

**BERKSHIRE & SOUTH
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ASA**



**ANNUAL REPORT
2015-16**

President's Report

A big thank you to all the people who have made me feel really welcome at the events I have attended in my capacity as President. As President you get to see the various active aquatic disciplines within the County and this has been a truly rewarding and enlightening experience.

The past year has not been without its challenges, but a great deal has been achieved.

It has been the year of our County Championships moving to a new slot in the swimming calendar, coming in line with the new ASA competition pathway; a year when our well established development programme of activities led by Windsor's Joan Scarrott was again delivered successfully, and a year in which Wycombe District moved into its long awaited brand new home with its 50-metre pool. It was also the year in which Masters activity, having been in hibernation, stirred with the organisation of a County Masters Meet in the Autumn thanks to the work of my predecessor Bob Odell, and also the year when Synchro stalwart Jenny Gray was awarded an MBE in the 2016 Birthday Honours for "services to Synchronised Swimming". A member of Reading Royals, Jenny has been involved in the sport for 52 years as a competitor, then coach and judge. A truly well deserved honour.

One of the most pleasurable duties for me is presenting trophies and medals to our county's talented young athletes. However, putting ribbons around the necks of Synchro swimmers has to be the most challenging task. The thick sugary paste used by Synchro swimmers to hold their hair rigidly in place always proves a tricky obstacle when trying to speedily place medal ribbons around their necks.

During the year I have also been fortunate to be involved many of the activities the County offers.

I accompanied the County Team to Sheffield for the National Team Championships as Team Manager keeping a photographic and video record of a very special occasion. The team, led by Windsor's Joan Scarrott and Reading's Paul Hurley was tremendous. The 24 swimmers threw themselves wholeheartedly into everything asked of them from training in the Loughborough ITC pool on the journey up, to the evening ice breaking game in the hotel, to getting their war paint on and dressed for action on the morning of the competition which has to be one my memorable highlights. With green and yellow face paints, tutus, wigs and banners, they were certainly startling. The journey from the hotel to the pool, decked out in green and gold is always exciting and leaves a lasting impression on the unsuspecting inhabitants of Sheffield up at that time of the morning.



Well done to all the swimmers who did the County proud and a big thank you to Joan who masterminded the whole weekend, and to Paul who, in his first year in the role of County Coach, got some great swims from our swimmers.

Our team came 13th in Division 1. Wycombe's Ellie Cowan was particularly impressive winning the 100 Breaststroke in 1:13.48 and earning the County a maximum 20 points. 71% of the times achieved were PBs. The remaining 29% were all very close to PB and contributed an all important 41 points to our team's final total. The county's final position ensured we would be competing in the top division this autumn.

In the middle of our County Championships the South East Region organised a Camp in Geneva where 19 of the region's most talented swimmers took part in a 3-day Challenge International Meet. I was fortunate to accompany the team, selected on the strength of performances in the SER Winter Championships, as Team Manager. Returning with a medal haul of 6 gold, 10 silver and 10 bronze medals the team demonstrated that they were not overawed by the experience. The prestigious event in its 50th year attracted swimmers from across Europe and beyond including well-known swimming celebrities like Hungarian Laslo Cheh and American Katie Ziegler.

The party included 5 swimmers from our County - Maidenhead's Connie Dean, Wycombe's James McFadzen and Nicole Ryan, Bracknell & Wokingham's Milly Routledge, and Newbury's Zoe Ryan. 10 of the 26 medals (38%) were won by our BSB swimmers (3 Gold, 5 Silver and 2 Bronze) – a fantastic achievement. Our swimmers excelled themselves against some distinguished competition.

I was also involved with the 2-day Regional Development Camp held at Crystal Palace which brings together a team of coaches and trainers to work closely with some of the County's up and coming athletes. It was a demanding but very worthwhile 2 days. A packed programme of pool and gym work was interspersed with presentations from athletes and coaches who had worked at the highest level. The input from contributors who have made the journey as far as the Olympics was truly inspirational for the 27 aspiring regional swimmers. Katy Avramova's honest and candid responses in the Question and Answer session were a highlight of a great weekend. We wish Katy well when she swims for Turkey in Rio this summer.

A really big thank you goes to Joan Scarrott and County Coach Paul Hurley who continue to deliver the development pathways mapped out over 4 years ago by

Joan and Matt Heathcock. The plan endeavours to offer opportunities to swimmers at Pre-County, Regional and Elite level. I am convinced that these events have had a significant impact on County swimming. They have a clear focus of widening horizons for participants in the sport and the events have enjoyed the support of our clubs.

The well-supported Development Meet has firmly established itself as an important and valuable addition to our swimming calendar. It took place at Bracknell for the 4th year running in the Autumn.

The County Championships moved earlier in the swimming calendar coming into line with ASA recommendations. It has become the climax of the short course focus of autumn training. With the welter of activity in the autumn from Arena League, Club Championships, and Open Meets, the County Championships came upon us very quickly in the New Year.

Nevertheless, the Swimming Performance Committee delivered the County Championship's with their usual efficiency. The Distance and Relay programme that had taken place in Wycombe's old 50-metre pool last year, moved to Aldershot because of the uncertainties surrounding when Wycombe's new pool would come online.

The Magnet Pool in Maidenhead still proves to be a good venue for the other 3 days of competition. Apart from the disappointment of the new scoreboard's teething problems, it was an extremely well run County Championships.

Congratulations go to Wycombe whose Ellie Cowan took the Parker Silver Cup for the Girls highest aggregate points total for the second year running, and 11-year-old Solomon Williams who claimed the Lambert Shield for the highest Boys aggregate points total.

Wycombe also claimed both the Dockery Trophy for highest points total in the Ladies Club Aggregate Competition and the Ellen Trophy for the highest total in the Men Club Aggregate Competition.

The County Championships are a major undertaking involving an army of officials and volunteers who make all the varied aspects of a successful Championships happen seamlessly. A big thank you for all those who helped in any way. And a big thanks you to the swimmers and coaches. 5 new County Records were set with some young swimmers announcing themselves on this stage.

