

TURTLES NEWSLETTER

Turtles Swimming Club is for anyone with a physical, mental health or learning difficulty

Registered Charity Number 1055585

NOVEMBER 2013



Membership Continues to Grow

Our membership numbers are now running at a record high level (circa 160) and as a consequence our Saturday pool sessions are much busier than before. The Turtles Committee has been contemplating how best to deal with the increased activity. There are a number of options ranging from suspending new membership through to expanding our pool sessions to 90 minutes.

The cost of extending the pool session works out at £2500 p.a. and the club currently cannot support that level of expenditure on an on-going basis and so we approached Hillingdon council to see if they would fund an extension.

Their response and some more details about the current options being considered is contained on pages 4 & 5, but the Committee would welcome your feedback and thoughts ahead of the next Committee Meeting on the 12th November.



Long standing member Justine Cook making good use of her Turtles cap when holidaying in Menorca



.....and one of our Kiwi members!

NASCH / Insurance

Following our representation to the NASCH Committee (our governing body) we received a letter stating the following:

We have discussed at length your presentation in our meeting on 21st September. As a committee we feel that our insurance is comprehensive enough for our affiliated clubs. These matters have been discussed again with our insurance brokers again. We feel that we will not come to an agreement with the insurance specification that you feel you need. We would be very sorry to lose your club from the Association as you have been a very active member. However we feel that we cannot make an exception for you.

As a consequence of the above the Committee has since taken the decision to leave NASCH after nearly 50 years of association and our NASCH affiliation will therefore end 31/12/2013.

However, the good news is that The Turtles SC has successfully applied to Hiscox Insurance (through the Swimsure representation) and we intend to secure insurance with Hiscox with effect from January 1st 2014.

We are very grateful to Ault Insurance (Swimsure) and Hiscox for all the advice and guidance that they have given to our club during this very difficult process.

In 2014, our 50th year, we move on to a new chapter as an Independent Swimming Club.

Our swimmers will no longer be able to compete in the NASCH Championships, so this year will be our last year of attendance.

Health & Safety



We have been advised to appoint a Health & Safety Officer as part of our revised insurance requirements and risk management. We are delighted that Peter Horne, who has training in Health & Safety matters, has volunteered to take on the role .

Club Policies & Procedures

We have now revised the club's policies and procedures and it is important that members read through and familiarise themselves with these important statements.

All the policies can be viewed on the Turtles Website, viewed at Poolside (please ask Alison Grey) or hardcopy Word versions can be requested. The club now has the following revised policies:

[Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy](#)

[Health & safety Policy](#)

[Members Code of Conduct](#)

[Parents, Carers & Supporters Code of Conduct](#)

[Volunteers Code of Conduct](#)

[Anti Bullying Policy](#)

[Club Equity Statement](#)

[Supervision When Visiting Other Locations Policy](#)

[Whistle Blowing Policy](#)

[Poolside Helpers Induction Programme](#)

[Child Protection Procedures](#)

[Child Protection & Vulnerable Adult Officer—Job Role](#)

Fun Session

Now that we are clear about our insurance plans, we are hoping to arrange another fun session for the New Year, similar to the ones that we held during our stay at Hillingdon Pool. Peter will be taking an active interest in this project with his Health and Safety role in mind and so we hope to have details in the next Newsletter if we are able to organise and secure a pool timeslot at either Highgrove or Hillingdon.

NASCH Championships 2013

The following Turtles swimmers will be representing Region 1 in the National Championships at Leamington Spa on Saturday 2nd November following their successes in the NASCH Regional Gala:

Jamie Woodbridge	Boys 1 and 2 Lengths
Sophie Grey	Girls 1, 2 & 4 Length
Karen Hoffmann	Ladies 1 & 2 Lengths
Shaida Ghorbanian	Ladies 4 Lengths
Jack Locket	Mens 1 & 2 Lengths
Gary Lee	Mens 4 Lengths
Junior Relay	Sophie, Jamie and Aaron Maddox
Mens Relay	Jack, Gary & Carl Richards



Good Luck Team!

Leamington Mini Bus Schedule	
Bushey Road	9.45
Linden Avenue	9.55
Pine Gardens	10.05
Eastcote Avenue	10.10
Durley Avenue	10.15
Loudwater Lane	10.40
Gala Commences (Doors Open 12.30)	13.00

Good Luck Yasmin!

Our Helper Yasmin Francis has now left us as she has started her Psychology Degree at Hull University. We wish her all the best of luck and thank her for all her help and support.

Yasmin promises to come back and see us during the University holiday breaks.



Thank you to the sponsors of our club!

The United Reformed Church of Eastcote & Northwood Hills

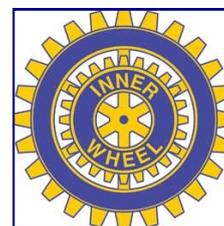
Hillingdon, Early Intervention Services for Children & Young People

Eastcote Community Association

Fourways Ladies Group



BARCLAYS



Our Expanding Club—the Options

The Turtles Swimming Club has been very successful over the last few years with membership steadily growing along with our good reputation. Our one year stay at Hillingdon Pool generated new interest and our return to Highgrove has seen the return of former members who did not wish to make the trip to Hillingdon. Our higher profile (partly through the support of Sainsburys, South Ruislip) has also seen a steady flow of new members joining every week. As a consequence, our membership numbers have grown from circa 120 when we left Hillingdon to 160 some 7 months later. As the pool sessions are getting busier, the Committee has been considering various options and we meet again on the 12th November to decide on the way forward.

