

Berkshire & South  
Buckinghamshire County



Annual Report  
2022-2023

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## ***President's Report***

My first duty as President was attending the County Master meet at Braywick in September 2022. There was a somber start to the meet as we held a 2-minute silence in memory of her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, former Patron of Swim England, who had recently passed away. You can read more about the event and all the County, National and International success our Masters swimmers have had this year later in this report.

October brought a busy time as the season for Performance Swimming was well under way. At the start of the month I accompanied our County team to the National County Team Championships at Ponds Forge. The team were brilliant, and we had many excellent, strong swims coming away from the competition finishing 12th overall in the premier division, an improvement on the previous competition. Well done to the team, County team manager and County Coaches. A special thank you to Alex Vine who provided mentoring to our new county coaches.

|                   |                  |                 |               |                               |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Jack Allman       | William Dean     | Johnny Ireland  | Nathan Potter | Annabelle                     |
| Henry Benton      | Lucy Fox         | Lucas Iweanya   | Luke Poulton  | Compton                       |
| Lily Brabbin      | Gilbert          | Adam Maaref     | Sienna Ramery | Jessica Humm                  |
| Hazel-Anne Carter | Charlotte Heyden | Alexander Moore | Neve Tyson    | Oliver Mowbray<br>Monty Smith |

Joe Evans - County Coach

David Cummins - Asst County Coach

Julia Craigie - County Team Manager

Hot on the heels of this was the County Development meet where I attended in my role as an official on pool deck so up close and possibly a bit wet after the experience. This is a brilliant way to engage with our younger swimmers and provide them an opportunity to achieve times for the County Championships.

In November I was invited to attend the Masters Southeast Regional Counties event at the London Aquatic Centre. The team were up against some strong competition from hosts Kent and came an admirable 3rd in the region.

I attended a training session by Reading Royals our very successful Artistic Swimming Club in the County. It was such an eye opener into the amount of stamina swim training they do, not very different to the Performance swimmers in their sessions, and then on to practicing the components of the routines. It was amazing to watch them in action and meet the coaching staff and their Club Chair Adam. I saw them all again a month later when I attended their award night and helped to present trophies along with Jenny Gray.

While I relaxed over the festive period the Performance Swimming Committee worked hard to get everything ready for the County Championships in January. They did a fantastic job as always so my thanks go to James Glazebrook, Stuart Fillingham, Rob Moore, Andy Mackay, Johnathan Mills, Sam Dyson, and Peter Button. I had the easy job of handing out the medals and trophies at the end of the sessions and appearing in many photographs. We are very lucky to have such a dedicated and professional team.

As a full time working parent who has had the early morning wake up alarm to taxi swimmers to training and travel around the County and Region to meets I appreciate that when a call goes out for volunteers for an event it is normally the last thing you want to do. We are all under lots of time pressure but please if you do see a shout out raise your hand and get involved – it really is true when they say many

hands make light work!

These are just the highlight so from my year as President. 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. I wish my successor a fantastic year getting out and about to meet you all and know that they will have as great a year as I have had.



**Diane Cryer**

**President**

### ***Secretary's Report***

I have written the Secretary's report for many, many years now, and I find (and you, the reader, will undoubtedly feel) that the contents of the report are almost changeless. So ..., as I reread my 2021/22 report, I was struck as to how much needed to be repeated this year. You have been warned.

Of course, there was one thing about 2022/23 which was different from its immediate predecessors – the spectre of the pandemic was removed and our sports returned to the near, or new, normal. Nationally and regionally, club membership numbers are returning to near pre-pandemic levels, which is great, but there is a 2 year lacuna in memberships presently working its way through the age groups. A number of officials, for instance, have ironed and folded away their whites (or blacks – it's a discipline specific uniform code) for the last time, and no longer venture onto the poolside. It will take time to replace them, too. On the whole, however, I would like to think that we are now heading in the right direction. None of "our" clubs disappeared during the Covid era. Neither did our Association, now 112 years old.

As mentioned last year, there is/was a review of "counties" by Swim England, the first stage of which was to gather information about them. Your Board entrusted Jonathan Mills and I to respond on behalf of the Association. The upshot of the survey was to decide that "counties" needed to have more predictable governance, and your Board is just beginning to work its way through a number of number of processes designed to establish its fitness for purpose. You might question what that purpose is. May be that will be revealed as the review progresses...

Here, I revert to my 2021/22 report.

"Certainly, the Berkshire & South Buckinghamshire Amateur Swimming Association aspires to be a sub-regional organisation, supporting the Region in delivering its strategies, themselves derived from Swim England (more formally known as the Amateur Swimming Association (Swim England) Ltd) the national governing body. Inlaw, however, the County is an association of clubs from a defined area, having no obvious role in the governance of the sport. So ... it does not have a life detached from

the clubs in the area – it is driven, and delivers, by means of the efforts of members of the clubs in the association.”