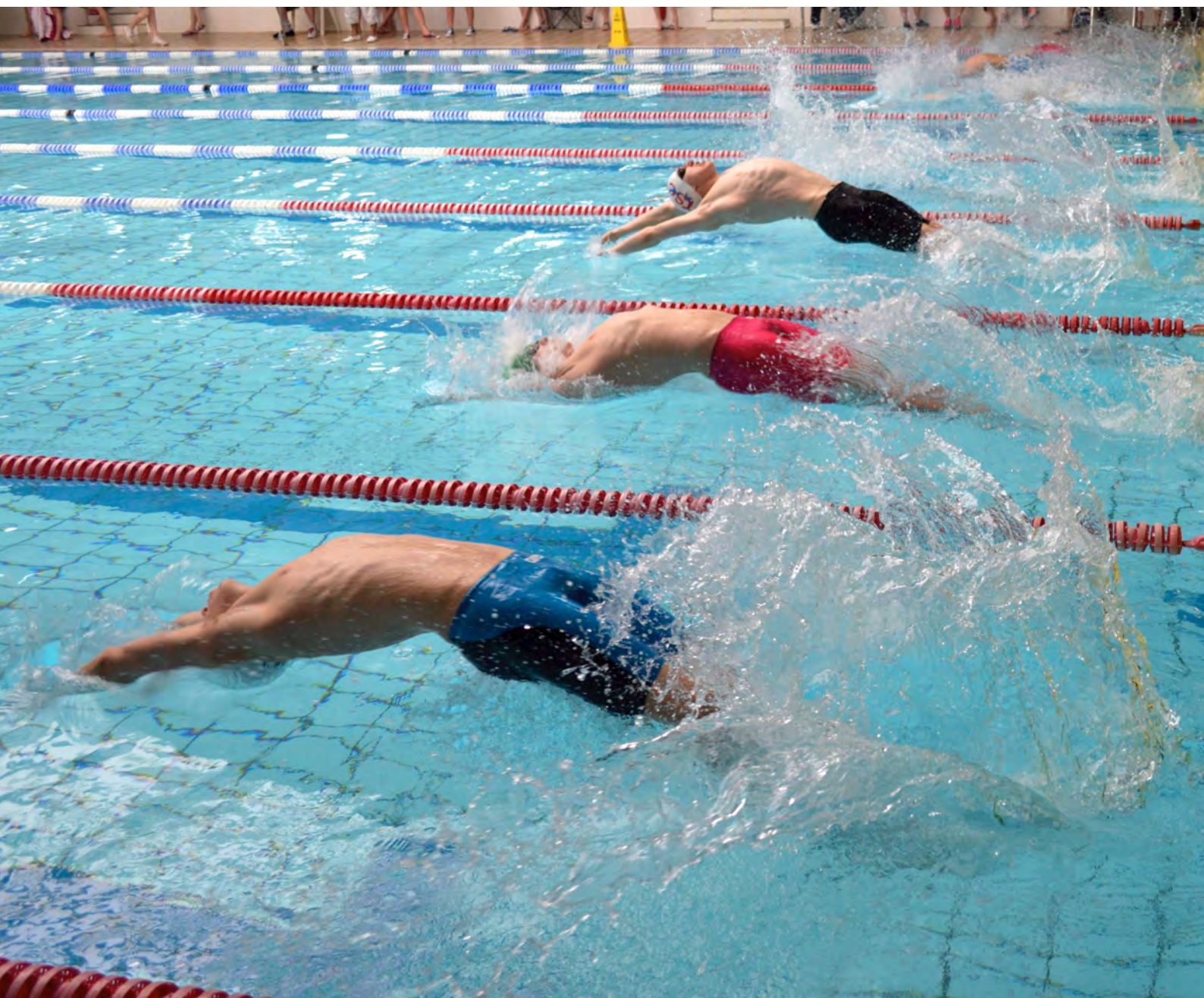
I have been fortunate to present the awards at other events like the recent Synchro Novice Gala staged at Central Pool by Reading Royals. My knowledge of the discipline of Synchronised Swimming has come on leaps and bounds under the guidance of Bev Skelton who has talked me through the finer points of a sport, which can be breathtakingly beautiful when skill, choreography and music come together. At this event swimmers were still buzzing with the news of Jenny Gray's MBE. The impact of such recognition cannot be underestimated. It has a powerful effect on our young swimmers, and hopefully will inspire and hold on to swimmers when they get to the age when we lose some very talented athletes from the sport.

Thank you to all those who worked hard on the various committees and on the management Board during the past year. It is so easy to take for granted the work that goes on.

As President I get invited from time to time to the Annual County Dinners of other counties. This year I had the pleasure to attend those of Sussex and Kent, which were highly enjoyable. It is always fascinating to find out how other counties tackle the issues that confront us all.

So as my 2 years as President draws to a close I would like to wish Terry Norris every success in the role next year. He has already hit the ground running by making contact with many of the clubs in the County strengthening communication links. Those visits have revealed some of the issues that are causing clubs concern, and these undoubtedly will inform our work over the coming year.

John Rowley



Secretary's Report

It has, in the past, fallen on the Hon Secretary to ensure that any missing information was incorporated in the Annual Report. That was not a difficult task when I compiled or edited the report. Of recent years, our retiring President has, in his role as Public Relations Officer, drawn the report together, and he has my undying gratitude for doing so! It does, however, mean that I cannot refer to anyone else's contribution before writing my own...

Now, you may ask why the Secretary needs to report at all. That is a question I have asked myself from time to time over the past 23 years. Regular readers of my reports will know that I have enjoyed a wide brief, and commented on most things which are not sport discipline specific.

From a governance perspective, 2015/16 has not been an easy year. We were lucky that John Rowley was prepared to carry on as President for a second year, in the absence of any nominations, throughout 2014/15, for the office of Vice-President. We owe John a huge debt of gratitude, for which, quite frankly, a past president's jewel (if we remember to bring it to the ACM!) is somewhat tokenistic. We are lucky that Terry Norris came forward during the year to be Vice-President, and he will be installed as President at the ACM. He and John have been touring the clubs, flying the flag for the Association, and, indeed, finding out what clubs would like from their Association.

I wonder whether it is time to review our open election policy for the presidency. I am not suggesting that we revert to the patronage of the past presidents selecting the next president, but we do need a better system, one which does not rely on the good nature of the incumbent to put him or her self forward for an extra year wearing the chain.

Neither did we have a Hon Treasurer when we started the year in question. Again, Myra Felmingham was prepared to soldier on whilst we searched for a successor. Fortunately, Jonathan Mills offered his services, which the Management Board gratefully accepted.

