



Swim England

Hertfordshire



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2020-2021**

## General

This annual report covers the year from April 2020 to March 2021. The Annual Council Meeting is scheduled to take place in July, with the county financial year end being 31<sup>st</sup>December.

Usually the annual report provides a governance report; news items and full reports on the competitions which have taken place within the year being posted to the website, in a timely fashion following the event, rather than being included in the annual report. Like our lives in general, our sport has been drastically affected by the coronavirus pandemic in the report's year, with competition and normal activity for our sport being impossible. So the annual report has a somewhat different format this year.

The lockdowns and restrictions have meant that face-to-face meetings have not been possible. The use of online meetings has however meant a saving of room hire cost, and also a saving of time spent travelling to meetings, and the county has continued with Management Board meetings and discipline committee meetings, as necessary. Through Swim England and Swim England East Region, online theory training has been possible for volunteers and officials, and forums and development have also been available online.

The Management Board has met four times in the year. There were four vacancies on the Management Board following the Annual Council Meeting 2020. Subsequently, one vacancy was filled, following the submission of a nomination form, leaving three vacancies. There is no doubt that the management of the county affairs would be better served with a full complement of Board members. At present the governance of the county lies in the hands of eleven members of the Management Board – this is not ideal in any way. There are only four meetings (2 hours maximum), plus the Annual Council Meeting, and so the time-commitment is minimal. It would be SO helpful have a full complement of members and be able to share the load and responsibilities. It is hoped that the vacancies will be filled at the Annual Council Meeting.

Unfortunately, the perception is that a wealth of experience is required. This is definitely not the case. What *is* required is people with positive ideas and a commitment to the development of swimming, in all its aspects, in the county. If the few people, who do bother to contribute, did not do so, then our athletes would have no competitions and development! The idea that other people know far more than you, should not be a factor in making a commitment. Knowledge and experience are built up by doing a job, and full support to a newcomer would most certainly be given by those who have the experience and knowledge. The time-commitment for a member of the Board or a committee is minimal over the year, and any role undertaken to help organise events need not be onerous timewise if the load can be spread.

The club development group, the disability committee, the synchronised swimming committee and the swimming committee have met online during the year. Minutes of the meetings which were held are available on the website. During the year, following the change made by Swim England and by Swim England East Region, the discipline of synchronised swimming is now known as artistic swimming. There has been no water polo committee this year, and no water polo manager either. The diving committee is currently suspended, and there is no diving manager. Hertfordshire has a representative on the Swim England East Region committees, which seek to ensure development and competition for the athletes of all disciplines. The disciplines of water polo and diving in Hertfordshire, whilst having no county committee, are, however, engaged with the regional committees.

As a consequence of the restrictions imposed because of the pandemic, there was concern about a possible drop in the number of members in the county's clubs, and their consequent viability. Also, at the beginning the membership year 2021, all Swim England clubs were required to be either SwimMark accredited or to have the Stronger Affiliation accreditation. Membership numbers have fallen by around 1000, but only one club did not renew Swim England membership for 2021.

Swim England East Region has delivered various forums for counties and clubs and their personnel, and there have been two successful networking projects within the county. One of these was a group sharing best practice

for the Covid-19 requirements within the club environment, and the other is the setting up of the Hertfordshire Aquatics coaches network, engaging around fifty coaches.

Along with regional and national championships, county championships did not take place during the year, owing to the restrictions imposed because of the pandemic. Another casualty was the county's Development Weekend which did not take place in February 2021.

Sheila Mackenzie has again been the Hertfordshire representative on the Swim England East Region Management Board this year. Ian Mackenzie continued as an elected member of the Swim England East Region Management Board, and when Swim England East Region became a company on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, Ian became one of the Directors. Ian took on the prestigious role of Swim England President in October 2019, and should have finished his term in May 2021, but, in view of the lack of competition from March 2020, his term of office has been extended to May 2022. In a similar way, Tom Brennan became the Swim England Hertfordshire President in 2019, and because of the lockdown in March 2020, and the resulting lack of competition, Tom was asked to continue in the Presidential role until July 2021. Sadly, the hope that competition would recommence was not fulfilled.

Throughout the year, clubs in the county continued to benefit from the supportive work of the regional staff. The Swim England Hertfordshire website and Facebook and twitter continue to be used by the county to engage with the membership.

As we work through the many challenges being faced in trying to move to more normal activity in our sport, please consider carefully whether you could contribute by giving a small amount of your time to your county, either on the discipline committees or on the Management Board.

## **Hertfordshire Aquatics - the 50m pool project**

The 50m pool project has made huge progress this year, and with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the site owners, it was possible to make the announcement of the location of the pool. It is at Oaklands College in St Albans.

Regular weekly meetings continue and huge progress has been made this year. The design of the building has been carefully reviewed on several occasions to accommodate, in the most expedient and efficient way, the facilities which can be provided, as against the amount of funding which would be required.

