Hadleigh Swimming Club AGM

Chair’s report

Thank you all for attending our AGM – your support is appreciated.

Those of you who attended last year’s AGM will have noticed that I am not Claire Hood – the chair of last year. In July 2018, Claire felt that she was unable to continue as Chair and resigned. As I was Vice-Chair, I agreed to take on the role on a temporary basis and have been Acting Chair since that time. The committee formally thanks Claire for her work in the role and at the club over a number of years.

The year to date has been an exciting and eventful one for our club. We have successfully negotiated a new contract with the pool – now operated by Abbeycroft Leisure and have forged a growing relationship with Swim School, enabling their swimmers to try out club swimming before deciding whether or not to join – so far, all of them have. We took the decision to end our swimming lesson offer for a number of reasons – chiefly the lack of available teachers and dwindling numbers of learners. The children of Hadleigh have a wealth of choices for ways to spend their time available to them and there was clearly not enough of a market for both HSC and Swim School. Our new-look coaching development section has proven to be very successful and we have new members joining steadily.

We have redrafted the constitution with a view to becoming the Community Amateur Sports Club. The draft has been on the website for a number of months now and an EGM was held in January to discuss this move. The wording has now been approved by Swim England and the move to pass the new constitution should be voted on this evening. The headlines of this, in case you are unaware are that the club will continue to serve the community of Hadleigh (i.e not become an elite/performance only club), fees will be at a rate accessible for the majority, protect the committee from personal financial liability should the club find itself in a position where it is unable to pay the poolhire fees or other monies and to be able to claim gift aid on funds raised (not subs).

We have also upped the publicity surrounding the club and our work here will continue so that we continue to grow our membership. We have received support form local businesses, for which we are grateful.

The new style club champs and presentations were well received. All swimmers were given a personalised award to mark their participation and the plaque for this year is on display on poolside. This has represented a significant saving on individual medals.

Our Captains: Alex, Oliver, Nia and Rowan are in regular contact with one another to come up with ways to support the club. They held a bake sale before Christmas and Rowan has had the idea of a Summer Sports Day and Barbecue, which she will bring to the next committee meeting.

The committee have been working very hard create the best club they can. Thank you to Maxine Molyneaux, for sourcing attractive new kit, to Ian McIntyre and for redesigning and maintaining our website. Val has been very busy this year as Team Manager and the committee thanks her too. The positions of Treasurer and Secretary have been ably tackled by Kate Willis and Debbie Thornton respectively and we appreciate the Herculean task they face – especially at particular times of the year. The whole of the committee are thanked for their commitment, energy and ideas.

Phil, Val and I have been busy training as officials and now Val and I are qualified Judge Level 1s and Phil is just awaiting assessment – thank you and well done.

The amazing success of the swimmers over the past twelve months is marvellous and I am sure you will all join me in thanking the coaching team – Mick and Lee, plus their helpers for their tireless work, on top of their full-time employment. We do all appreciate though, that swimming is a big commitment for the families too – sitting gently stewing poolside for training and giving up whole weekends to watch your darlings swim in the pool for a total of about ten minutes is not everyone’s idea of fun. However, I think we can all agree that being a part of Hadleigh swimming club is worth it – they are a very special bunch of young people and we are always proud of them.

The news on the new pool will be shared with you as a when it comes in. The closure, now looking like it will be early January to early April, will undoubtedly affect our club and we are exploring our options to minimise any negative impact.

Rebecca Abbott

Acting Chair HSC