“As to what the County does, it provides a level of competition opportunities in speed swimming, a level recognised in the national athlete pathway. This is not replicated in the other disciplines because, quite frankly, the population of competitors is much lower. There are, for instance, only 2 diving clubs and one artistic swimming club in the County, and one club which offers competitive water polo. There is an inter-county speed swimming competition, so the County supports a team at those events: there are no similar competitions in the other disciplines. It seeks to co-ordinate the training of speed swimming officials: the training of officials in the other disciplines is largely covered by regional or national agencies. The County delivers a strand of the English Talent pathway, in respect of training camps for speed swimmers, having, before the inception of the national programme, previously put in place a range of camps for athlete development.

“In addition, the Association supports workforce development in offering bursaries for club members seeking swimming teaching or coaching qualifications. The Region has such a scheme for coach education in SwimMark clubs while the County offers bursaries to any club, after, if they qualify, the club has exhausted its regional allocation.”

Where we get to eventually is anyone’s guess!

You will remember that the national government body restyled itself, and incorporated, before the pandemic. The Region incorporated in December last year, although the Company is not yet operational, as its bankers are being extraordinarily slow in creating the necessary accounts.

This County continues to punch well above its weight regionally. Sara Todd, Roger Prior and I serve on the Regional Management Board, Roger being the Board Member for Finance and on the Swimming Group and Sara leading on the Region’s strategy. Incidentally, Sara is Vice-President of the Region presently, and will become President next April. Janet Hopkins serves in the SwimMark Panel, and Bob Odell has an important role with the Masters’ Group. Di Hughes is the Regional Artistic Swimming Manager, and she and Kate Coupar serve on the Artistic Development Group. Emma West is a leading light on the Diving Group. Kevin Brookes, Jason Keeler and Paul Lloyd serve on the Regional Coaches’ Panel. Kevin, incidentally, now serves on the national Swimming Leadership Group. Susan Harrison checks constitutions for incorporated clubs across the Region, as well as constitutions for “our” clubs, and is the Region’s representative on the national Judicial Appointments’ Panel.

Access to appropriate water is vital for our aquatic sports. I suppose we are relatively well off in our County, in that respect, in that we have one of a limited number of usable long course pools in the Region, at the Wycombe Sports Centre, the home of our County [swimming] Championships. We see new pools built, from time to time. We have disappointments on that front, too. The opening of the new competition pool in Reading, at Rivermead, has been delayed until the Spring of 2024. Let us hope, for the sake of Albatross DC, Reading SC, and Reading Royals ASC, that the opening is not further

delayed – the clubs have had to survive the lack of a major pool in the area for a number of years, now.

On the other hand, the decree from Swim England (and its/our/your Club's insurers) about safe depths for racing dives in speed swimming will undoubtedly impact on the ability of some clubs to secure revenue from running open meets in their "home" pools.

I should like to conclude with a list of thanks, to

- Peter Button and Diane Cryer, the Presidents for the year in question. They have been dedicated and hard working in support of the aquatic disciplines in the County;
- the Hon Treasurer and the members of the Management Board;
- the discipline managers (all of whom are also Board members), and the swimming officials' co-ordinator. Their support and endeavours are vital to ensure the success of our sports in Berkshire and south Buckinghamshire;
- Kristie Jarrett, the Regional Club Development Officer assigned to this County, who has attended, and reported to, meetings of the Management Board during the past year;
- Sandra, my wife, who tolerates (but only just) my continued involvement in the wider world of swimming.

**Roger Penfold**  
**Secretary**

## ***Performance Swimming Report***

### ***Introduction***

Please find the 2023 Annual Report of the Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire ASA Performance Swimming Events Committee.

The report is written to primarily cover the 2022/2023 season, covering the Development meet and County Championships held over the past 12 months as well as the new county records and developments in county swimming facilities.

The Performance Swimming committee comprises the following members: James Glazebrook, Stuart Fillingham, Rob Moore, Andy Mackay, Johnathan Mills, Sam Dyson, and Peter Button. All members and have made an active and important contribution to the planning and execution of the events organised. As Performance Swimming Events Manager, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee and other for their support and commitment to the County.

The following 4 sections of the report respectively cover the key areas of responsibility of the committee.

### **Development Meet**

The Development Meet is an annual meet aimed at swimmers 17 years old and under in the county who do not yet have licenced times that allow them to be considered for entry to the County Championships. In 2022 additional age groups were added to allow old swimmers to compete. The

event was held at the Braywick Leisure Centre on 9<sup>th</sup> October. This was the first time this event has been held since 2019, the 2020 and 2021 meets having to be cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions.

Following consultation with the county coaches, there was a clear desire to hold the event again although take up was less than expected. The meet went ahead and worked well despite the low turnout, using only 6 of the 10 lanes, and managing to turn a profit at the same time.

