



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



Berkshire & South Buckinghamshire County

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Report _____	3
Secretary _____	5
Treasurer _____	9
Performance Swimming _____	10
Masters Swimming _____	13
Artistic Swimming _____	17
Diving _____	18
Waterpolo _____	23
Appendix 1 Performance Swimming Records _____	26
Appendix 2 – Financial Reports _____	27

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In keeping with tradition, my first official engagement after being elected President of the BSBASA was attending the County Master's meet at Braywick on 8th September. A fantastic day of swimming, and a very impressive turnout too, following on the back of the Paris summer Olympics, some say record breaking! but let's not get carried away.

Thanks to Bob Odell for organising a great event.

October heralded the first of the Performance Swimming events of the season.

Unfortunately work commitments frustrated my efforts to attend the County Team Championships in Sheffield on 6th October. Thankfully the county swimmers did make it. My thanks to Barbara Garden and Paul Lloyd for organising the trip and putting the team together.

The following weekend saw the BSBASA Development meet which thankfully I was able to attend – just as well as this was my meet (wearing my other hat, "Performance Swimming Events Manager"). This was a hugely enjoyable event and great to get our clubs together in preparation for the forthcoming County Championships in January. There is a separate report covering the Performance Swimming events, so I won't repeat myself here. All I will say is that awarding the medals and trophies to the top athletes at the County Championships was an incredible honour and the highlight of my year as County President.

I know there is so much more going on in the county, including diving, water polo and artistic swimming, as can be seen in the annual reports. It is great to see the county's clubs and athletes doing so well. My apologies for not being able to attend more events during the year.

It has been a most rewarding and enjoyable experience being President of the BSBASA. Working with the rest of the management board, a group of very knowledgeable and passionate people supporting our local clubs and ensuring they can maximise the opportunities for all their members.

As we enter July and I look back on the year, I want to reflect on how our little county has such a strong influence at regional and national levels. Peter Roycroft has taken over from Sara Todd as President of the South-East regional management board, keeping the role in

the county. It is worth noting that our own Sara Todd, Roger Prior and Roger Penfold are all part of the regional management board too. Congratulations to Roger Prior who was elected as SE President in May. And even more congratulations to Sara Todd who joined the Aquatics GB Board back in February and was also appointed as Member Nominated Director to the SE Board in May.

I now hand the mantle of the Presidentship across to my vice President (who was also my predecessor), Peter Roycroft, knowing the County is in good hands.



James Glazebrook, President of the BSBASA

SECRETARY

In the past, I was able to review all the other contributions to the Annual Report, and then add my two-pennyworth, to make sure that everything was covered. And then I probably got on a few hobby horses ...

Of recent years I have enjoyed the luxury of not having to edit the Report as well – thanks very much, Diane – and it is very liberating! However, I still feel that there are many items upon which the Secretary should dwell, if not pontificate, although I will try to resist the temptation to do the latter.

So, my starting point is “what is the County”? Legally, it is an association of [mostly] unincorporated bodies comprising individual members of a national governing body, brought together by geography. The Thames Valley area is quite unique in our sports – 3 ceremonial counties [I can expand on what that means if you have the time and inclination!] divided into 2 county areas for the purposes of the aquatic sports. And the boundary line, where Buckinghamshire is divided, is no longer defined. We used to have precise latitude for that boundary, but as we no longer have anyone with an astrolabe, that has been swept away. That said, I knew that to be the latitude of the first Handycross Sports Centre, now demolished. Then we used district council boundaries in Bucks, but those councils have since been abolished. Even so, Bourne End SC, with headquarters in our County area, has always been assigned to Oxfordshire & North Bucks... In any event, following a change a couple of years back, the national governing body no longer attempts to define the aquatic county areas by administrative or physical geography.

To return, therefore, to a message I have delivered many times over the years, the County has no resources beyond the services of the employees of, contractors to and volunteers of the clubs assigned to it. That’s it. For instance, the County officers are all members of assigned clubs, as are the Members of the County Board. And all the officials you see at the County Championships, together with the non-technical support and the Championships’ promoters. I suppose the bottom line is, if you want the County to do something, you ought to be prepared to lend a hand.

All that said, as a County, we punch hugely above our weight, and particularly so from May 2025 to May 2026. This is because Roger Prior (of Slough Dolphin) is the President of Swim England this year. As far as I am aware, Roger is the first person from a Berkshire & South Buckinghamshire club

to hold the national presidency, as we go back to our formation in 1911. I have to confess that I have not delved into either the County's or Swim England's ancient archives, but those of us with longish memories are pretty confident that we are right! Congratulations to you, Roger: we wish you a great year as the sport's president in England.