But we did not have many Board members either. Out of a maximum of 12, we had 6 nominations at last year's ACM. That meant that, for the first Board meeting after the ACM, all but one of the Officers and Board members had to be present to form a quorum. We failed on the scheduled date, and postponed the meeting until later in September. We acquired 3 more



members by co-option. However, we still had to cancel the April meeting, because, from apologies given in advance, for a variety of reasons, there would again not have been a quorum. I am delighted to see that there are 12 nominations for the Board this year!

Nevertheless, our sub-region probably punches above its weight in terms of the ASA South East Region. Roger Prior, a member of the Regional Management Board (and its former Chairman), is the Region's representative on the ASA Sport Governing Board, the body which guides the sport (or, more properly sports, given the various disciplines) nationally. Gary Shields is the Region's Board Member responsible for Finance – in other words, the hon treasurer. Stuart Fillingham is a member of the Region's Finance Sub-Committee, bringing his professional skills to that office. (Indeed, 4 of the 6 members of the Finance Sub-Committee come from Berks & South Bucks!). Bev Skelton serves on the Region's Synchro Development Group, which is led by Kate Coupar from Reading Royals, ably supported by Di Hughes, also from Royals. The doyen of national synchro, Jenny Gray, recently honoured by Her Majesty the Queen, is also, of course, a Royals' member. And I have the honour to be Chairman of the Regional Management Board.

It goes without saying that there are many technical officials from Berks & South Bucks who support the Region's swimming and synchro competitions – I am afraid that I have no knowledge of the other disciplines. Certainly, [speed] swimming has a voracious appetite for officials, and the Association and, more importantly, its clubs, will have to keep up their efforts, driven by Sue Green, to ensure the supply of qualified officials to maintain standards at licensed meets.

Amongst the sub-regions in the South East, Berks & South Bucks is one of 2 that I know invest in workforce development, in that we offer bursaries to those seeking teaching or coaching qualifications, in any discipline. These are available where Swim 21 accredited clubs have exhausted their annual allocations of bursaries from the Region, although we will also support candidates from non-Swim 21 clubs, as the latter are not covered by the Region. That said, nearly all our "active" clubs are Swim 21 accredited - the last one is now well on the way. Incidentally, the South East leads the way on Swim 21 nationally, and we are doing particularly well in the north of the region.

This is in no small measure because of the excellent relationship we have the Regional Club Development Officers, and Helen Mack in particular. It is a pleasure to hear from Helen at our Board meetings. We also pleased to welcome Rosa Gallop, the ASA's Club

Development Officer for the South East, to our meetings. One of Rosa's main roles is to foster networks of clubs, and some are developing around clubs in Berks & South Bucks.

Facilities are vital for our sports – even open water swimmers need the water to be safe to swim in! It was great to see the new long course facility at High Wycombe come into use during the year in question. Unless I am mistaken, it is the first new pool in the sub-region, capable of use for swimming competitions, for nearly 30 years. Whilst this is to be welcomed, this area, like all others, faces the spectre of pools closing, either for financial or structural reasons. Unfortunately, the civic pride of the past seems to have dissipated, and prestige sports' facilities are unlikely to be high on the list of our local authorities' priorities.

Central Pool, Reading, is a case in point. It presently supports diving, water polo and synchro, as well as [speed] swimming. But will it fall down before its successor is built, and will that successor provide for the same range of disciplines?

I have in the past reported on changes to the management structure of the national governing body. After a 2 year period of relative stability there have recently been some changes to the staffing structure deployed in the regions. Those formerly known as Aquatic Officers are now called Area Swim Managers. They have a geographic remit, and each have a speciality, e.g. learn to swim, which they bring to bear across the whole Region. Time will tell whether this structure will deliver better than its predecessor. Suffice it to say that these personnel don't really interface with the sport and clubs, because their prime function is to sustain and grow participation in swimming as an activity.

And that is important to the national governing body, because participation equals pounds in the minds of that major funder, Sport England.

I must conclude by thanking those who make it possible for me to be the secretary of this Association, although I sometimes fear that I do not do the job justice. The President, who makes meetings flow well, and not take too long ... My fellow officers, who readily take urgent decisions with me, although, to be fair, they are not frequently required. The Assistant Secretary, who has had to step into the breach at least once in the past year. And Sandra, who despite her feelings about the sport, is very supportive of my involvement.

Roger Penfold

Performance Swimming Report

For the 2015/6 swimming season the Committee has constituted the following members: Stuart Fillingham; Rob Moore; Gary Shields; Sue Green; Jonathan Mills and Helen Whittle. The Committee Meetings have also been attended by John Rowley in an ex-officio capacity. All members and attendees have made an active and important contribution to the smooth running of the Committee and the events that have been organised. As Performance Swimming Events Manager I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee for their ongoing support and dedication to the County.

The following four sections of this report respectively cover the key areas of the committee's responsibility.

Development Meet

The Committee organised and ran the fourth County Development Meet on the 11th October 2015. This was again perceived to be a successful competition aimed and provided for those swimmers who did not have on entry a County Championships qualification time in the strokes in which they were competing. The Committee reemphasise that this meet is not a feeder meet for the County Championships and is aimed at those swimmers that do not regularly achieve County Championship consideration times.

A total of 1,158 swims were entered into the competition, an increase on the 1,039 entered in 2014 and the 950 entered in 2013. Only Amersham, Wycombe & District and Slough & Eton Dolphins of the County's performance swimming clubs did not enter.

The meet ran well on the day at approximately 90-95% capacity. Session 1 ran to time and session 2 was slightly quicker due to a larger number of withdrawals from this session finishing ahead of the scheduled time. No complaints were received in connection with this meet and only one matter was raised before the day being the age old question of swimmers who change age groups between the Development Meet and the County Championships. This query has been raised a number of times and on each occasion a standard response has been provided explaining that this is a condition of the meet. The situation will however change for the 2016 Development Meet following the introduction of the new ASA competition pathway.

From a financial perspective the meet total income of £6781 showed a small reduction over the previous year

(2014: £7423; 2013: £7248) as a consequence of a greater number of entrants offset by lower programme sales. Expenditure declined a little to £1792 from £1817 in 2014 and £1785 in 2013; there being only limited year on year variables. Consequently, although it is never the intention for this meet to be profitable, a surplus of £4989 was earned (2014: £5,606; 2013: £5,463) which has been remitted back to the County for investment as the Management Board consider appropriate.