Feedback from the event showed that the major factors leading to the low turn out were:

- Lack of publicity and clubs/swimmers not being aware of the fixture early enough
- Complete entry procedures requiring the use of SportSystem software (not widely compatible with systems used by most of our clubs)
- Clubs still recovering from the effects of the pandemic and recovering their members numbers, including many swimmers without suitable meet experience to quality for the meet

There is strong desire to continue holding the event and it is planned to hold the next Development Meet on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023. To grow the event, the following changes are proposed:

- Maintain using the Sunday after the 1<sup>st</sup> round of Arena league meet date and establish it firmly in the annual fixture list for our clubs. Applying for an earlier license and publicising before the summer break should also help.
- Allow club to enter using a Hytek meet file format, compatible with the TeamUnify system. This work successfully for the 2023 County Championships (see below) and reduces the admin requirements of the clubs considerably.
- Our clubs memberships are continuing to recover and build following the end of pandemic effects and with a full open meet fixture list swimmers are gaining licenced times.
- To make better use of the pool time we will also introduce extra 200m events and consider reducing the minimum qualifying times.

My thanks go to Paul Lloyd and Maidenhead Marlins who helped us plan the meet and have committee to continue helping in 2023.

### ***County Championships***

The 2023 County Championships took place on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> January. The meet was held with a full programme of events and all the changes that were introduced in 2022 due to the pandemic were removed, allowing spectators into the gallery again. Following feedback from the clubs, 2 sections of the sports hall were booked to allow swimmers more space to relax away from poolside when not competing, allow for more effective land warm-ups and make marshalling easier. Despite not restrictions being in place, this also meant that poolside did not get over-crowded making officiating a more pleasant experience.

The main changes to the entry process were that the meet consideration teams reverted to their pre-pandemic levels, and Hytek/TeamUnify entry files were permitted as well as the SportSystem type used previously. Following the development meet feedback, there was a lot of pressure from the clubs to allow other entry types, as SportSystem is not a format widely used by our clubs and requires significant amounts of admin to process entries and payments which is automated by TeamUnify and similar systems.

Developing an entry file for the county championships compatible with Hytek was a considerable undertaking, to ensure the quality and integrity of the entries and ensure the file contained the correct

entry information and was full compatible. My thanks to Jonathan Mills and Rob Moore for performing this task, together with help from Maidenhead and Chalfont Otters to test the files and iron out bugs before we launched the meet entry process.

The meet income from entries was slightly down from the previous year due few swimmers qualifying (£24k vs £27k), however income from spectators and programme sales raised £9k and without the costs of live feed video the meet profits rose to £13k, only slightly down on pre-pandemic levels.

The 2023 meet included special exhibition event where the 200m IM was held for the 4 top male swimmers in the county, including James McFadzen. This was held on the final day of the championships in front of a packed pool and spectator gallery and was a great spectacle to watch. With the help of our announcers and Kevin Brooks, this allowed us to showcase the great talent from the county and how successful our home grown swimmers have been over the previous 12 months. It was a truly inspiring event for the swimmers and spectators attending and hopefully the opportunity will arise in future to hold something similar again.

Feedback from the coaches at the forum held after the championship was largely positive and appreciative of how the competition was organised and run. However, it was clear that the entry numbers were disappointing and measures need to be taken to grow the meet. Although this was partly due to club membership numbers and swimmer performance still recovering from the effects of the pandemic, it is clear that some event categories are regularly under subscribed. Following the meeting, a proposal has been circulated around the club coaches and the performance swimming committee to increasing the considerations times for a range of events identified as being under subscribed following analysis of rankings and previous county champs.

The 2024 Championships are planned to be held at Wycombe Leisure Centre on January 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Performance Swimming Records***

During the 2022/23 season (up to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023), 5 new Junior County Records and 1 new County Record have been set by the county's athletes:

| Gender                       | Course | Event           | Swimmer / Club                          | Location    | Date       | Time     |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|---|-------------|------------|----------|
| <b>Junior County Records</b> |        |                 |   |             |            |          |
| Boys                         | SC     | 50m Free        | Noah Wheeler<br>(Chalfont Otters)       | Guildford   | 19/11/2022 | 00:23.89 |
| Mixed                        | SC     | 4x50m<br>Free   | Chalfont Otters                         | Southampton | 12/11/2022 | 01:46.42 |
| Mixed                        | SC     | 4x50m<br>Medley | Chalfont Otters                         | Southampton | 12/11/2022 | 01:59.91 |
| Girls                        | LC     | 100m Free       | Annabelle Compton<br>(Wycombe District) | Wycombe     | 28/01/23   | 00:57.98 |
| Girls                        | LC     | 50m Fly         | Annabelle Compton<br>(Wycombe District) | Wycombe     | 29/01/23   | 00:29.07 |
| <b>County Records</b>        |        |                 |   |             |            |          |
| Womens                       | LC     | 100m Fly        | Lucy Fox<br>(Wycombe District)          | Wycombe     | 14/01/23   | 01:02.80 |

### ***Performance Swimming facilities within the County***

The Performance Swimming Events Committee takes a keen interest in the facilities available in the



county which are suitable for the organisation of galas and competitions.