Declining New Memberships

We could decide to place all new membership applications on a waiting list (possibly referring applicants to the Hillingdon Otter Disabled Swimming Club in the interim). However, Hillingdon Council do not want us to decline membership or form a waiting list. The management of any list could be complicated and we do not want to be turning away disabled swimmers and their families if at all possible. Our current attendance figures vary enormously and at the moment it remains the exception rather than the rule that the Saturday sessions are over busy. It is also the case that many of our members are infrequent swimmers and again we would not want to impact on those occasional swimmers.

Limiting Entrance

Obviously we have to consider all aspects of Health and Safety and if our sessions remain at the current 60 minutes and the trend in membership growth continues we would have to consider limiting the number of people that we allow to participate in the Saturday session. This may well lead to disappointment to those who can only attend the later part of the session.

However, if all our 160 members were to all turn up even we would have to limit entrance.

Extending the Swim Session

One option available is to extend our current swim session by 30 minutes. The extra 30 minutes would be utilised for structured lane swimming (Vulnerable Swimmer Lane, Gala Training Lane, Long Distance Swim Lane, Lane Swimming etc.) so that the ropes could then be removed for the 60 minutes free swim, making space for the large number of casual swimmers.

Hillingdon Council currently fund our existing pool session but are not prepared to fund the additional £2500 on-going annual cost of an extension (see letter Page 5), they also remain very concerned about our low annual subscription rates and wish us to extend our sessions by increasing the subscriptions.

We also recognise that the increased pool sessions will put additional strain on the Saturday volunteers at both reception and at poolside. We are always looking for extra Helpers to assist Alison with the Saturday administration and Linda with the pool support so please let them know if you are able to support in any way.

Your Thoughts

The Committee Meeting to discuss this matter is on Tuesday 12th November. If you have any thoughts or views, please send an email to the Turtles email address (page 7) or leave a written response with Alison at reception on Saturday 9th November.

We will feedback in the next Newsletter.

Our Expanding Club—Hillingdon Council Response

Dear Dave, further to our meeting to discuss an expansion of Turtles Swimming Club I have given more consideration to the club's request for additional free pool time at Highgrove.

I would first like to make it clear that I am supportive of the work you and other volunteers do with the club and it great to see that now back at Highgrove the club is attracting a number of new members. I also appreciate that with this comes a different challenge for the club and that you are actively looking for a way to accommodate the growth in members.

As we discussed, the club are looking to address this by re-organising / increasing capacity with an extra half hour in the pool and I can confirm that there is scope and opportunity in the pool programme to increase access for the club with an additional half hour of water time. However, when taking in to account that Turtles existing hour in the pool is already provided free of charge, and the club has a healthy membership of around 150 with very low fees, I don't think it is an unreasonable request Turtles to pay for the additional half hour access.

You explained that the current subscription charged to members is from £8 per annum (around 17p a week) and no additional weekly fees are applied when members attend. When compared to any other similar activity, including a number of other sports aimed specifically at disabled people, this is very low cost and is not a realistic level in order to grow the club further, keep up with demand and still be sustainable. In the current climate it is particularly important to ensure that activities are sustainable long term that enables clubs to stand on their own two feet without the need to rely on long term financial support to survive.

I do recognise however that in some cases this is not always possible and as such the Council continues to support the Turtles through on-going funding for the 1 hour session at Highgrove. As discussed, the additional half an hour pool time is around £2,500 a year which given that the club has a healthy and growing membership I would estimate this would cost each member less than 35p per week to fund the extended club session. This should be something that a club with a strong membership base should be able to achieve and self fund without further subsidy.

As explained when we met, the facility hire budget needs to support a variety of activities, a number of which (including Turtles) are aimed at increasing opportunity for disabled sports participation, not only in swimming but a range of activities, all of which are currently more expensive than Turtles Swim Club.

One suggestion you offered (subject to your committee approval) would be a 50/50 split on the cost for the extra half an hour. I would be prepared to consider this for a 6 month period that would provide the club with an opportunity to test the new arrangements. It is however not a realistic long term option to fund this extension indefinitely and a more sustainable route would be for the club to consider how it can look to raise funds to support this. Therefore, after the initial 6 months the club would need to be prepared to meet the full cost of the extended session.

We also spoke about swimming teachers and requests the club receives for teaching disabled people to swim. We can assist with this via the 'On Your Marks' scheme and have programmed lessons at Highgrove for the hour before Turtles current swim time <http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/disabledsport> I appreciate this will not suit everyone but for those asking the club for swimming lessons, this will hopefully provide an opportunity for those wanting a lesson to use the pool earlier, and potentially free up space for other activities. Members would however need to be prepared to pay the subsidised rate of £2 per lesson. This is significantly less than the standard rate for swimming lessons.