Sara Todd (Reading SC) was elected by the [national] membership as a director of Swim England earlier this year. This is another great accolade. Berks & South Bucks has been at the top table nationally in the past, but it is some years – maybe between 30 and 40 – since that was the situation. Swim England had already appointed Sara as one of its directors on the Board of GB Aquatics. Many congratulations are due to her on those appointments

Sara is, of course, also the Chair of the Regional Management Board. She follows Roger Prior and I, all from Berks & South Bucks clubs, in that office: indeed, since its establishment just under 20 years ago, the Region has only had chairs from Berks and South Bucks. Both Roger Prior and I remain involved with the Region at Board level. Roger is the Board Member Responsible for Finance of the unincorporated region and is Finance Director of the Company, still waiting in the wings to take over the running of the Region. I am a Board member of the unincorporated body and a director of the Company. We are joined on the Board by Jenny Gray (Reading Royals ASC). While I would not say the Regional Board is dominated by B&SB, the County certainly has a strong showing. Even beyond Board level, the County's clubs are well represented across the disciplines in the Region. Sara was President of the Region, and she has just passed the trappings of office on to Peter Roycroft (Amersham SC), presently our County Vice-President. As I said, B&SB punches above its weight...

Just in case anyone is wondering, having incorporated a couple of years back, it does look like the transfer of operational power from the unincorporated Region to the Company will happen on 1 January 2026, as all the various hurdles, like getting a bank account, and securing good tax advice, have now been overcome. It does, however, seem to have been a protracted exercise!

It is not my business to review the reports of those volunteers who lead the various disciplines across the County. There are a few points to be made, however. Our County swimming championships, held over 2 weekends in January, were once again a huge success, a tribute to our President, who is also the Performance Swimming Events' Manager, James Glazebrook, and his magnificent support team. The County team won Division 2 of the national Inter-Counties

competition in Sheffield last October, thus being promoted back to the top division. This is a tremendous accolade for the team, and its support and coaching staff. The County promoted an excellent Masters' event in Braywick last September, and our team came 4th in the regional round of the masters' inter-county event, in which the regional results are aggregated to provide a national result.

While there are no county teams per se in other disciplines, our clubs' athletes perform well in them, especially in artistic swimming and diving, and we are growing in strength in water polo.

I touched on things national in last year's report. There is a new senior leadership team, and they are changing the outlook at Swim England. Following a consultation exercise last summer, there is a new strategy, which is being taken on board by the regions. There is a strong feeling that we should all be pulling in the same direction, and there is evidence that this is happening. There are still issues about communication – for instance the ban on use of mobile phones in changing areas, does not, given the number of reported cases, appear to have been cascaded to competitors particularly well. Whether that is because of failings at the centre or within clubs remains to be discovered.

This leads neatly to safeguarding and well being, a now high profile issue in our sports, especially in light of the recent television expose. Swim England is very keen to portray our sports to be "safe" for participants, be they minors or adults, but it is particularly important in respect of minors, where clubs, and to an extent, counties, find themselves in loco parentis. We should all be striving to ensure that our sports appear, and are, safe environments.

As I explained last year, for my sins I am also County Welfare Officer, a role I took on because there were no volunteers, and we had to have one. Last year I reported that, technically, I should not be in that role, because I am an officer of the Association. Sadly, that statement did not lead to any one coming forward to volunteer for the role, so I remain in office.

There is one item crucial to our sports – access to suitable water. I mean indoor pools here, as, this being the Thames Valley, there are any number of flooded gravel pits where open water swimming may be pursued. Incidentally, personally I would counsel against swimming in any river, especially the Thames, given the doubts about water quality!

As far as I know, the competition and training pool estate remains as at the time of the 2024 Report. We remain blessed with an excellent long course facility at Handycross, although, when I last heard, the operators had still not signed off the Association's booking for the County Championships scheduled for January next year. The new (as of last year) pool at Rivermead has meant a return of competitions to the Reading area, although, soon after it opened, I was advised that the main pool is too shallow for artistic swimming competitions, a major disadvantage, I suggest, to one of the country's leading artistic swimming clubs. We are, of course, where we are, but that lack of depth in the pool – 1.8m, while 2m is required according to World Aquatics (and a massive 3m by Swim England!) - is rather saddening. Anyway, I am not aware of any plans for further new pools in Berks and South Bucks.

On a sad note, we were all dismayed to hear the news that Eileen Adams had passed away in January this year. Eileen was already involved in the sport, in the County, when my daughter first swam in the County Championships: suffice it to say that one of my grandsons now swims in masters' events. She was ever present at the Championships, in a variety of roles over the years – organiser, announcer, on the door – virtually always accompanied by Ken, her husband, a competitors' steward of renown. Eileen was our President in 1999 and subsequently the Regional President. She is already sorely missed... Full tributes appear on the County and Regional websites.