The new Palmer Park Stadium opened on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023, providing Reading with a new 25m 6-lane pool. Meanwhile, the Rivermead Leisure Centre, also in Reading, is being rebuilt (along side the existing facility). The new centre is due to open in Summer 2024 and will feature an 8-lane 25m competition pool with movable floor.

**James Glazebrook**  
**Performance Swimming Events Manager**

### ***Masters Swimming (June 2022 - June 2023)***

By all accounts the British MASTERS LC in Aberdeen over the period 17-19 June was a tremendous event with many new World, European and British records set. Once again Amanda Heath took centre stage with an individual World record swim of 3.12.63 (65-69 age group) on 200 Br. She was a contributor to 2 more World records in the 4x100 mixed medley (240 years) and Women's 4x100fs (280 years) Spencer teams. There was also a European record in the 4x50 Spencer mixed medley relay team and 3 individual British records for 100 breaststroke, 200back and 200 fly respectively. Phew - I am worn out just writing this! Not to be outdone, Becky O'Brien amassed 9 medals (7 Gold) at this same meet.

Several of our swimmers competed in Rome in August at the European MASTERS, notably Amanda again with 2 more World records on 100 and 200 breaststroke and Dave Milburn with World records on 50 and 100br. Pip Williams came back with a Silver and Bronze, also Becky O'Brien collected a Bronze. Then Amanda even took a Silver in the 3K open water event at the nearby Lido di Ostia. As if to prove it was no fluke she medalled again in the SER Open Water event!

More mundane matters took over in early September when our County Open MASTERS event was held at the new 10-lane Braywick Leisure Centre, Maidenhead. With good support from Maidenhead club personnel and head coach Paul Lloyd the event ran well and I see no reason to move from this location in the future. To their credit the 'stars' mentioned in this report all took part in support of this local event. The top swimmers overall were Dave Milburn (1st), Georgina Heyn, Teddington (2nd) and Amanda Heath (3rd). It was good to see Ian Daniell swimming well, particularly in the 50 fly. Should he not have done the 200 fly as well?? The top club was Wycombe (401 points), 2nd Kidlington (215), 3rd Teddington (196) and 4th Bracknell (187).

The SER SC event ran over 2 sessions at K2 in early October - as always providing a good lead-in to the SC Nationals later in the month. At least 18 competitors from B&SB took individual Gold medals, re-inforcing the inherent strength in MASTERS swimming in our district. Almost inevitably amongst the highlights were the 2 new British/European times set by Amanda Heath in 200br and 200im to put alongside the 3 British records set with her Spencer relay team.

Unfortunately with the stepping-back of a key volunteer recording the MASTERS meets times on a national basis, it is becoming difficult at present to establish with certainty what is and what is not a British/Euro/World record time. Another highlight of the meet was a young Jennifer Holland (30 - Wycombe) who grasped 4 Gold medals. At the other end of the spectrum came Claire Moore (67 - Bracknell) with 2 wins. Relays were grouped into a third session as an experiment and feedback was generally positive on this trial. Overall top club was Teddington on 101 points. Our 2 main contenders Wycombe and Bracknell came 6th equal on 59 points.

The SC Nationals were held over 3 days in Sheffield at the end of October. In addition to the usual suspects of Amanda Heath (65) with 6 individual Golds and 3 Brit/Euro records as well as Becky O'Brien (33) with 5 Golds and Dave Milburn (60) with 3 Golds, there were successes for Duncan McCreddie (77) with 3 wins, Samuel Tucker (18), Jeanne Petit (52), Daniel John (35) and Kellyn Caldwell (33) with 2 wins each and Pip Williams (60) with 1 win. Becky (now Mrs Gray) had held over her honeymoon from the Summer and flew away to Mexico the day after the event concluded.

The Inter-County event in November 2022 was organized by Kent at the London Aquatic Centre. B&SB came 3rd in the region, which is very good as we are the smallest district. Although there were many fine individual and relay performances the only outright winner on the night was Amanda Heath in her favoured 50m breaststroke event. The result translated into 7th place nationally (from about 30 districts).

At the South East regional LC meet in January 2023 at Crawley, 11 different individual swimmers took 19 Gold medals between them. The pick of these would be Pip Williams of Wycombe District who won all 4 of her 50m discipline events. The next best were Caroline Jubb and Gregory du Tertre (also both from Wycombe) who took 3 Golds each. A 1500fs (LC) was run at the same venue in March with a full complement of 51 swimmers (6 from B&SB). The evening session was devoted to relays for which, sadly, there were no B&SB entries this year.

Earlier in the month at Swansea Amanda Heath was setting another new European LC record at for 200 fly. She broke this at the British MASTERS event at Sheffield in June with a time of 3:16.19 sec on the way to winning 6 events. Dan John (Reading) was next in line with 3 Golds, hotly followed by Alfie Evans (Reading) and Dave Milburn (Newbury) with 2 each.

**BOB ODELL**

**MASTERS Manager**

## ***Artistic Swimming Report***

It has been a challenging year in Artistic Swimming with all officials having to retrain to meet the new World Aquatics rules. This is an on-going process. The coaches have also had to learn the rules so they could adapt their routines.