The Committee has agreed that since the meet was well supported was not massively over-subscribed and continues to appear to fulfil a need within the County that it should continue in its current form. Accordingly the meet will run in 2016 (and has been scheduled for 9th October). It is also understood that Wycombe and District SC will enter in 2016.

County Championships

The Committee organised and ran the annual County Championships to the new timetable prescribed in the recently introduced ASA competition Pathway on the weekends of January 15/16, January 22 and February 6 2016.

The new ASA competition Pathway also enforced a few other changes to the championships in the current year. The most significant of these being as follows:

- Change of age groups to: 10/11 12 13 14 15 16
- Change of Relay Age groups to : 10/11 12/13 16 & under Open
- Age on day: 31 Dec 2016
- Para Swimming multi-classification competition now included
- 10/11 may not enter 800m 1500m or 400m IM
- 100 IM is now a championship event with finals
- BAGCAT awards have been discontinued
- Finalists (including reserve finalists) must withdraw if not swimming or will be fined.
- There was a revision of qualifying times.
- The Junior Championship is now for 14 and under
- The Senior Championship is now for 15 and over
- There are a number of changes to how awards are calculated

Ahead of the Championships and for the third year in succession a review of the entry times had been completed with the aim of reducing the number of swimmers eligible to compete. Whilst this did not result in a significant reset of consideration times a number of events were tightened with the aim, at the request of the County Coaches, to reduce the volume of entries by circa 10% (having failed to achieve this in the prior year

despite the tightening of times). Accordingly in 2016 it again became more difficult to achieve a County consideration time.

For the 2016 Championships 2,563 swims were entered into the Championships compared to 2,987 swims in the preceding year thereby continuing to achieve the reduction in entrants that the County has been looking for. This made the Championships more manageable in terms of swimmers and available water time. All of the County's performance swimming clubs were represented, albeit that Slough & Eton Dolphins SC only had one entered swim.

The Coaches in the County reporting at the annual feedback meeting after the Championships expressed their gratitude to the Committee and declared that it had again been a successful and well run Championship. Whilst there were some inevitable problems in running a championship of this size, it did in general run very smoothly across the four days of competition. As in 2015 the Championships were in the main held at the Magnet Leisure Centre in Maidenhead. The long course session was this year run at the Aldershot Garrison Leisure Centre as the (new) Wycombe Leisure Centre refused to take our booking.

The Performance Swimming Events Committee would like to extend a formal thanks to all of the volunteers and officials who gave up their time to make this (and the Development Meet) possible. Worthy of particular mention are Herman Bleekendaal, who admirably supported the committee in his position as Trophy officer, and John Rowley in his role as county PR Officer.

Some of the matters covered in the post Championships review meeting were:

- Relay session
- Relay teams
- Magnet facilities
- Scoreboard

To date the Committee has received three formal complaints in connection with Championships. Two concerned the Boys 50 metre Backstroke event and both emanate from Tilehurst SC. One concerned the stewarding of competitors and the other related to the rearranged final of the event. The Committee has responded to these complainants and continues to express its regret for any inconvenience caused. The third complaint came from Bracknell & Wokingham SC and concerned the final session which the complainant perceived to be too long and overcrowded. The Committee will consider this matter further when planning for the 2017 Championships.

However from a swimming perspective, the Championships delivered five new County Records and given the change to the entry ages new Meet Best times in every event!

Following the meet the Committee also launched a new web site; separate to that of the County which includes results and pictures from the Championships. This is available at the following web address:
www.bsbasaswimming.com

From a financial perspective the meet accounts have yet to be finalised the meet only concluding a few weeks



ago. However draft accounts indicate that total income of £22,961 showed an improvement compared to the previous year (2015: £21,252; 2014: £24,436) mainly as a consequence of better entry fees and door monies despite the planned lower number of swimmers. Expenditure is currently estimated slightly lower than the prior year at £8,973 (2015: £9,490; 2014 £7,316); mainly as a consequence of pool hire refunds due to the problems experienced at Magnet Leisure Centre.

Consequently, a draft surplus of £13,485 is estimated (2015: £12,060; 2014: £16,871) though this is obviously subject to change. This meet is designed to be profitable, as it represents the main source of income to the County for the funding of its wider activities. Accordingly the surplus has also been remitted back to the County for investment as the Management Board consider appropriate.

The Committee has made no applications for capital expenditure in the current season. It is, however, envisaged that applications will be submitted in the coming period for printing facilities and other related IT equipment.

The Committee has agreed that since the meet was well supported and continues to fulfil a need within the County that it should continue and accordingly the meet will run in 2017. However, given the recent opening of the new pool in Wycombe the Committee will consider both the location of the meet and potential changes to the format of the Championships over the coming months. The meet has though tentatively been scheduled for 21/22 January 2017 and 4/5 February 2017.

Other envisaged changes will include:

- Relays - Given this was the area of greatest feedback from the coaches changes will be made to improve this area.
- Separate finals sessions
- Holding the meet over four days instead of the current three and a half days

Performance Swimming Records

The Performance Swimming Events Committee continues to take responsibility for the administration of Performance Swimming County Records. The Committee also retained responsibility for administering County Championship Meet Best Times.

The administration system written a few years ago along with a database and reporting mechanism has been maintained throughout the year. This aligns the meet best times and the records into a single database. The system continues to generate a certificate of achievement for records that is presented to the new record holder. The up-to-date records list is now also republished on the website each time after a new record has been set.

An appendix to this paper sets out all of the new County records ratified since the last annual report. A listing of new County Championship meet best times is also available on request and is available on the website.

Performance swimming facilities within County:

The Performance Swimming Events Committee also takes a keen interest in the facilities available in the county which are suitable for the organisation of galas and competitions. To this end, the Committee notes that building work has now been completed on the new long course pool in Wycombe. Completion of the pool was on track and opened on 1 January 2016.

The Committee note that a significant factor in the use of the Wycombe pool is the expensive cost of the pool and there will be a need to determine whether or not these costs represent good value for money.

Stuart Fillingham



Officials Report

The 2015-16 season has been well supported by our dedicated volunteer officials. It has been a great pleasure to see more people coming forward for training at all levels and we have an increasing pipeline of candidates moving through with the aim of becoming referees.

So it was a cause for concern, in October, when at a national swimming official organiser meeting I learned that all candidates must have an official ASA provided course book. The trainers in this county have struggled to get the workbooks from the ASA all season and have failed to get the numbers we need to meet demand. In addition all candidates must now hold a current CPD in Contemporary Issues before they can progress to examination. This course is free online and can be taken at the candidate's convenience.