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

- Peter Roycroft and James Glazebrook, 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 (many 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: she was also Acting Regional Manager for 2024, covering maternity leave;
- Sandra, my wife, who, while complaining about my absences because of my continued involvement in the wider world of swimming, just about tolerates them!

Roger Penfold

TREASURER

We did manage to return to the “full programme” that we run for the County Team attending the National County Team Championships in Sheffield, including some time travelling and training together as a team. The team then rewarded us with a return to the Division 1 of the championships.

There remains a steady request for training bursaries for clubs to train coaches: The format is the association will pick up these after the quota from South East Region has been exhausted.

The Masters swimmers had a staggeringly successful meet at Maidenhead with the County Masters: in 2024 it attracted about 50% more swimmers than last year, and the meet was very successful. The Country Championships and Development meet remain well supported by clubs.

Unfortunately, we did not run any training camps for the swimmers this year.

The association remains in a stable financial position, although the coming year will see rising costs due to inflationary pressures. The pools are charging more for facility hire, and Swim England have told us that there will be no financial support for attending the National County Team Championships anymore.

My thanks to Barbara Garden for examining the accounts for 2024-2025.

Jonathan Mills

PERFORMANCE SWIMMING

Introduction

Please find the 2025 Annual Report of the Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire ASA Performance Swimming Events Committee.

The report is written to cover the 2024/2025 season, including:

1. The 2024 County Development meet
2. The 2025 County Championships
3. New County Swimming Records (since April 2024)
4. Developments in county swimming facilities

The Performance Swimming committee comprises the following members:

- James Glazebrook (Committee Chair),
- Stuart Fillingham,
- Rob Moore,
- Andy Mackay,
- Johnathan Mills,
- Sam Dyson,
- 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 for their support and commitment to the County.

Development Meet

The Development Meet took place on 13th October 2024 at Braywick pool. This 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 following County Championships. The events included in the meet programme were a repeat of the 2023 Development Meet. The main difference being the reintroduction of qualifying times as well as “no faster than” time in the meet conditions. This was based on the feedback from the 2023 competition when the event was 30% over subscribed. Due to the new entry time restrictions, the entries were down on last year (375 swimmers and 1482 swims) making the meet more manageable within the pool space available. Total income was therefore below 2023 levels at £12,552 (down by £1,872). Costs of running the meet were also slightly lower at £4130 (down by £851).

Support for the meet across the clubs is strong and we plan to continue to run the Development Meet. Braywick pool is booked for 12th October 2025 for this purpose. The qualification times will continue to be aligned the County Championship's consideration times.

Our thanks also go to Maidenhead Marlins and Windsor Swimming Clubs who helped the committee with some of the planning of the meet and advised on the best way to use the facilities.

County Championships

The 2025 County Championships took place on 11th/12th and 25th/26th January. The meet was held with a full programme of events including the Tandem relay introduced in 2024. This is the biggest event run by the county each year and went to plan with a very enjoyable 4 days of high level competition.



Entry numbers for the meet were up marginally on last year with 2,967 swims (up by 103), all qualifying entries were accepted. Entry fees were maintained at 2024 levels meaning the total meet income remained similar at £42,309, costs also remained level at £21,696.

Feedback from the coaches' forum held after the championships was largely positive and highly appreciative of how the competition was organised and run. Improvements focussed on more efficient running of the warm-up sessions and building the atmosphere around the final heat of long distance events that do not have separate finals.



Although similar numbers qualified, the swims were better spread across the categories. Only 5 events with finals had fewer than 8 swimmers entering (all were Male/Open events), compared to 8 last year. As the session lengths are getting longer, the Tandem relay will be removed from the event list for 2026 to free up some time on Sunday. While the tandem relay was a popular event for many, and created a great atmosphere for the weekend finale, it

was not well supported by some clubs who felt it was not a formally recognised event worthy of

the County Championships. Otherwise, the structure for the 2026 Championships is planned to follow the same format as 2025.

The 2026 Championships are planned to be held at Wycombe Leisure Centre on 10th/11th & 24th/25th January.

Performance Swimming facilities within the County

The Performance Swimming Events Committee takes a keen interest in the development of facilities available in the county which are suitable for the organisation of galas and competitions.

The county now has 6 pools suitable for holding Level 3 meets and above:

- Braywick Leisure Centre, Maidenhead (10 lanes, 25m)
- Bracknell Leisure Centre, Bracknell (6 lanes, 25m)
- Chilterns Lifestyle Centre, Amersham (8 lanes, 25m)
- Crosfields School, Reading (5 lanes, 25m)
- Rivermead Leisure Centre (8 lanes, 25m)
- Wycombe Leisure Centre (8 lanes, 50m)

James Glazebrook

* Performance Swimming Records are available in Appendix 1.