These challenges did not stop Reading Royals when they competed at the Swim England Artistic Swimming National Junior and Senior Championships 2023 in April. They had an immensely successful weekend.

The team scored 72.5333 points in the Free Team competition and a combined total of 137.5494. The successful Free Team squad was made up of Tara Dakovic, Rebecca Saunders, Lily Halasi, Florence Blinkhorn, Cara Zeidler, Holly Hughes, Sofija Dakovic and Elena Smith-Fernandez, with Beatrice Askar in reserve.

Reading Royals retained the **Redwood Trophy** once again! The win makes it three from three in terms of Redwood wins since 2019, missing out the years impacted by the pandemic.

Florence Blinkhorn was awarded the **Holland Trophy** for gaining the highest combined routine score. And with Lily Halasi the pair were awarded the **Spencer Trophy** for their Duet.

Eleanor Blinkhorn clinched her first Free Solo title. She finished on a score of 73.3667 and was awarded the **Helen Elkington Trophy**



#### National Selections:

- Francesca Pringle Di Lauro (Reading Royals) was selected for the England National Age-Group squad,
- Florence Blinkhorn, Lily Halassi (Reading Royals) selected for the GB Junior Squad
- Isobelle Blinkhorn and Eleanor Blinkhorn and Beatrice Crass (Reading Royals) have been selected for the GB Senior Squad at the World Aquatics Championships in Japan

Not just the athletes that are drawing national recognition but also the Reading Royals Coaches: Yulia Demchenko has been selected as the GB Junior Coach.

The Electric Eels Club for swimmers with Downs Syndrome have flourished and on Thursday, 12 January 2023, their Patron and double Paralympic gold medalist, Graham Edmunds was invited by the Mayor of Reading to open the new Palmer Park Leisure Centre and the Synchro team were given the opportunity to perform for the public.

**JENNY GRAY**

## Diving Report

### Programme



There remain two Swim England Diving Clubs within the county boundaries:

- Amersham Diving Club based at the Everyone Active operated Chiltern Lifestyle Centre in Amersham

- Albatross Diving Club who, since the closure of Central Pool in Reading now operate primarily out of The Abbey School, but also use other pools.

Both Albatross and Amersham are SwimMark accredited clubs with the SwimMark Full Reaccreditation being presented to the next Southeast Regional Board for Albatross.

Amersham run a primarily Skills (novice) level competitive programme and have a flourishing Masters section. There have been some setbacks for them this year with pool operational problems which has slowed progression, but the aim is still to advance these divers and others to Age Groups in the future.

In addition to Skills, Albatross also have Age Group, Elite and Senior divers competing at national level. The club do not have an adult section but do have a recreational Learn to Dive teen section who include some junior master's divers.

Both clubs have continued to build their programmes over the past year enjoying a boost in enquiries following the success of the sport at the Commonwealth Games and increased mainstream sport television coverage at both the Games and the Senior Europeans.

Amersham moved into their new facilities last year in the recently built Chiltern Lifestyle Centre where they benefit from 2 x 1m, 2 x 3m and a 5m platform with dry training being offered in the on-site sportshall which gave them renewed optimism, but the programme has been hampered this year by operational issues and facilities outages leading to 10 weeks out of the pool. The operator provided sessions at Dacorum (Hemel Hempstead) which enabled competing divers to train but many found it difficult to make the journey which has impacted their performance. Additionally, mainly due to the pool outage Amersham lost almost 20% of their Learn to Dive divers which, they report, has drastically impacted the club's ability to bring divers into squads so reducing squad numbers from previous years and, of course, also had the financial impact of lost revenue.

Albatross remain nomads for another year with their new pool now not opening until summer 2024. This new delay has impacted motivation from the club coaches and a need to reorganise squad training for the autumn term as some coaching (volunteer) hours are reducing due to personal circumstance changes which, whilst expected, had been anticipated to coincide with a reduction in travel from the current four times a week.

Amersham played host to the very successful Novice event, Amersham Invitational 2022, in the new pool in October with divers from Albatross, Amersham, Haringey, Havering, Southwest London, Star (Guildford) and Waltham Forest attending. This was an enjoyable event focusing on our Pre-Skills and Learn to Dive divers in their first entry to competition with the county clubs winning multiple medals and the team trophy.

## **Statistics**

|                                 | Amersham | Albatross |
|---------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Lesson/ Learn to Dive Programme | 39       | 47        |
| Recreational Divers             | 23       |           |
| Pre-Skills Competitive          | 20       | 5         |
| Skills Qualifiers               | 5        | 7         |
| Age Group                       |          | 6         |
| Elite                           |          | 2         |
| Seniors                         |          | 3         |
| Masters                         | 15       | 2         |

Amersham support the club with 5 Dive Coaches (old Level 2) and 1 Assistant Coach (old Level 1).

