

Chair's Report AGM 2024 (January – June 2024)

General overview

Another immensely positive six months for the club. CASC continues to punch above its weight, coaching is stable, governance is strong, membership is near capacity and it remains the premier club in Croydon with frequent outstanding performances by our swimmers.

- The club continues to have its best season for over a decade. Head Coach Patryk Folinski's vision and the success of his training programme are evidenced in another year-on-year increase in the numbers competing in the County, Regional, English Summer and British Summer championships galas. CASC was represented across a wider range of events and the medal haul from County and Regional championships has significantly increased. This is further reflected in CASC's superb contribution by those chosen to represent Croydon at the London Youth Games and Surrey Masters.
- The club was successfully steered through the full SwimMark Accreditation governance process, valid until April 2026. Swim England accreditation recognises high standards of club governance, sustainability and effectiveness. The Welfare Officer, Mariana Turner, and I are grateful to all those who provided detailed information, data and reports. We also thank Lee Findell for his invaluable guidance.
- Boot camp and stroke clinics were run during the summer half term at Whitgift School. Boot camp sessions, aimed at the senior squads were well attended, whilst the stroke clinic less so than when it was previously run. Feedback will be taken on board for future sessions.
- Croydon Boroughs took place in March and CASC remains the dominant club in Croydon outperforming all other clubs, some of similar size. Once again two CASC swimmers won the prestigious John Berkeley Award (Oliver Handley) and Ethel Rogers Award (Cerys Phillips) based on their overall performances in the previous, 2023, gala.
- This year to date, CASC has been awarded £1,900 by the Jack Petchey Foundation and reporting requirements have been approved. Voting participation has been high and winners for January, March and May are Evan Gollidge, Isabelle Armstrong and Jonathan Fraser. In addition, Katy Dolling was recognised for her fund raising and leadership role in the first Malaga warm weather training camp trip. All award money is used only for the benefit of swimmers in the club.

Looking Forward

Exciting times lie ahead for CASC in the next six months:

- Participation in Arena League's Premier Division for the first time in 20 years.
- The second warm weather training camp in Malaga for senior squad swimmers.
- A new second fitness squad "Troy" aimed at the older swimmers who wish to still swim and train but would prefer the option of whether, or not, to compete in galas.
- K2 Crawley 50m pool sessions (details tbc).

Membership

Membership is at near capacity with many of our squads full and we have waiting lists. Impacting the lower squads, swim trials have been postponed until progression promotions have taken place.

Coaching Team

Under Pat's leadership, the team continues to be stable. Some coaches have taken the opportunity to coach more senior squads and CASC home-grown swimmers continue to fill roles as coaches, teachers and assistants.

Pool Time

Access to pool time in local facilities continues to be extremely competitive. Whilst the club is always looking to increase pool time, our current arrangements have remained consistent and are secured for the foreseeable future.

Whitgift continues to be our primary pool and there is an ongoing strong relationship between the club and the management team. Although there have been some frustrations, such as car parking arrangements and a couple of incidents which have caused the pool to be closed at very short notice, Whitgift still remains an excellent facility. Furthermore, the poolside display is now in use and we look forward to the electronic touch pads being available in due course.

Thanks

- The ExCo has welcomed the following people and sincerely thanks all of them for taking on the vacant roles and for the contribution they have already made: Karlene Fraser (Co-Club Secretary), Mike Garvin (Treasurer), Sophie Golledge (Competitions), Katy and David Dolling (Arena League Co-ordinators), Mel Rumpf and Hollie Sime (Volunteer Co-ordinators), Lucy Ashdown-Parkes (Swim School Administrator), Wendy Butler (Social Media), Alan Turner and Chris Diver (Technical support at galas) and Marie Phillips (Jack Petchey Co-ordinator).
- Without the hard work and effort of the following volunteers the club could not run smoothly either from a day-to-day or gala perspective: Nick Hallam (President), Mariana Turner (Welfare Officer & Co-Chair), Simone Kelly (Co-Club Secretary), Emma Brown (Swim Secretary) and Didier Sorel (Membership Secretary).
- CASC acknowledges, and appreciates, all the volunteers / parents who assist and represent the club as gala officials, team managers or help with refreshments and provide prizes for the highly successful, and popular, fund-raising events.

Volunteer Request

Without volunteers, the club could not exist.

CASC always has open arms to those wishing to be more involved with the club and we are grateful to those who have recently qualified as gala officials and team managers.

Remembered

Anne Reader passed away at the age of 80 on 24 March. She was a Life Member of Croydon Amphibians, Life Member of Croydon Borough Swimming Association ("CBSA") and a longstanding Official at CBSA, Surrey and Southern Counties events, and later London Region. In addition to being an active CASC Masters swimmer, she was ever present volunteering at local swimming club and school galas and was an active member of the CASC and CBSA committees for many years.

Marie Phillips

CASC Chair