vision for the sport.

### SECTION THREE: TALENT CLUBS - EXPECTATIONS AND BENEFITS

The Sprint Performance Strategy sets out how collaboration will be improved between the racing clubs and the centralised programmes. This will see the strengthening of the talent pathway in clubs, and will encourage all parties to work much more closely together.

The Talent Club Partnership will play a key role in strengthening these relationships.


The environment we are working to create will see;

- Good collaboration between national programmes and racing clubs with clearly defined roles and responsibilities at each stage of the pathway
- Clarity in the role and function of Talent Club Partners, which sets out the expectations, requirements (of coaching, athlete support, recruitment, facilities etc) and support that the clubs will receive
- Greater collaboration with and between clubs to share improved understanding of how to develop successful athletes
- Formal and informal mechanisms established for recognising and rewarding clubs' impact on athlete success and the coaching chain
- Informal 'open' invitations to club coaches to become involved in national programmes,
- National coaches engaging in club visits each year, together with consistent communication and sharing of athlete progress with relevant club coaches
- Biannual forums for the Performance Director to update the community on progress against strategic objectives and continued engagement of the community in a whole sport annual consultation for progress against long-term direction of the sport
- Annual learning events for both national and club coaches to share experiences and knowledge
- Better support to clubs to recruit paddlers from all sections of society, and promoting the sport widely in different communities
- The establishment and wide adoption of a development framework to support the early progression of flatwater racing skills in clubs for young people
- Improved support to clubs to assist in the development of business models to allow long-term sustainability of the performance environment
- Sharing of knowledge, learning and best practice in club business development across the network
- Support to clubs to develop full-time and part-time paid coaching roles
- The development of technical frameworks for each event that align language and coaching practice across the pathway in support of athlete progression
- Increased focus on Crew (and Canoe) boat development
- Increased focus on the development of female athletes
- A focus on developing a community of highly skilled coaches that are equipped to offer outstanding support to athletes
- A greater emphasis on the importance of supporting the continual development and growth of coaches
- Purposeful and effective learning opportunities for coaches and emerging coaches within the Talent Club Partnership, Academy and Podium programmes

## The benefits and support clubs can expect to receive through the Talent Club Programme

In moving towards the new future we are trying to create a system within which clubs can expect to receive benefits and will also have responsibilities.

The matrix below outlines the benefits and support which will be made available to clubs at each level .


	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Talent Champion Clubs	Talent Club Associate	Talent Club Partners
Access to coaching community of practice	✓	✓	✓
Access to club resources & club development events	✓	✓	✓
Talent Club Partnership Manager access		✓	✓
Bespoke support Talent Club Partnership Manager			✓
Talent Strength & Conditioning Coach access		✓	✓
Bespoke support Talent Strength & Conditioning Coach			✓
Talent Coach Developer access		✓	✓
Bespoke support Talent Coach Developer			✓
Engagement from relevant programme coaching staff			✓
Support from British Canoeing Area Development Officer team	✓		
Support to enable the tracking & monitoring of athlete development		✓	✓
Ongoing financial investment over 4 years			✓



Access to annual financial grants	✓	✓	
Recognition as part of the wider Talent Club Partnership with use of Talent Club Partnership branding and marketing material (banners, flag, use of logo)		✓	✓
Support to develop relationships with local providers of athlete services, such as universities, colleges and other professional clubs		✓	✓

### The Expectations of clubs

In return for the benefits and in order to play their role within the Sprint Performance Strategy there will be some agreed roles, responsibilities and expectations of Talent and Academy clubs. Those responsibilities specific to the Talent Club programme are presented in the table below.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Talent Champion Clubs	Talent Associate Club	Talent Club Partner
Completion of the Talent Club Self Evaluation Framework lite	✓		
Completion of the Talent Club Self Evaluation Framework		✓	✓
Implementation of a long term business plan		✓	✓
Working to become more financially sustainable by 2025		✓	✓
Coaches engaged on a programme of development driven by the coaching Self Evaluation Framework		✓	✓
Club coaches engaged in the community of practice	✓	✓	✓
Club coaches working collaboratively with relevant British Canoeing Programme coaches			✓

Employment of a Full or Part Time Head Coach			✓
Head coach obtaining a Racing Performance Coach Award			✓
Club coaches engage in Continual Professional Development (CPD) programme, acquiring 20 CPD points over a 3 year period.		✓	✓
Utilising the WITTP framework		✓	✓
20 athletes tracking in line with WITTP and achieving age relevant pathway performance development targets			✓
60% of junior members competing within the racing competition structure			✓
Recruitment of 15-20 new U14 athletes every two years who are engaged in regular activity (3 water sessions a week)			✓

## **SECTION FOUR: APPLICATION PROCESS**

The application process for clubs interested in becoming a Talent Club Partner is open to all Racing Clubs in England and not just those clubs that were involved in the first phase of the programme.

### **The application process**

An application form will be made available and applications should be made on the form provided.