Albatross have 7 Dive Coaches and 7 Assistant Coaches. Both Amersham and Albatross have identified candidates under the Swim England Training Needs Analysis for coaching courses but there is currently a national shortage of tutors with only one able to run Dive Coach Courses and two running Assistant Diving Coach Courses.

## ***Competitive Calendar***

Amersham Swimming & Diving Club have entered children in several competitions this year:

- Surrey Skills
- Gavin Brown Love to Dive
- GBDF Spring Masters – Southend
- East Region Skills
- London Region Skills
- Southeast Region Skills
- Swim England National Skills Finals (with five qualifying divers)

Albatross too entered divers into Surrey Skills, East Region Skills, London Skills, Southeast Region Skills, and Swim England National Skills Finals (with seven qualifying divers) but, in addition, have attended the following:

- Southampton Invitationals
- Armada Cup, Plymouth
- Southeast Region Age Group
- East Region Age Group
- British Diving GB Junior Elites 2023 (2 divers)
- Swim England National Age Group Championships (5 divers, with a sixth qualifier unable to attend due to GCSE timetable conflicts)

Both Amersham and Albatross have divers entered for the 2023 National Skills Finals in Leeds this July and Albatross had divers at both the 2023 British Diving Elite Junior Championships and the Swim England National Age Group Championships. Whilst no medals at this year's Elites the two divers put



in a good performance with one, once again, demonstrating the nurturing support of his club in reaching the pinnacle of junior competitive diving in his last year in this age category. National Age Groups saw the club with five divers with Joe Foster winning all three gold medals for 1m, 3m and platform events in Group A, an achievement of only two previous

Albatross divers. All five divers reached new PBs at the competition, a commendable achievement in the face of national event competitive pressure on top of school external exams for some of the squad.

Expanding Albatross' base of competitive divers has afforded the club the opportunity to take a larger squad to an event that includes a novice





section. Albatross are, therefore, taking eighteen divers to the Irish Nationals in autumn 2023 as there are events embracing all nationally competitive divers' abilities.

### ***Administration, Coaching and Recognition***

Both clubs remain committed to encouraging and supporting past divers who wish to remain in the sport. Amersham has a thriving Master's section diving at National, International and World events and Albatross now have a growing group of older girls who have formed a Junior Novice Master's team. All the Albatross coaches have come from involvement in the sport either as a diver themselves or as a parent of a diver and the club hosted an Assistant Coach course at the Abbey earlier this year which boosted their qualified Assistants by three.

Both clubs also support Swim England with judges with Amersham having 5 Regional Judge 1's and Albatross having 5 Regional Judge 1's, 3 National Judge 2's and 3 Senior Judge 3's. The county was represented at all Swim England and British Diving Regional Qualifiers and National Events this year by a selection of these judges.

Swim England also support national divers on the aquatics Diploma in Sporting Excellence Programme (DiSE). Two county divers received their qualification this year through Loughborough College which supported their university applications with 64 UCAS points and helped secure them places at Falmouth College (Photography) and University of Nottingham (Maths).

Albatross's position, as part of Reading's aquatic heritage, was once again showcased at the Reading Sports Personality Awards where they have had nominations for the past 10 years (excluding the 2 Covid years). In 2022 they received the prestigious Junior Team of the Year, Coach of the Year and Junior Sports Personality of the Year Awards in recognition of their contribution to local sporting success.

### ***Facility Development and Growth***

Both clubs are non-selective in their Learn to Dive programmes and will be looking to their new pools to grow the clubs further once operational issues are fully resolved in Amersham and the new pool is open in Reading. Despite delays the relationship between Albatross and the operator, GLL, has remained good and the club will be moving into the new sportshall in July this year when the dry side of the new facility opens. The dry programme will still be supported by equipment housed on two badminton courts offering two dry boards, two trampolines, an air track and wall bars. There will be a rig installed above one of the boards. The club are fundraising to purchase a new trampoline as those in use are very old.

It remains unclear at this stage how the new programme will run in Reading once the pool opens in respect of staffing and employment; Albatross currently being run on a completely voluntary basis. Diving has remained with the club at Amersham and clauses in the letting contract precluded a separate operator run lesson programme competing with the club offer. Both clubs are run well. Albatross continue to train locally at the Abbey School during the week and travel at weekends to Hemel Hempstead and Southampton. Session sizes are back to pre-pandemic levels and there is a constant flow of enquiries which are supported with free taster sessions run weekly.

Coach and elite athlete development continues to be led through Regionally funded SEEDS and ACE programmes which, have both resumed.

**EMMA WEST**  
**DIVING MANAGER**

## ***Water Polo Report***

Water polo is played competitively in one club – Reading SC, to my knowledge, but a weekly one-hour water polo session features in the timetable published on the website of one other club – Wycombe District SC.

Reading SC has 2 dedicated water polo squads. These have been training at Eton College pool since the beginning of 2020 and moved into their new “Athens” pool, with moveable bottom/all deep water, earlier in 2022. The visiting teams that have played at the pool have all said what a good facility it is.