The record of achievement this year includes 2 new referees - congratulations to Annette Moss and Chris Hirst both from Wycombe District SC - and we have a third candidate with the theory paper passed waiting to take his practical assessment. There are 6 new starters, 6 J2 and 24 JL1 to swell the ranks for licensed meets.

The efforts of all our existing officials to encourage and mentor candidates, sometimes from other parts of the country, deserve special thanks. Training would be impossible without their time passing on their experience.

With revised training workbooks due at any time the county is well positioned to harness the enthusiasm of parents to support their children in our sport by becoming officials.

Sue Green



Masters Swimming

This report covers the period from September 2015 to June 2016.

The ASA National MASTERS and Senior Age Group Championships (SC) took place in October 2015 in Sheffield. A total of 43 competitors from BSB (including 3 swimming under the Spencer banner) took part and amassed more than 50 medals. Richard Stannard, 41, (Maidenhead) was again a major player with 4 Golds. Amanda Heath, 58, (swimming for Spencer) never came lower than 3rd in any of her 7 events. Unfortunately, Richard was not available for the subsequent Inter-County Masters event at Barnet Copthall but, despite this, the BSB team of 26 swimmers still managed to take 3rd place (as last year) behind Middlesex and Hampshire. This placed us 9th in the National rankings. Another notable absentee was Duncan McCreadie who was still recovering from an operation on his shoulder.

27 swimmers took part in SER Masters (LC) in January 2016 at Crawley winning 49 individual medals (18 Gold, 16 Silver, 15 Bronze) between them.

The Bracknell Masters Open meet in early March 2016 was fully subscribed well before the nominated closing date for entries. An advance indicator perhaps of the impending shambles surrounding entries for the European Masters held at LAC in May 2016. The Bracknell event was supported by 44 local competitors (32 Golds).

There were 20 swimmers from BSB at the British Masters and Senior Age Group Championships (LC) in Sheffield in early April 2016.

It had been mentioned previously that consideration was being given to the resurrection of our own Open County Masters gala, last held in 2011. This will now be held on Sunday 11 September 2016 at Magnet Pool, Maidenhead over 2 sessions. This is an 8-lane SC pool with AOE. Session times – warm up 11.00 for 11.45 start and 3.15 for 4.00 start respectively. Estimated finish at 7.00pm. The date was finalised after talking with Ian Woollard, organiser of the Barnet Open Masters Sprint Meet. That event will now take place on the preceding weekend. Although minimum cross-over of competitors was envisaged, it did seem sensible to avoid a direct clash of dates if possible.

A recently issued FINA rankings list shows 5 individual competitors and one relay team from BSB to be in the world top 10 in various events.

Nearly 50 local swimmers took part in the European Masters at LAC in May. Kirsty Johnson achieved 2 Silvers, Richard Stannard and Dave Milburn 1 Silver each and Peter Morris 1 Bronze in individual events. The stand-out performance (which I witnessed as a technical official) was almost certainly the 400 Freestyle by Richard Stannard where he was beaten only by an Italian who came within 0.31 sec of a European Record. Amanda Heath, swimming under the Spencer banner, achieved 2 individual Bronze and 1 team Gold medal (Medley relay).

Robert Odell



Water Polo Report

As in 2014, Water polo in Berkshire & South Buckinghamshire is active at only one club offering competitive water polo to its members, Reading SC. Much of the information in this report derives from the Annual Report adopted by Reading SC at its AGM in October 2015.

The Water Polo section of the Club comprises 16 [adult] players - 13 men and 3 women. The Club notes that its polo membership is transient, in that players move in and out of the area in connection with their work.

Although some years ago the Reading Water Polo team reached the dizzy heights of National League polo, presently the teams plays in the London League. They were relegated from Division 1 of that league in 2014, but, as of 22 October 2015, were top of Division 2, and look likely to be promoted. The team also plays in the London League Winter League, to secure game time for the developing squad.

After a year without a coach, 2 members have sought the level 1 coaching qualification (via a course at Basingstoke, and with financial support from the County Association), and, assuming they are successful, one of them will seek the level 2 qualification next year.

As reported last year, the Club has decided to participate in the Basingstoke polo network, although it is not clear whether the memorandum of understanding has yet been signed on behalf of the Club.

On a national level, following the Tunnicliffe Review, the England Water Polo Management Group unveiled its Strategic and Operational Plan first to the Sport Governing Board (and regional chairmen) and then to the water polo fraternity last November.

Roger Penfold

Synchronised Swimming Report

The County continues to be represented mainly by Reading Royals and also by Bracknell who continue, although as a much smaller club. Reading Royals have again collected medals at all competitions and have a large number of swimmers selected into the England Senior, Junior, Talent and Development squads. Katie Dawkins continues to coach the Great Britain duet and teams and is assistant to the club's current Head Coach, Kelly Ann Russell.

Reading Royals Recreational 9-12 took a Silver medal at the Multi-regional Competition to start the competitive season off. The 12 & under team collected Gold and the Competitive strand with the 13/14 team Silver and many individual medals too.

The biggest competition of the year is held in December, the National Age Group Competition. Again Reading Royals did well. In the 12 & Under age group Mimi Grey collected the Gold medal in figures, solo, duet and team, the second year she has achieved this. Isobel Blinkhorn took the Silver in figures, solo and duet, joining Mimi in the team gold. Anna Welland came a very creditable 5th in the 13-15 age group; as a young 13 year old she is one to watch in the future. Mimi Gray paired with Alyssa Bassinger to collect her Gold duet medal, with Isobel and Eleanor Blinkhorn collecting the Silver in the 12 & under, and Harriet Smith and Abigail Taylor collecting the Bronze medal in the 13/14 age group. In the 15-18 age group Emma Critchley collected the Bronze medal in figures but improved to collect a Silver medal for her solo. The 12 and under team won Gold and our second development team of swimmers, 10 and under, swam strongly to come 11th gaining experience in their first major competition ready to improve for 2016. The 13/14 team won the Silver medal and the 15-18 team came 6th.