MASTERS SWIMMING

In November 2023 Amanda Heath competed in the European MASTERS (SC) event in Madeira, taking a clutch of Gold medals, including 50 back, 200 fly and 200 breast. She also won the 3K open water race - such versatility. Dan John and Sarah Fitzgerald-Smith also competed with distinction in the SC events.

The SSE (LC) Championships at Crawley in January 2024 attracted 23 swimmers from our district, 10 of whom won individual events. Leading the way almost inevitably was Amanda Heath with 6 triumphs. Interestingly 3 new names (to me) appeared on the podium - namely Abigail Goldfinch (Windsor - 50fs), Ffion Thomas (Tilehurst - 50br) and Karen Jenden (Bracknell - 50 & 100br). Other winners were Laura Cooke (4), Caroline Jubb (2), Gregory du Tertre (2), Guy Emerson (2), Bridget Bewick and Paul Cruci. Armed with her success at Crawley, Karen Jenden took part a few days later in the Isle of Wight MASTERS (SC), winning the same 2 events. She was accompanied by her Bracknell teammates Terry Wright, Gregory Adams and Jevgenis Putans who pocketed a further 24 Gold medals between them.

In February at the World Aquatics Championships (LC) in Doha there was more success for Amanda Heath with 4 Golds. Once again Dan John and Sarah Fitzgerald-Smith provided good support with respectively 4 and 3 excellent swims.

About 30 local swimmers took part in the Bracknell Open (SC) event at the beginning of \March, almost 50% being from the host club. Their swimmers Laura Cooke with 5 wins and Kirsty Johnson with 4 wins led the local medal table. The most successful visitors with 3 wins each were Caroline Jubb and Kellyn Caldwell (both Wycombe) together with Sarah Fitzgerald-Smith (Reading). On the same day as the Bracknell Open Jack Endersby (Reading) made a lone trip to the Swim Wales Open (LC) in Swansea bringing home a Gold (50fs) and Silver (50fly). The SER MASTERS 1500fs (LC) at the end of March at Crawley remains a popular stand-alone event and was fully booked with 50 entries. 2 swimmers from Bracknell, namely Terry Wright and Bridget Bewick, won their age-groups. A few days later Terry Wright appeared again - this time at Guernsey MASTERS (SC) winning 200fs. Samantha Usher (Wycombe) triumphed in 6 events at the same meet.

The British MASTERS Championships (LC) took place at Swansea in April. Gold medals were claimed by Dan John, Cameron Winchcombe, Huw Jones, Kellyn Caldwell, Bridget Bewick, Kirsty Johnson,

Amanda Heath and Guy Emerson. The pick of the bunch was probably the 50 back success of Guy who swam his best time (33.04) for 7 years. At the same meet he took 2 further Golds and 3 Silver medals (including relays). This confirmed his recovery from a number of debilitating illnesses in recent times and was one reason as to why he was awarded the President's Plate later in the year. Another notable performance was posted by Andrew Moore (once of Amersham but now domiciled in the North) who after several retirements and now at the age of 58 swam his 50fs only slightly slower than 40 years ago - as witnessed by the writer at the time!

In June the South East Region Open Water Championships were held at Mercers Lake, Redhill and this year MASTERS events over 2Km (mixed) and 3Km (open/male and female) were introduced for the first time. Sarah Mieves, Brodie Judge, Kellyn Caldwell, Lucas Bryant and Terry Wright all secured Gold medals in their respective categories. At the end of the month the European Aquatics MASTERS Championships (LC). were held in Belgrade where a number of our local swimmers took part. Unsurprisingly the star was again Amanda Heath with many successes in the pool AND Open Water, posting new competition record times along the way on 200fly, 200IM and 400IM. Pip Williams (Wycombe) also collected a Gold on her favourite 50bk and Samantha Usher won her 200bs. Having found his feet in April at the British MASTERS, Andrew Moore had 3 more impressive swims in Belgrade.

In early September our annual County Open MASTERS (SC) event was again held at Braywick L.C. Maidenhead. Like everywhere else the costs have increased considerably but this remains a good venue for our meet. Probably aided by the blanket TV coverage of swimming and para-swimming from the Paris Olympics there were nearly 300 entries, although on the day 256 swimmers actually recorded 849 swims - a 40-45% increase on 2023. 76 clubs participated which is double the number from last year. The top local club was Wycombe District and Aylesbury were the top visiting club. It was fitting that 2 local swimmers Dave Milburn (Newbury) and Amanda Heath (Maidenhead) won the Top Swimmer trophies. Guy Emerson (Amersham) actually pocketed 10 medals, which included 3 Gold. An improbable record was that of the 22 officials present, at least 12 were either fully qualified referees or referees in training! There were 3 British and 1 European Records set at the meet, subject to ratification.