The only issue is the timings of the sessions, the junior session being moved from 18.30 to 19.30 which is not ideal for some of the more junior juniors (although only a couple of players were lost) and the College will not look at changing times (of the sessions) for at least a year. There are only two training 1.5 hour sessions a week - Seniors on Thursdays and Juniors on Sundays. This is not ideal - more pool time is required for seniors and another session for the juniors, so that the larger and smaller juniors can be split, and reduce the numbers in each session (24 is too many to develop their skills bearing in mind their relative inexperience).

The Club needs to ensure that it has suitable pool time secured in the new pool at Reading to ensure it can access junior players from Reading as well as the Wokingham/Bracknell/Windsor areas, to ensure it continues to develop both sections and continue water polo within the Club. Ultimately, the Club would like to try to develop the junior section, to do what Basingstoke has done in Hampshire, and develop a centre of excellence for juniors from all over Berkshire/Buckinghamshire, in Reading.

The senior membership currently stands at 12. The junior membership/section has been thriving since it started in August 2021: there are presently 24 junior members training, with a number of new juniors still requesting trials. The issue is that the majority of them are from the Windsor/Maidenhead areas and only a few are from the Wokingham/Bracknell/Reading area, so the Club needs to decide the best location(s) for the juniors going forward.

The senior London league team started playing matches again at the end of 2021, after almost a 2-year break. They were unable to join the league due to the old pool issues, but the new pool opened a week before the 2022 Summer league started! Thus the Club was able to re-join the London league for the 2022 summer season, which started in April 2022. Unfortunately, the team has had a terrible season with regards to available players: 2 left early this year and then 4 players were unable to play for most of the season due to long term injuries. So they have been unable to play some of the games and have not had a full enough squad to win a lot of other games. Despite this, the results improved throughout the season, culminating in one win last time out. Sadly, it is likely that the team will be relegated to division 2 this year, but this may be an opportunity to bring in some of our older juniors into the senior team.

The junior section is going well and the players being very committed and seem to love the sessions, there being some great feedback from both parents and juniors. Matches started with one against Winchester in July – the U14 team won 17-16 but the U17 team lost (to a much more

experienced team), but not bad for their first game. In September, the U17 squad played in a tournament in Winchester and, despite playing a number of U14 players, the team managed some good results – including winning their last game (against Winchester). The leagues over Winter and Summer (London and Hampshire) will help to develop all of the junior players further over the next 12 months.

The Club currently has 2 level 1 qualified coaches for the seniors and juniors, together with one assistant coach assisting with the junior section. One of the level 1 coaches will be completing his level 2 coaching qualification when the next course becomes available (expected early 2023), while the assistant coach expects to be completing his level one coaching course imminently.

With thanks to the Water Polo Secretary, Reading SC.

**Roger Penfold**  
**Water Polo Manager**

### ***Treasurer's report***

Last year I reported that the finances for the association have not followed any stable pattern for the last few years due to the disruption of the pandemic etc.

This year allowed us to plan to do a much more normal year, The emphasis is on plan: As in many walks of life the manpower available to execute plans is more difficult of obtain.

The association's finances recovered to plan on the elements that we did make happen. Chiefly this is the County meets for Masters, Development and County Championships for performance swimming.

Where we fell short was in the training camps and events which we had previously held. We didn't hold any. As a result the expected expenditure didn't happen.

The budget was planned to deliver a slight shortfall – but ended up with a surplus as over £10,000 – which has been allocated to spend on the camps, but none were held.

It does illustrate how dependant the county is on a few key people: The County currently lacks a Development organisation. The previous person organised the camps (3 of them: 12-year-old, pre-county, and regional) as well as the trip to the National County Team Championships. And managed the stock of shirts and hats for them.

This is an area that needs to be addressed. We are not expecting a single person to take all this on, but it is disappointing that we have not found a volunteer(s) to assist us with some of the elements. It would really suite a small group of 2 or 3 working together. The camps historically have been spread throughout the year (12 year in spring, later summer for pre-county and autumn for regional) Other point worth commenting on – Bursaries were less than expected, The Association acts as a second resort to Regional funding.

The Counties assets – diving boards and Race timing equipment – are now fully depreciated. Whilst pleasing to have the attendance of the artistic and diving communities on the management board, there is little identified for the county to assist them. Probably as a small community around 1 or 2 clubs they cooperate between themselves effectively.



Banks have started to charge for accounts held by charitable organisations nowadays. The £5 a month is however more than offset by the rise in interest rates on deposits. The Association is not a borrower so the recent changes in interest rates has not adversely affected us, unlike the affect over on much larger external communities.

In summary, the unplanned large surplus of £12,500 for the year's trading emphasises the need for the establishment of a means of reinvesting into our club communities.

My thanks to Barbara Garden for examining the accounts for 2022-2023.