**Stage One** - Applications will open on **26th October 2020** and close on the **7th December 2020 at 5PM**.

These applications will be assessed by a panel and those clubs meeting the assessment criteria will then be invited to present their applications further within a second stage of assessment.

**Stage Two** - Meetings with shortlisted clubs will take place week beginning on **4th January 2021**. These are likely to take place over google hangouts.

Selection will be made by a panel who will consider club applications and which submissions best align with the strategic direction of the Talent Club Programme, and which offer a geographical spread within the overall programme.

The Panel will have the responsibility to make recommendations to the Board of British Canoeing, who on 31 January 2021 will confirm the clubs to be included within the Talent Club programme 2021-2025. The decision of the Board shall be final.

### **Contact Details**

If you have any questions regarding the Talent Club Partnership or a query in relation to your clubs application, please contact the Talent Club Partnership Manager, Charlie Barwis using the details below.

E: [charlie.barwis@britishcanoeing.org.uk](mailto:charlie.barwis@britishcanoeing.org.uk)

M: 07534302473

## Appendix A

### Draft Assessment Criteria for Talent Club Partners (Level 3)

- Facilities (10% weighting)
- Coaching (25% weighting)
- Safeguarding, Governance & Wellbeing (20% weighting)
- Business Planning (20% weighting)
- Athlete Development Frameworks (25% weighting)

#### Facilities

<b>Boats</b>	<p>Variety of racing boats in different disciplines and in an appropriate range of stability ratings and sizes.</p> <p>Variety of paddles in appropriate sizes</p> <p>Secure storage for boats</p> <p>Outside stands</p>
<b>Water</b>	<p>Access to a variety of water conditions to suit development needs of young people</p> <p>Alternative water access if club water prone to flooding</p>
<b>Sport Science</b>	<p>Access to an open indoor gym space large enough to cater to your squad of athletes</p> <p>Resistance bands</p> <p>Chin up bar</p> <p>Chin up belts</p> <p>Rings/TRX equipment</p> <p>Small collection of dumbbells/kettlebells with varied weight</p>
<b>Coaching Facilities</b>	<p>Marked course distances for established benchmarks</p> <p>Range of Ergos and sliders for indoor sessions</p> <p>Area for coaching conversations which have a level of privacy.</p>
<b>Changing Area</b>	<p>Showers and toilets</p> <p>Privacy within the changing rooms</p> <p>Ability to keep an athletes items secure</p> <p>Bins &amp; Sanitation bins</p>
<b>Other</b>	<p>Car Parking &amp; Bike Racking</p> <p>Kitchen area to prepare food/host nutrition focused workshops</p> <p>Social Area</p>

## Coaching

<b>Coach Qualifications</b>	<p>Head Coach is willing and able to work towards the Racing Performance Coach in the first 18 months of the agreement commencing.</p> <p>Volunteer coaches willing to acquire relevant coaching qualifications for the level they work at</p>
<b>Coach Development</b>	<p>All club coaches working within the clubs talent programme willing to engage in a programme of continued professional development, acquiring a minimum of 20 CPD points over a 3 year period.</p> <p>Head Coach delivering the clubs talent programme willing to undertake an individualized development plan driven by the Coaching Self Evaluation Framework.</p> <p>The Head Coach proactively engaged in coaching communities of practice.</p>

## Governance, Safeguarding & Wellbeing

<b>Policies &amp; Procedure</b>	<p>Clubs to have an up to date Safeguarding Policy in place in line with British Canoeing policies and procedures. DBS checks undertaken where appropriate and updated for all coaches and volunteers in line with British Canoeing policies and procedures.</p> <p>Club coaches to have an updated Safeguarding &amp; Protecting Children (SPC) qualification or equivalent.</p>
<b>Processes</b>	<p>Clubs to have appointed a Club Welfare Officer who is suitably qualified having undertaken Time to Listen training as a minimum</p> <p>Clubs to complete the Talent Club Partner Self Evaluation Framework on application.</p> <p>Clubs to complete the Talent Club Partner Self Evaluation framework annually with the creation of bespoke club action plan for the next 12 months</p>

## Business Planning

<b>Business Planning</b>	Clubs have a 12 month business plan in place which outlines future direction of the club
<b>Financial Sustainability</b>	<p>Club can provide their last 12 months of accounts accompanied by a statement saying they do not know of any significant changes to the financial position</p> <p>Club is able to evidence a budget forecast with income and expenditure listed for the forthcoming two years</p>
<b>Employability</b>	Clubs is able to engage the services of a Head Coach through a self-employed contract on a FT basis

## Athlete Development

<b>Recruitment &amp; Retention</b>	<p>Evidence of the club's recruitment sources</p> <p>Evidence of the club's junior athlete pathway, outlining the progression for an athlete and support at each stage.</p>
<b>Development Framework</b>	<p>Club able to deliver up to 12 sessions per week</p> <p>Club is willing to track athletes development against the WITTP benchmarks and systematically share this information with British Canoeing.</p> <p>A club is able to outline and demonstrate their coaching programme, evidencing athlete progression</p>