On the back of results at this competition many of Readings swimmers have been selected into National squads. Emma Critchley was selected to swim in the GB Junior duet and in the GB Senior team. She then joins Hannah Mulshaw and swims with the GB Junior Squad too. Isobel Blinkhorn, Harriet Smith, Abigail Taylor, Mimi Grey, Alyssa Bassinger, Anna Welland, and Isobel Turrell were selected to swim in the England Development Squad competing during the summer, and Eleanor Blinkhorn has been selected to train with the England Development Squad. Mimi Gray and Alyssa Bassinger have been selected to swim as an England Development duet along with Harriet Smith

and Abigail Taylor training to swim at International Competitions in the summer.

Reading Royals have had 5 coaches pass their level 1 coaching course this year.

Katie Clark returned from retirement to gain a GB Olympic duet place with her partner Olivia Federici and have just been announced as the duet pair competing at the Rio Olympics in 2016, very exciting for the sport!

Bracknell has continued with a smaller number of swimmers who are planning to compete at the Reading Novice Competition. They have difficulties providing pool time with the number of swimmers participating. Hopefully this can be addressed over the next year.

Beverley Skelton



RESULTS

GB Senior Olympic Duet,	Katie Clark
GB Junior Duet,	Emma Critchley
GB Junior Team,	Emma Critchley, Hannah Mulshaw
England Age Group Team,	Isobel Blinkhorn, Harriette Smith, Abigail Taylor, Mimi Gray, Alyssa Bassinger, Anna Welland, Isobel Turrell.
England Development Squad,	Eleanor Blinkhorn

Multi Regional Recreation Competition 18 October 2015

Figures,	
12/Under,	1st Mimi Gray 2nd Alyssa Bassinger 3rd Isobel Blinkhorn
13/14	4th Terri-Faye Cooper 5th Harriette Smith 6th Anna Welland
Solo,	
12Under	1st Mimi Gray 2nd Alyssa Bassinger 4th Isobel Blinkhorn
Duet	
12Under	1st Mimi Gray/ Alyssa Bassinger 2nd Isobel & Eleanor Blinkhorn
13/14	2nd Harriette Smith /Abigail Taylor 3rd Isobel Turrell /Terri-Faye Coupar 4th Anna Welland / Cerys Larsen
Team	
12Under	Gold 6th Reading Royals J
13/14	Silver
15/17	4th Reading Royals

National Age Groups; 4-6 December 2015

12U	Recreational Team,	5th place
Figures		
12U	1st Mimi Gray 2nd Isobel Blinkhorn 4th Alyssa Bassinger	
13/14	5th Harriette Smith 6th Anna Welland	
15-17	3rd Emma Critchley	
Solo		
12/U	1st Mimi Gray 2nd Isobel Blinkhorn 4th Alyssa Bassinger 5th Eleanor Blinkhorn	
13/15	5th Anna Welland	
15/18	2nd Emma Critchley	
Duet		
12U	1st Mimi Gray/Alyssa Bassinger 2nd Isobel & Eleanor Blinkhorn	
13-14	3rd Harriette Smith/ Abigail Taylor 6th Isobel Turrell/ Terri-Faye Coupar 7th Anna Welland / Cerys Larsen	
Team		
12U	Gold	11th Team J (development squad)
13/14	Silver	
15-18	6th Place	

British Championships April 2016

Figures, Emma Critchley	4th
Solos, Emma Critchley	Silver
Team Combination,	Bronze

European Championships May 2016

(Katie Clark and Emma Critchley)	
Team Free (Emma and Katie),	8th
Team Combination (Emma and Katie)	8th
Tech Duet (Katie Clark)	9th
Free Duet (Katie Clark)	8th

Novice Competition - 18th June 2016

Public Relations

The initiatives introduced over the past few years were continued this season. This report will focus on developments and progress made.

New website

The key development was the experiment of launching a dedicated website to host the digital resources from the County Swimming Championships held in January and early February. This had long been an aspiration, and an experimental website was created to become the main gateway for swimmers, parents and their clubs to get hold of the video and photographic resources. With a clear brief from the Swimming Events Committee, a site was developed which was up and running by the final day of the Championships.

On the website users could access all 50 and 100 metre finals together with a selection of the best photographs taken over the 4 days of competitions. As usual all podium winners were meticulously recorded together with the best images of swimmers in action. Many Thanks to Tony Bakker and Maria Noguier who assisted in keeping this important visual record.

The 20 individual video clips garnered over 2325 'hits' at the time of writing which was an improvement on last year. The well received website gave a place to go to for all the visual resources from the 2016 Championships. The most watched final was the 100 Medley Boys with 213 'hits'. The most watched Girls final was the 100 Breaststroke with 161 'hits'.

There were requests from some swimmers for footage of longer events. These had been filmed but because they were heat declared winner events they posed editing challenges. As there was no guarantee that the podium places would all feature in the final heat - winners could come from any one of several heats - how to best present the races was an editing issue. Where possible footage from several heats was edited to tell the story of a particular event.

These videos were uploaded later to You Tube and have been viewed relatively infrequently. 12 separate videos have been posted which have obtained '166' hits all told. These included the 1500 and 800 events held at Aldershot.

The development of this experimental website was a success and has received positive comments. For next year the aspiration is to offer the service within the framework of the main County Web site. This will

require solving some logistical issues about the large file size of video in particular, and the number of photographs that can be uploaded to our existing website.

The County Newsletter featuring all the podium photographs published during the Championships was discontinued and replaced with an electronic slideshow on the new website. All the familiar data, including swimmer, race time and club was provided in a more interesting and dynamic way.

The images of the podium presentations additionally provide the trophy secretary with an invaluable resource when tracking who currently holds the various county Cups and shields awarded. This archive has also been the first point of call for clubs when posting press releases about their swimmers' successes in their local media. Some clubs have made significant use of the resources provide by the County on their own websites. Some have even used the images to create their own club videos. This is an encouraging development, which justifies keeping a detailed visual record of our swimming championships.

Sharing

Sharing the resources taken at County events has been an aspiration in recent years. During the season Videos were made of the County's involvement in the National Team Challenge at Sheffield during October and also the 2-day County Regional camp held at Crystal Palace in September.

All participants in these 2 successful activities were presented with a video souvenir of the event in which they took part. Many swimmers and coaches were highly appreciative.

Photographs

The photographic archive provides a great starting place when producing designs for the County Championship programmes. This year's Championships featured four images taken from the 2015 Championships. From the numerous action images from 2016, the 2017 programmes will be designed. Indeed the SERASA Region commissioned designs for their Regional programmes for their competitions, and images taken of our Swimmers have been used regularly.