The Swim England South East MASTERS (SC) were held at Crawley at the end of September. The Bracknell contingent numbered 11 swimmers, 7 of whom picked up Gold medals - namely Laura Cooke (3), Kirsty Johnson and Karen Jendon (2 each) and Terry Wright, Simon Mellor, Lynda

Callaway and Alexandra Boddington (1 each). A smaller group from Wycombe collected 2 Golds via Cameron Winchcombe and Pip Williams.

The Swim England National MASTERS Championships (SC) took place in Sheffield over 3 days at the end of October. Nearly 50 swimmers from our district took part. The largest contingent came from Wycombe with Kellyn Caldwell amassing 6 individual wins plus 2 relay successes emerging as their top performer. Bracknell had a smaller squad but Kirsty Johnson provided one of the stand-out moments of the weekend when setting a new British record in winning her 100bk event in a time of 1.04.53 sec. Dan John (Reading), Amanda Heath (Maidenhead) and Bridget Bewick (Bracknell) each took 3 Golds. Dave Milburn (Newbury but swimming as part of medley relay squad for Basingstoke) helped set a new British and European record. From the 274 teams that entered, Wycombe District came 17th with 141 points and Bracknell came 23rd with 119 points. There were a couple of other performances to note, namely Dave Milburn (Newbury, but swimming for his second club Basingstoke) made a clean sweep of his 3 breaststroke events and Andrew Moore (Amersham but now with his City of Sheffield hat on) swimming the anchor leg of a 4x50 mixed freestyle relay (240+ group) helping to set a new World Record time of 1.52.06sec - subject to ratification.

The MASTERS Inter-Counties competition is in its 25th year and in November 2024 the south-east leg was again held in the Olympic Pool (SC) at LAC Stratford. This will be the venue for the foreseeable future. B&SB again came 4th in our Regional event and this was good enough to place our district 6th nationally out of the 31 competing districts. We scored 8 individual heat wins through Amanda Heath (4) and 1 each from Laura Cooke, Kirsty Johnson, Millie Sansome and Kellyn Caldwell. Our oldest competitor Duncan McCreadie (79) made a valiant effort in his swim, coming a very creditable 4th.

The South-East MASTERS (LC) at Crawley in January 2025 had few entries from our district but we had 6 winners in various events, namely David Wood, Charles Wilson, Amy Barton (Wycombe), Luke Withers, Duncan McCreadie (Maidenhead) and Chris Ehringer (Bracknell). The next major event in the calendar was the Bracknell Open MASTERS (SC) in early March and, as might be expected, this was heavily subscribed by our local swimmers with more than 40 entering various events. 28 of these enjoyed success in their age-group with Bridget Bewick, Brodie Judge, Claire Moore and Josephine Wells leading the way with 5 wins each. On the same day, Amanda Heath had opted for the Swim Wales MASTERS Championships (LC) at Cardiff where she took 4 Gold and 1 Silver from 5

events! The Swim England South-East 1500 (LC) at Crawley attracted a capacity field of 55 competitors and Samantha Usher (Wycombe) emerged as a worthy winner in her age-group. worthy winner in her age-group. In the relay events held at this meet, Amanda Heath swimming with her 3 Spencer teammates in the mixed 280+ age-group set 3 European records in little more than an hour. Not a bad way to end this report!

Although B&SB is the smallest district in the South East Region, it is clear that our swimmers continue to 'punch above their weight' at home and abroad.

Bob Odell

ARTISTIC SWIMMING

There is still only one club in the county, Reading Royals. The club has settled well into Rivermead pool and are still utilising school pools.

We are delighted to announce that 4 swimmers were selected to the South East Region Training Squad - Lottie Cotton, Summer Patterson-Neild, Romily McQuillan and Lulu Tague

The GB Senior Squad competed in Paris in the 1st round of the World Cup March 2025. Reading Royals swimmers, Jessica Hinxman, Florence Blinkhorn, Cara Zeidler were selected.

The club was represented by Cara Zeildler and Jessica Hinksman and the recent European Championships in Madeira in June.

3 club swimmers were selected for the South East regional squad and attended the regional training camp in Spain and then competed in the regional games in Bristol. The figure results are still awaited.

Following the resignation of the club coach, this has been a rebuilding year with the appointment of a new Chief Coach Kate Coupar. The highlight results are 3rd in the Senior Tech Team at the National Championships, 1st in Junior Technical duet, 3rd in Junior free solo

In the Youth championships, the mixed duet took the silver medal.

The club will be competing in the Combo cup in Sheffield on 4th July

Jenny Gray

DIVING

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 July 2024, are now based at their new home pool, GLL operated Rivermead Leisure Centre in Reading.

Both clubs use alternative venues for highboard training, in Luton and Southampton.