In summary the opportunity is there to increase the time available in the pool to continue to grow the club further rather than closing the session to new members. I hope that the committee will understand that the cost to members for the extended swim time represents a very nominal sum per member and that access to increased pool time will enable more people to benefit and be active while still providing a low cost activity. I appreciate that you would need to take this back to the Turtles committee for them to consider. Should the club agree to accept this offer, please let me know so that I can arrange with GLL to ensure the pool booking is put in place as soon as possible.

Kind regards,
Howard Griffin, Sports Development Team, Residents Services

Stevenage Invitation Gala Results—Saturday 26th October

A good effort from our team, missing many of our regular junior swimmers. Although our swimmers did not manage to win any gold medals, an overall good team effort ensured a 2nd place finish on the night that saw Hatfield Platypus win the trophy previously held by the Turtles.

Team Results

Stevenage Dolphins Gala

Hatfield Platypus	64 pts
Ruislip Turtles	51 pts
Stevenage Dolphins	46 pts
Potters Bar Barracuda	43 pts
Enfield Venturers	24 pts



Event	Competitor	Position
Junior 25 Metres	Oliver Regan	R3 rd
Ladies 25 Metres	Karen Hoffmann	4 th
Mens 25 Metres	Jack Locket	2 nd
Junior 50 Metres	Ian Andrew Horne	R5 th
Ladies 50 Metres	Jeannette Prentice	2 nd
Mens 50 Metres	Don Lamb	R4 th
Junior 100 Metres	Ian Andrew Horne	3 rd
Ladies 100 Metres	Shaida Ghorbanian	R4 th
Mens 100 Metres	Gary Lee	R5 th
Junior Relay	Oliver & Ian Andrew	2 nd
Ladies Relay	Karen, Jeannette & Shaida	4 th
Mens Relay	Don, Jack & Gary	2 nd
Diving (M)	Jack Locket	4 th
Diving (F)	Karen Hoffmann	3 rd

Detailed results (including timings) are available on the Turtles website together with the full medal table.

Distance Badges

Do you want to try for a Distance Swimming Badge?

Now that Norman has taken a well deserved rest, Peter Horne (photo on page 2) has taken over responsibility for awarding distance badges to our developing swimmers. There are badges available when you achieve 10m, 25m, 50m and 100m (and so on, right up to 1500metres). If anyone wants to try out for a badge please let Peter or one of the other pool helpers know.

Congratulations to the swimmers listed below for the award of the following distance badges:

- Charlie Laws 10, 25 and 50 Metres
- Anthony Laws 10, 25 and 50 Metres
- Jennifer Ward 10 and 25 Metres
- Edward McNaughton 10 and 25 Metres
- Ian Andrew Horne 100 Metres

Club Diary Dates

NASCH Championships
Leamington Spa
Saturday 2nd November

Committee Meeting
Tuesday 12th November

Sainsbury Tombola & Bag Pack
Saturday 23rd November

Committee Meeting
Tuesday 10th December

Sainsbury Carol Singing
Saturday 14th December

Sainsbury Update

The next scheduled events in our Sainsbury supported fund raising activities are:

Saturday 23rd November

Tombola stall - please let Linda Clarke know if you are able to donate prizes or help with ticket selling.

Bag Packing — we will also be providing bag packing assistance to shoppers on the same day. Please let Andy Wallis know if you are able to help with some check-out support.

Saturday 14th December

We are going to sing Carols to the shoppers on Saturday 14 December 2013 between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. If you would like to help sing or hold a collecting bucket please contact Peter Horne or anyone on the Committee.

The good news is that we raised £222 on our first fund raising day (21st September) with our bucket collection. Thank you to everyone who helped us on the day.



Trefoil Fundraising

We will be presenting to the Trefoil Group on the 20th November as they wish to make a donation to the Turtles. A Trefoil fund raising Coffee Morning will be held on Saturday 9th November at Pinner Methodist Church, Love Lane, between 10.30am & 12pm. Free entry (but obviously you will be expected to pay for Coffee), there will be a raffle, sales table and cake stall. Turtles members are welcome to go along to this event.

We are a swimming club for anyone with a physical, mental health or learning difficulty. The Turtles Swimming Club is based at Highgrove Pool, Ruislip and meets every Saturday between 5pm and 6pm.

Sylvia Smith OBE

It is with much sadness that Sylvia has decided to step down as President of NASCH. Sylvia has been unwell for sometime and has therefore not been able to contribute to the organisation in the way that she would have liked. Sylvia has been actively associated with NASCH since the organisation's formation in 1964 and has held many Committee positions and responsibilities. Her contribution to the national sport of Swimming for the Disabled was recognised when she collected her OBE from Princess Anne in January 2010.

The timing of Sylvia's resignation from NASCH coincides with the Turtles Committee decision to end our 49 year association with NASCH due to our concerns regarding insurance. However, we are delighted though that Sylvia is to continue on as President of the Turtles as we very much value her contribution, wisdom and guidance.



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(Secretary)
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