Other activities

Recently we have begun to update the County Handbook annually, and the 2016 version was published

electronically during the year on the County website. Drawing upon the numerous images taken at County events, it provides a useful insight into the work of the County. Members of clubs have access to a wealth of information. Featured prominently are images from all the active aquatic disciplines. Clubs have generously provided images, which have been included in the Handbook. Our 2016 championships provided the bulk of the competitive swimming images used.

Conclusion

Overall this has been a year when we have continued to develop the way we record and share resources. The use of the website to allow individuals to access materials has sped the process of dissemination.

For next year we hope to explore the possibilities of using social media as a method of communicating between County and Clubs. Other counties have successfully used Twitter and Facebook very effectively within the ASA guidelines. We hope to adopt some of the best practice going on elsewhere in the swimming fraternity.

Raising the profile of the County and particularly of our talented swimmers is a key objective. The process of recording the successes and sharing the resources has built a positive ethos, celebrating what the County has achieved during a busy year.

John Rowley

South East Region Report

Swim 21

Currently Berkshire & South Bucks has 13 swim 21 club Essential accredited clubs. Tilehurst SC achieved accreditation for the first time in September 2015.

Regional Talent Camps

In 2015, Berks and South Bucks had 14 young swimmers selected for the SER Regional Talent Camps, four 11 year old girls, two 11 year old girls, two 12 year old girls and six 12 year old boys.

Bursaries

Between March 2015 – April 2016, the South East Region awarded 22 teaching and coaching bursaries across 3 disciplines totalling £4107.90 to clubs within Berks and South Bucks.

Networks

Bracknell & Wokingham SC support the Portsmouth Beacon Programme with two members attending regularly. The club is also an active member of the Four Counties network.

Amersham and Albatross Diving Clubs attend the Beacon Programme at Southampton and are involved with both the Regional and Network programmes.

Coach Education

In June 2015 - 5 coaches, from Wycombe District SC and Chesham SC attended the SER coach education workshops.

One coach from Windsor SC attended the SER coaches conference in November 2015.

During the SER February / March 2016 workshops, 4 coaches attended from Chesham SC and Chalfont Otters SC

Time to Listen

One TTL course was delivered in Berkshire & South Bucks in October 2015. The SER commits to delivering one course per County ASA every twelve months. Six welfare officers in BSB have been trained within the last 12 months.

Team Manager Training

6 Team Manager Courses were delivered in BSB between March 2015 – April 2016, 3 team manager module one courses and 3 team manager module 2 courses, training 39 team managers.



Young Volunteer Programme

The aim of the SER Young Volunteer Programme is to increase the number of trained young people and to improve the accessibility to formal and informal training opportunities. Young people participating in the programme were expected to attend two Development Days, one between September – December 2015 and the second in February / March 2016. In addition to attendance at the development days, the young people were expected to undertake ten hours volunteering within their home clubs and complete an online training course.

Training provided during the programme included;

- ASA Young Aquatic Helper Certificate
- ASA Timekeepers Course
- St. Johns Emergency First Aid
- Sports Coach UK – Safeguarding for Young Volunteers (13+)

8 young volunteers from Chalfont otters SC completed the 2015/2016 programme.

Helen Mack



Treasurer's report

Treasurers' reports rarely make exciting or entertaining reading, and I expect that my first report as Berks & South Bucks ASA Treasurer will be no exception.

I took over from Myra Felmingham at the turn of the calendar year: I would like to thank her for her efforts and keeping the books straight, so that the handover was straightforward and accurate.

The accounts have again been examined by Peter Upton FCA and he has approved them. The Hon. Secretary has the examiner's letter and accounts for filing.

The county championships are the major income source of the year, and this year is no exception. After costs, the net income from them brought £9,848 compared to £12,060 last year. This seems surprising until you realise that, last year, some £4,000 of trophy costs accounts for the decrease in profit – previously the awards for meets were reported separately to the meet. I now apportion the trophy costs – ribbons, medals etc – against the specific meet, leaving “Trophies” as pertaining to the physical cups and silverware the County possesses. Whilst pool costs tend to continue to climb, the lack of a scoreboard, and the disruption caused by Magnet's error on Sunday swimming lessons, earned us a refund for the inconvenience not likely to be repeated next year.

Not only unlikely to be repeated, but the desire of the clubs to move to the new facility at Wycombe is significantly more expensive, and, correspondingly, will provoke an adjustment to the entry fees (that's a weasel word for “increase”!). Similarly, the awards' costs for the Development Meet are now apportioned: there are no trophies for that gala. The meet was popular, but, with the adjustment, we account slightly less than last year.

Whilst this might sound gloomy, the maths shows that together, the meets brought in approximately £1,300 more than last year when you include the trophy costs on a like-for-like basis.

The Inter-counties again attracted support from the ASA towards the team expenses; and Masters was comparable to last year. This year, however, masters are reviving the County Masters' Meet in September: we wish them luck.

We ran two development camps this year, with Joan Scarrott leading those (as well as managing the Inter-counties' team), one for pre-County swimmers, at Ascot, and one for Regional swimmers at Crystal Palace. This is an investment of some £4,500 between them both.

There was a purchase of ‘Presidents’ Jewels’, having run out after the last purchase about 25 years ago – this should set us up until 2040.

Last year we bemoaned the fact that the County only spent £800 on bursaries. This year it did rise to £1,251. Clubs are reminded that funding for training and development of volunteers (teachers, coaches etc) is available: all details are on the B&SBASA website.

We remain with our Bankers, HSBC. I have, with the agreement of the Management Board, set up electronic banking, which means that the age of the cheque is almost dead. As it seems to take me an almost extraordinary effort to get to a post box, this means that expenses and invoiced can be paid promptly, and good quality documentary evidence for an audit trail exists. A major boon for my efforts.

As stated at the top, the accounts were examined by Peter Upton (Accountants), for which a professional charge was, of course, made. This charge amounts to about 20% of our excess income, which I feel is significant. Whilst not decrying the abilities of professional accountants, I have made enquiries, and there is no requirement for the accounts to be professionally examined – whoever does it must be independent of the Finance Committee and the officers of the Association, and we aren't hiding tax in the Republic of Ireland or the Cayman Islands – the books are very straightforward (we have less than 80 transactions a year). To this end, I suggest we make arrangements with a willing person who has worked on financial matters, which should save the Association a large chunk of the fee. So there is a proposal that we appoint Barbara Garden, DipPFS, (Tilehurst SC) as the examiner of the 2016/17 accounts.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Finance Committee, as well as Rob Moore, for their advice, as I got to know my way around the books as the new Treasurer.