Both Albatross and Amersham are SwimMark accredited clubs with, since SwimMark is nationally currently on hold, Club Affiliation for Albatross being presented to the next Southeast Regional Board.

Amersham is a family-friendly, competitive swimming and diving club located in the heart of the Chilterns. Their mission is to provide a supportive environment where swimmers and divers of all abilities can achieve their full potential. Diving is fully integrated and well supported within the Club, allowing them to offer competitive opportunities at all levels — including Pre-Skills, Skills and Age Group diving as well as Masters, and junior/adult learn-to-dive groups.

The club has seen a notable increase in both the number of divers and lessons offered compared to 2024, due to an expanded programme. While coaching capacity has remained similar, the growth in participation has placed increased demand on facilities. Although these are operating more smoothly, they continue to pose challenges due to intermittent outages that impact training and competition readiness.

Established in 1978, Albatross is part of Readings aquatic heritage offering both a community lesson-based programme and nationally competitive squad opportunities. Since moving into the new pool Albatross has experienced phenomenal growth with diver volume now at 3 times the number of lesson programme divers than when at The Abbey School. Having benefited from the promotion of the new facility which coincided with national success at the Paris Olympics and diving having increased in mainstream sport television coverage and online streaming the club were able to take advantage of its increased session capacity. They too have also now introduced an adult section, two of whom competed and medalled at the Great Britain Diving Federation Spring Masters

in Edinburgh and have a flourishing recreational Learn to Dive teen section who include some junior master's divers.

Both clubs have a steady number of enquiries and Albatross are currently looking to identify a team of younger talented divers to form a development squad to attend the Aquatics GB Talent Games in November which is a skill-based test of both dry and pool skills for divers between the ages of 8 and 11. On moving into the new pool Albatross took the opportunity to restructure and, for the first time in their history, now pay for coaching hours funded by increased capacity to support future sustainability.

With two new pools in the county the two diving clubs are still examining opportunities to work collaboratively to host a triangular stage competition across three levels of diving; Recreational Learn to Dive, Skills and Advanced, which could work as a county event with other clubs diving as guests. It is hoped that this will take in October 2025 promoting diving in the county and allow Pre-Skills and Learn to Dive divers their first entry to competition at the start of the 25/26 competition season. Additionally, Albatross have reintroduced their annual Inter-Club event this month (its first since 2017) and hosted the Southeast Division English Schools Diving Championships Qualifier in October 2024. Discussions are taking place to host the Southeast Region National Skills Qualifier in 2026 which has previously been run at Crawley and Tunbridge Wells.

Following Regional success with its recognition as Swim England Southeast Region Diving Club of the Year Albatross are immensely proud to have been then awarded Swim England National Diving Club of the Year in November 2024.



Statistics

	Amersham	Albatross
Lesson/ Learn to Dive Programme	84	146
Recreational Teen Divers	18	12
Pre-Skills Development	25	27
Skills Qualifiers	4	6
Age Group	7	6
Elite		
Seniors		3
Masters/Adults	18	11

Amersham support the club with 3 Dive Coaches and 4 Assistant Coaches. Albatross have 8 Programme Dive Coaches with 4 Bank Dive Coaches who support absences. They also have 5 Assistant Coaches. Both Amersham and Albatross have identified candidates under the Swim England Training Needs Analysis for coaching and judging courses. Albatross has 1 Assistant Coach on the June Dive Coach course in Sandwell, Birmingham. There is currently only 1 Assistant Coach courses available and no Judging courses. One Albatross coach has applied to becoming a dive course tutor but is waiting on this course starting.

Both clubs have had movement in their coaching numbers due to changing personal circumstances but are active in promoting coaching opportunities to parents and older divers on their programmes from which all new coaches have been drawn.

Competitive Calendar

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

- Surrey Skills
- Gavin Brown Love to Dive
- GBDF Winter Masters
- Southeast Region Skills
- East Region Skills
- London Skills
- East Region Age Group
- Southeast Region Age Group
- English Schools Diving Championships Regional Qualifiers and Finals
- Swim England National Skills Finals
- Swim England National Age Groups

Albatross too entered divers into Gavin Brown Love to Dive, English Schools Diving Championships Regional Qualifiers and Finals, London Region, and Southeast Region Skills, Southeast Region Age Groups, Swim England National Skills Finals and Swim England National Age Groups but, in addition, have attended the following:

- Southampton Invitationals
- Northwest Region Skills, Manchester
- Midland Region Skills and Age Groups, Birmingham
- Armada Cup, Plymouth



Internationally, after the success of the event in 2023 Amersham once again competed at the Irish Open Championships in Dublin and Albatross took a team of seventeen divers to the Dubai International Aquatics Championships in March this year. This trip is one the club feel particularly proud to have been able to offer to their divers as a unique experience in a new country and culture and one they hope the divers will remember for

many years to come, not least for the twenty-two beautiful medals they brought home!