**Jonathan Mills**  
**Hon Treasure**

**Berks & South Bucks County ASA  
Accounts at 31 March 2023**

|                                       | Year Ended<br>31 March 2023 | Year Ended<br>31 March 2022 | Year Ended<br>31 March 2021 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Income and Expenditure Account</b> |                             |                             |                             |
| <b>Income</b>                         |                             |                             |                             |
| County Championship receipts          | 36,724                      | 29,615                      | -                           |
| Development Meet                      | 6,783                       | -                           | -                           |
| County Masters                        | 4,553                       | -                           | -                           |
|                                       | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Synchro Receipts                      | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| English Programmes Camps              | -                           | -                           | (2,700)                     |
| Inter County Gala rebate              | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| T shirts sold                         | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Interest received                     | 141                         | 10                          | 53                          |
|                                       | 48,200                      | 29,625                      | (2,647)                     |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                    |                             |                             |                             |
| County Championship expenditure       | 23,854                      | 25,698                      | -                           |
| Development meet                      | 4,020                       | -                           | -                           |
| County Masters                        | 2,723                       | 195                         | -                           |
| English Programmes (previous year)    | -                           | -                           | 200                         |
| English Programmes (this year)        | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Bursaries                             | 395                         | 573                         | -                           |
| Diving <sup>1</sup>                   | 840                         | 840                         | 840                         |
| Meet Equipment <sup>1</sup>           | 2,303                       | 1,963                       | 1,963                       |
| Synchro Expenses                      | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Masters expenditure                   | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Development camp                      | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Regional camp                         | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Inter county Gala expenditure         | 900                         | -                           | -                           |
| Trophies <sup>2</sup>                 | 299                         | -                           | 10                          |
| Management Board                      | -                           | -                           | 54                          |
| Room hire (meetings etc)              | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Officials                             | (132)                       | -                           | -                           |
| Website                               | 120                         | 95                          | 95                          |
| Miscellaneous expenditure             | 99                          | 146                         | -                           |
| Bank Charges                          | 60                          | 15                          | -                           |
|                                       | 35,482                      | 29,525                      | 3,163                       |
| <b>Income over expenditure</b>        | <b>12,718</b>               | <b>100</b>                  | <b>(5,809)</b>              |
| <b>Balance sheet</b>                  |                             |                             |                             |
| <b>Assets</b>                         |                             |                             |                             |
| Closing Cash Balance                  | 148,320                     | 133,535                     | 130,490                     |
| Liabilities                           | (12)                        | -                           | -                           |
| Fixed Assets <sup>3</sup>             | -                           | 2,803                       | 5,606                       |
| Accruals                              | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Stock                                 | 2,030                       | 1,282                       | 1,424                       |
|                                       | <b>150,338</b>              | <b>137,620</b>              | <b>137,520</b>              |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                    |                             |                             |                             |
| Opening Funds                         | 137,620                     | 137,520                     | 143,330                     |
| Income over Expenditure               | 12,718                      | 100                         | (5,809)                     |
| Closing Funds                         | <b>150,338</b>              | <b>137,620</b>              | <b>137,520</b>              |

**Berks & South Bucks County ASA****Accounts at 31 March 2023**

(continued)

**Notes to the accounts**

<sup>1</sup> Represents the depreciation on the AOE and Diving boards Fixed Assets. See Note 3.

<sup>2</sup> Trophies are the cups etc; ribbon/medals now allocated against the gala

<sup>3</sup> The Association owns certain fixed assets, specifically AOE equipment and diving boards. These are depreciated straight-line 5 year in the following way:

|                                      | <b>Year Ended<br/>31 March 2023</b> | <b>Year Ended<br/>31 March 2022</b> | <b>Year Ended<br/>31 March 2021</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Fixed Assets Cost: Diving Board      | 9,816                               | 9,816                               | 9,816                               |
| Fixed Assets Cost: AOE               | 4,200                               | 4,200                               | 4,200                               |
| Depreciation to Date                 | <u>(11,213)</u>                     | <u>(8,410)</u>                      | <u>(5,606)</u>                      |
| NBV at Year Start                    | 2,803                               | 5,606                               | 8,410                               |
| Accumulated Depreciation             | (11,213)                            | (8,409)                             | (5,606)                             |
| Depreciation this year: Diving Board | (840)                               | (840)                               | (840)                               |
| Depreciation this year: AOE          | <u>(1,963)</u>                      | <u>(1,963)</u>                      | <u>(1,963)</u>                      |
| Depreciation at Year end             | (14,016)                            | (11,212)                            | (8,409)                             |
| Fixed Asset Value                    | 2,803                               | 5,606                               | 8,410                               |
| Depreciation                         | <u>(2,803)</u>                      | <u>(2,803)</u>                      | <u>(2,803)</u>                      |
| Current Book Value                   | <u><b>0</b></u>                     | <u><b>2,803</b></u>                 | <u><b>5,607</b></u>                 |

**Independent Examiner's Report**  
**Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire ASA Accounts**

Basis of report

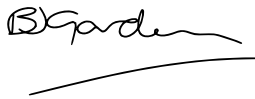
My examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the association and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items in the accounts and seeking explanations from the treasurer concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records have not been met
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Barbara Garden  
DipPFS

11 July 2023