

Dart-Totnes Rowing Club



Dart-Totnes ARC

Founded: 1868

Region: Western

Colours: Black

Membership: 55% junior, 10% senior, 35% veteran. (Approx.)

Gender: 40% male, 60% female

Rowing offered: Competitive and recreational

Facilities: Modern extended boathouse with small gym on the bank of the River Dart. Excellent flat tidal water as far as Dartmouth (10 miles approx).

Contact: Chairman, Simon Gifford-Mead, DTARC, Longmarsh, Steamer Quay, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5AL

Website: www.darttotnes.co.uk

Named after the River, Dart Rowing Club was formed by local businessmen in 1861, and – named after the town – Totnes Rowing Club was formed soon after for the local working men. Seven years later the two Clubs merged and Dart-Totnes ARC was established.

After occupying several different temporary waterside sites with limited boat storage and facilities the Club finally erected its present headquarters in 1985, built largely by the skills of its own members at a cost of £40,000.

In the mid-nineties the Club's membership had doubled and their fleet of boats was similarly increased through a *Foundation for Sport and the Arts* grant. With an eye for further development the Club joined the ARA's *Project Oarsome* in 2002. The associated benefits of *Project Oarsome* meant a further increase in those using the facilities through the Club's links to two local schools.

Whilst the current premises had served rowers and the wider community well, Club growth and the popularity of rowing had limited facilities. To accommodate the continued development they needed to increase the capacity of their facilities,



and last summer Dart-Totnes ARC celebrated the opening of a £232,000 extension to the boathouse.

Funded largely through a Community Club Development Grant from *Sport England* the improved facilities now provide disabled access to the Club, a significant increase in boat storage, new changing and shower facilities and a gym, which Club Chairman Simon Gifford-Mead claims *"has one of the best river views."*

The extension was opened by World Adaptive Rowing Champion Alan Crowther, recently returned from his third successful Rowing World Champs. Alan, wearing all three Gold medals, requested just two things from members as he opened the new building; *"smile when you enter the Club, and smile again when you leave."*

The new extension increases the scope for hosting courses and is also a community resource for other sports and activities in the area. As well as *Project Oarsome* the Club is home to a group of *World Class Start* athletes.

Dart-Totnes hosts an annual regatta each June as part of the West of England calendar. Each spring they run one of the longest non-stop head races from Totnes to Dartmouth, plus a mini head race in November.

The Club would like to thank: Sport England, Environment Agency, Totnes Christmas Club, Kirkham Board of Quantity Surveyors, Totnes and District Youth Network, Terry Kerswell-Jenson, Anthony Prowse and all Club members – in particular; Alan Tate, Alan Pyne, Andy Sloper, Jenny and Vernon Full.

Dart Totnes is affiliated to the ARA and *Sport England* Club Mark accredited – their extension was funded through *Sport England's* Community Club Development Programme. ■