All Swim England Hertfordshire clubs were contacted to establish the potential use they might want to make of the pool for training and competition. Individual consultations were held with each club which responded, and consultations were also held with other organisations within and outside the county, to establish their potential interest in hiring the facility. These consultations have enabled a business plan to be drawn up which will be needed to support the application for the funding of the project.

## **SwimMark and Stronger Affiliation**

The SwimMark accreditation is regarded by Swim England as a mark of a well-run club, with systems in place for the support and benefit of its members, especially its athletes. The following clubs are SwimMark accredited as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021:-

Aqualina (Stevenage) Artistic SC  
Bishops Stortford SC  
Bushey ASC  
City of St. Albans ASC  
Harpenden SC  
Hemel Hempstead SC

Beaumont Diving Academy  
Borehamwood SC  
Cheshunt SC  
Dacorum Diving Club  
Hatfield SC  
Hertford SC

Hitchin SC  
Letchworth ASC  
Stevenage SC  
Verulam ASC  
Watford SC  
Welwyn Garden SC

Hoddesdon SC  
Potters Bar SC  
Tring ASC  
Ware SC  
Watford Water Polo Club

There is no doubt that the governance and succession planning of the club benefit from the accreditation, and this then benefits the athletes.

Stronger Affiliation is more basic accreditation than SwimMark and requires fewer governance processes to be in place. At the beginning the membership year 2021, all Swim England clubs were required to be either SwimMark accredited or to have the Stronger Affiliation accreditation.

The following clubs have the Stronger Affiliation accreditation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021:-

Berkhamsted SC	Borough of Broxbourne Swim Squad
Broxbourne SC	Buntingford SC
Dacorum Synchronised SC	Hartham Masters SC
Kings Langley SC	Potters Bar Artistic SC
Royston SC	St Albans Masters SC

## **Awards**

### ***Roy Rogers Memorial Trophy***

The trophy is awarded to the person, team or club who has made a significant contribution to the sport of swimming. As there were no national or regional volunteer awards this year, the Management Board had decided that the Roy Rogers Memorial Trophy would not be awarded this year.

### ***The President's Plate***

The trophy is awarded, at the sole discretion of the President, for conspicuous service to Swim England Hertfordshire . This year the President's Plate was presented to Keri Brennan.

### ***The Wilkinson Sword***

The sword is awarded annually for achievement in the sport of swimming. The Wilkinson Sword was awarded this year to Nathan Hughes.

## **Finance Officer's Report**

### **For the period ended 31st December 2020**

The accounts have been approved by the Management Board and are currently with the Independent Examiner for his confirmation.

The accounts have been drawn up for a 9 month period as approved at the last Annual Council Meeting.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic aquatic activity for the period was shut down and there was no income from the various disciplines. There were a few small invoices from the previous year which were paid during the period and which show as expenditure.

Membership income has previously been included in the accounts on a calendar year basis and therefore the figure shown in the March 2020 accounts are for the calendar year to 31 December 2019. The figures in this

period's accounts are for the calendar year to 31 December 2020. Going forward the membership income will align to the financial year end.

Membership fees are charged at £3.00 for Category 1 membership and £3.50 for Category 2 membership. These figures did not change during the year. Any memberships taken out between October and December each year are charged at 50% of the full membership fee. The fees are collected by Swim England and remitted to the County.

Due to the pandemic overall membership numbers dropped for the year.

Although the bulk of the 2020 Membership Income was received before the pandemic hit the UK, the number of people joining clubs during the year has been minimal, which has impacted of the predicted overall membership income. For 2021 membership numbers have continued to drop but now that pools have re-opened I am expecting membership numbers to increase over the year but they will probably not reach the levels of 2020 by the year end.

	2020	2019
Category 1 members	2,417	3,196
Category 2 members	2,732	2,914
Total "in pool" membership	5,149	6,110
Fees received	£16,814	£19,668

Category 3 membership is for volunteers and there is no membership fees for them. Detailed numbers of category 3 members are not available.

The future for the rest of 2021 is unclear and it is probable that there will be no significant aquatic activity for the rest of the year. For 2022 I expect that the level of activity will recover significantly. At present there are discussions about holding a swimming county championship and I expect that other disciplines will also resume their activities.

The county's finances are in good position to move forward after the pandemic and I wish all athletes a safe and productive return to the pool.

## Appreciation

The county could not function successfully if it were not for the many volunteers who give their time freely to support our athletes. In this particularly difficult year for us all, the support of volunteers working in their clubs and/or working on county committees, is greatly appreciated.

Finally, sincere thanks to all the officers, Board members and others elected to the various committees, who have given their time and expertise, and have made great efforts this year to ensure that support and initiatives are in place in these challenging times, for the ultimate benefit of our athletes.

**For, and on behalf, of the Swim England Hertfordshire Management Board**  
**Sheila Mackenzie**  
**Secretary**



[www.swimherts.org](http://www.swimherts.org)

Keep up to date with what your county is doing

**Forums** – Club, Coaches, Officials

**Committees** –

Club Development Group: Disability: Diving:

Artistic Swimming:

Swimming, including Masters and Open Water: Water Polo

**Events: Courses: Contacts: Galas: Competitions**