Both clubs had divers, coaches, and officials as part of the Southeast Division English Schools Diving Championships Finals team in Manchester.

The county had regional medallists from both clubs at Skills and Age Groups events with *Misha Colton, Edward Nason, Charlotte Buthee, Clementine Webster, Hamish Darrah, Oliver Mills, Kate Von Benecke, Ruby Royall, Alice Jones, Harry Hancock, Edward Salter, Oliver Salter* and *Amelie Holland* shining at Regional Skills and *Millan Colton, Sam Roberts, Ruby Harris, Ariana Fox, Hannah Hopkinson, Emma Buckley, Finlay Stratford, Naya Sogut* (who has once again been selected as part



of the Turkish National Team to compete in Bulgaria in July) and *Jaspar Hussain* shining at Regional Age Groups.

Masters Divers from Amersham have also been doing well bringing home a large number of medals in both Novice and full masters events at the Winter Masters in Southend.

Administration, Coaching and Recognition

Both clubs remain committed to encouraging and supporting past divers who wish to remain in the sport. In addition to Masters diving at Amersham and Albatross the County have three senior divers, two of whom have competed internationally in Dubai for Albatross and this weekend one came seventh at the Aquatics GB Diving Championships in Birmingham. We congratulate *Charlie Minns*

from Albatross on this achievement as he returns to competitive senior diving in his first event since 2020.

All the Albatross coaches have come from involvement in the sport either as a diver themselves or as a parent of a diver. Both clubs also support Swim England with judges and officials with Amersham having Regional Judge 1's and Albatross having Regional Judge 1's, National Judge 2's and Senior Judge 3's. The county was represented at all Swim England and Aquatics GB Regional Qualifiers and National Events this year by a selection of these judges as well as recording officials.

Facility Development and Growth

Both clubs are non-selective in their Learn to Dive programmes. Amersham remains concerned about operational issues affecting their facilities as these impact the club both financially and limits training consistency affecting its ability to develop and retain competitive divers. These disruptions have been identified as a barrier to reaching their goal of advancing more athletes through the club's development pathway into regional and national competition squads.

Whilst regional development programmes have temporarily stalled due to coaching and operator problems in Southampton these should be starting up again this summer as new regional diving management drive forwarded initiatives to grow grass root development and coaching CPD.

Emma West

WATERPOLO

As in previous years, to my knowledge, water polo is played competitively by only one club in the County, Reading SC. I understand, nevertheless, that there is a weekly water polo session shown on the website of Wycombe District SC. I think, therefore, that the best course for my report is to repeat much of the content of the report on water polo submitted to the AGM of Reading SC in October 2024, as below.

2023-2024 Water Polo Business Plan Objectives

1) Pools - To secure suitable pool time to train & play matches, for the senior and junior squads, to ensure the continuity of the senior and junior squads; bearing in mind the location of the pool and the geographical split of players.

2) Membership - Try to increase senior and maintain/increase junior membership. To continue the junior club and expand the number of sessions for seniors and juniors to 2 sessions per week, to ensure junior membership continues to expand and to allow us to split the younger and older junior players to continue their growth/development. But with the proviso that we continue to ensure both sections break even financially.

3) League/Results - Try to regain our league position in Division 1 of the (Summer) London League and to enter a mixed U17 squad into the Hampshire league (Winter season). To try to start to integrate some of the older juniors (17+) into the senior squad sessions and games.

4) Junior Polo - To continue to develop and expand the junior Water polo section, to ensure that it continues within Reading Swimming Club. To try to split the junior section into two groups/sessions, for older and younger juniors (mini polo). To develop the juniors with the aim to get some into the Regional U17 Girls development training sessions and/or squad.

Accomplishments to date

1) Pools

We have been training at Eton School pool since 2020 and we moved into their new "Athens" pool April 2022. We have been looking at moving back to Rivermead for water polo, but there were a number of significant reasons:-

- a) We cannot play matches at the Rivermead pool without significant investment of c£3k to purchase shot clocks which are essential for the game. In addition the pool is only 1.8m deep vs 2m at Eton which is typically seen as the minimum required by the London league.
 - b) Issues about available time slots for training. We currently train on Thursday between 8:30-10pm for seniors and 7:30-9pm for Juniors. As we have established the club in Eton, a good number of juniors are closer to Eton than Reading.
 - c) There is currently no opportunity to increase the amount of pool time at Rivermead. At Eton there is an opportunity to increase the pool time we have available which will be essential to grow the junior section of the club and remain a financially viable self-funding entity.
 - d) At Eton lifeguards are provided by the pool and are always on poolside. Currently we only have two training sessions a week; Seniors on Thursdays (20.30 – 22.00) and Juniors on Sundays (19.30 – 21.00). This is not ideal; we need more pool time for seniors and we need another session for the juniors so that we can split the larger and smaller juniors up, and reduce the numbers in each session (24 is too many to develop their skills bearing in mind the relative inexperience).
- The new moveable bottom/all deep pool at Eton, is very good but the costs have increased by 45% since we started using it, but this does include the provision of lifeguards for the sessions.