Jonathan Mills

Appendix B - New County Records since last Annual Report

Gender	SC/LC	Distance	Stroke	Age	Swimmer	Club	Meet	Venue	Date	Time
Boys	LC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Newbury	Rushmoor Royals Open	Aldershot	11 Apr 15	27.99
Boys	LC	200	Medley	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Newbury	British Championships	LAC	16 Apr 15	2:10.43
Boys	LC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA SER Championships	Crawley	31 May 15	27.93
Girls	LC	100	Freestyle	Junior Record	Rachel Cox	Wycombe District	ASA SER Championships	Crawley	31 May 15	59.94
Boys	LC	100	Backstroke	Junior Record	James Eddy	Wycombe District	British Championships	LAC	11 Apr 15	59.60
Girls	LC	4x100	Freestyle	Junior Record	Wycombe	Wycombe District	ASA SER Championships	Crawley	24 May 15	4:03.61
Girls	LC	4x100	Medley	Junior Record	Wycombe	Wycombe District	ASA SER Championships	Crawley	23 May 15	4:35.11
Boys	LC	4x100	Freestyle	Junior Record	Wycombe	Wycombe District	ASA SER Championships	Crawley	23 May 15	3:47.21
Boys	LC	4x100	Medley	Junior Record	Wycombe	Wycombe District	ASA SER Championships	Crawley	24 May 15	4:06.91
Mens	LC	4x100	Medley	County Record	Wycombe	Wycombe District	ASA SER Championships	Crawley	24 May 15	4:00.68
Boys	LC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	British Swimming Summer	Sheffield	31 Jul 15	27.24
Boys	LC	200	Medley	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	British Swimming Summer	Sheffield	30 Jul 15	2:07.68
Boys	LC	200	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	British Swimming Summer	Sheffield	29 Jul 15	2:05.19
Boys	LC	100	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	British Championships	LAC	11 Apr 15	59.07
Mens	LC	200	Backstroke	County Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	British Swimming Summer	Sheffield	29 Jul 15	2:05.19
Boys	LC	100	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	British Swimming Summer	Sheffield	1 Aug 15	58.06
Girls	LC	4x50	Freestyle	Junior Record	Wycombe	Wycombe District	ESSA National Relay Finals	LAC	20 Jun 15	1:54.72
Girls	LC	4x50	Medley	Junior Record	Wycombe	Wycombe District	ESSA National Relay Finals	LAC	20 Jun 15	2:09.99
Boys	SC	100	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ESSA Interdivisional Champs	Leeds	4 Oct 15	56.97
Boys	SC	200	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ESSA Interdivisional Champs	Leeds	4 Oct 15	2:01.72
Mens	SC	200	Backstroke	County Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ESSA Interdivisional Champs	Leeds	4 Oct 15	2:01.72
Boys	SC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	James Eddy	Wycombe District	Maxwell L2 Open Meet	Maxwell	3 Oct 15	27.61
Boys	SC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA Inter Counties	Sheffield	18 Oct 15	26.71
Girls	SC	100	Breaststroke	Junior Record	Eleanor Cowan	Wycombe District	ASA Inter Counties	Sheffield	18 Oct 15	1:13.48
Boys	SC	200	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA SER Winter Championships	Portsmouth	7 Nov 15	2:00.48

Appendix B - New County Records since last Annual Report

Gender	SC/LC	Distance	Stroke	Age	Swimmer	Club	Meet	Venue	Date	Time
Mens	SC	200	Backstroke	County Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA SER Winter Championships	Portsmouth	7 Nov 15	2:00.48
Boys	SC	100	Backstroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA SER Winter Championships	Portsmouth	7 Nov 15	56.36
Boys	SC	100	Medley	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA SER Winter Championships	Portsmouth	7 Nov 15	58.25
Mens	SC	100	Medley	County Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA SER Winter Championships	Portsmouth	7 Nov 15	58.25
Boys	SC	200	Medley	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA SER Winter Championships	Portsmouth	7 Nov 15	2:05.61
Girls	SC	50	Breaststroke	Junior Record	Eleanor Cowan	Wycombe District	Guildford L2 Open Meet	Guildford	21 Nov 15	33.82
Girls	SC	50	Freestyle	Junior Record	Millicent Routledge	Bracknell & Wokingham	Aqua Sulis Grand Prix	Bristol	21 Nov 15	26.23
Girls	SC	100	Freestyle	Junior Record	Millicent Routledge	Bracknell & Wokingham	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	56.37
Girls	SC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	Emilia Sansome	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	29.75
Boys	SC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	James Eddy	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	26.49
Boys	SC	200	Medley	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	2:03.47
Boys	SC	200	Breaststroke	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	2:19.41
Boys	SC	100	Medley	Junior Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	58.14
Mens	SC	100	Medley	County Record	James McFadzen	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	58.14
Womens	SC	50	Backstroke	County Record	Emilia Sansome	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	29.75
Womens	SC	50	Breaststroke	County Record	Lily Seaward	Wycombe District	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	32.73
Womens	SC	50	Freestyle	County Record	Millicent Routledge	Bracknell & Wokingham	Aqua Sulis Grand Prix	Bristol	21 Nov 15	26.23
Womens	SC	100	Freestyle	County Record	Millicent Routledge	Bracknell & Wokingham	ASA Winter Meet	Sheffield	17 Dec 15	56.37
Girls	SC	50	Backstroke	Junior Record	Emilia Sansome	Wycombe District	County Championships 2016	Maidenhead	6 Feb 16	29.67
Boys	SC	400	Medley	Junior Record	Tom Dean	Maidenhead	County Championships 2016	Maidenhead	17 Jan 16	4:28.42
Womens	SC	50	Backstroke	County Record	Emilia Sansome	Wycombe District	County Championships 2016	Maidenhead	6 Feb 16	29.67
Womens	SC	100	Breaststroke	County Record	Connie Dean	Maidenhead	County Championships 2016	Maidenhead	16 Jan 16	1:10.17
Womens	SC	100	Medley	County Record	Connie Dean	Maidenhead	County Championships 2016	Maidenhead	16 Jan 16	1:03.59