Ultimately we would like to try to develop the junior section, to do what Basingstoke have done in Hampshire, and develop a centre of excellence for juniors from all over Berkshire/Buckinghamshire in Reading.

2) Membership

The senior membership currently stands at 19 (up 5 from last year). The junior membership currently stands at 30 (up from the 26 last year) but we have had a number leave this year (A-levels / university etc). We are still receiving a steady number of enquiries from potential new starters; people moved to the Reading area mostly. We do have a potential issue with the junior section; a good number of our juniors (approx. half) are 17 years old and hence we will potentially be losing them from the juniors' section. We are trying to encourage some to join the senior section but I suspect a number will leave. With the new Eton pool fees, we had to reduce the number of sessions for the senior members, despite also having to increase their polo section fees. One senior session a week is not really enough, to be able to develop our squad.

Our aim over the next 3-5 years is to have:

- a) A strong Men's team playing to a good level of competition

b) A development Men's team for older juniors and seniors newer to the game to have the opportunity to play games against other teams

c) A Junior section 12-18

d) A Mini's section (c8-12 and new junior starters for first 4-6 weeks)

We have run a recent recruitment campaign to local schools and on the Club website, and we have had a number of new junior members come along.

3) League/Results

The senior London league team are playing in the London league (Division 2). We are trying to get back to division 1 again, but we have a strong league this year. We have a team of older players as well as some newer members and also some of the older juniors have also been playing for us this year. We are currently 3rd in the league with 3 more matches still to play. We are hopeful we will finish 2nd and will be able to challenge for a place in Division 1 if we do.

4) Junior Polo

The junior section is going well and we have 30 juniors (ranging from 11 to 17) training at present. Some of the older members have been training with the seniors this year and some have played in the senior league matches. The juniors are very committed and seem to love the sessions, we have had some great feedback from both parents and juniors. We played in the Hampshire U17 mixed league this year (with Winchester, Basingstoke, Jersey, Weymouth and Portsmouth) to give our juniors some match practice and they played well. We also held a tournament at Eton for the U17 and also a younger U15 squad. Unfortunately, the London league age limits mean that we cannot enter that league this year; most don't now qualify for U16 and the others are too young. Two of our boys and 4 of our girls went to regional training (U16 & U18 levels) and one (Airlia Philippidis) made it to the team and represented the South East in the regional tournament (in Liverpool) where the team managed a gold medal.

5) Coaching

We currently have 2 qualified coaches for the seniors/juniors; Head coach Alexis Philippidis (Level 2 qualified) and Assistant coach Paul Hancock (Level 1 qualified). Both have completed their DBS and Safeguarding courses.

Roger Penfold

(with grateful thanks to Lex Philippidis)

APPENDIX 1 PERFORMANCE SWIMMING RECORDS

During the 2024/25 season (from 1st April 2024 until 31st March 2025) 15 new records were set by 3 of the county's athletes, 9 County Records and 6 Junior County Records

Gender	Course	Event	Swimmer / Club	Location	Date	Time
Junior County Records						
Female	SC	50m Fly	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	05/12/2024	00:54.41
Female	SC	50m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	06/12/2024	00:25.24
Female	SC	50m Fly	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	07/12/2024	00:27.82
Female	SC	100m IM	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	07/12/2024	04:12.45
Female	SC	200m Breast	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	08/12/2024	01:58.37
Female	LC	4x100m Medley	Charlotte Burfitt (Maidenhead)	Wycombe LC	12/01/2025	02:38.67
County Records						
Male/Open	LC	50m Breast	Noah Wheeler (Chalfont)	Wycombe LC	25/01/2025	00:29.36
Female	SC	100m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	05/12/2024	00:54.41
Female	SC	50m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	06/12/2024	00:25.24
Female	SC	50m Back	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	07/12/2024	00:27.82
Female	SC	200m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Ponds Forge, Sheffield	08/12/2024	01:58.37
Female	LC	50m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Wycombe LC	12/01/2025	00:26.40
Female	LC	100m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Wycombe LC	25/01/2025	00:57.29
Female	LC	50m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Wycombe LC	26/01/2025	00:29.90
Female	LC	200m Free	Annabelle Compton (Wycombe District)	Wycombe LC	26/01/2025	02:02.57

APPENDIX 2 – FINANCIAL REPORTS

Awaiting provision by Treasurer.