

Chair's Report AGM 2025 (July 2024 – June 2025)

General overview

Another impressive and busy year for CASC in and out of the pool. Coaching remains stable, finances and governance are strong, membership is near full capacity and there continues to be an increase in both the number of swimmers qualifying for all higher-level galas and events CASC is represented in. Structural change has also been implemented, some long-standing issues resolved, and the club's next steps are ambitious and forward looking.

- **Another outstanding season in the pool** with 8 Swimmers qualifying for 20 events at the upcoming English Summer Championships (Alister Gironella, Lucy Morris, Josh Dolling, Imogen Dolling, Isaac AU, Cameron Whitfield, Teo Sorel, Rishan Shankar) and 3 swimmers (Peter Fensom, Alister Gironella and Teo Sorel) have qualified for 9 events at the upcoming British Summer Championships, with Peter qualifying for 6 of the 9.
- **Head Coach Patryk Folinski was promoted to Director of Swimming** in recognition of his year-on-year successful training programme and clear vision for the future. He now has overall responsibility for all technical swimming matters, including swim school. In addition, the swimmers raised funds for a new iPad to assist him with, amongst other things, real time heart rate monitoring of all Diamond and Platinum swimmers during training.
- **Swim School review and restructuring.** An in-depth review was conducted with the objective of streamlining Swim School in line with the squads, unifying teaching and coaching approaches and improving procedures and processes.
- **New fitness squad Troy** was introduced in September for the older swimmers and to free up capacity in Atlantis. It is very popular, and the swimmers are highly motivated and committed to training.
- **A second highly successful Malaga warm weather training camp** took place in October with a third organised for this year. The benefits were experienced immediately with more swimmers qualifying for both the Regional and National Winter Championships.
- **Swim Management Consultant, Rosa Gallop.** We are delighted to work with Rosa who has many decades of club management and high-level experience across a wide range of roles within Swim England. Rosa's role is to assist with the next steps in CASC's development and help us be future ready. Her initial focus has been supporting the implementation of the Swim School review recommendations.

Governance

The club is compliant with Swim England's affiliation criteria and affiliation is valid until April 2026. Affiliation recognises, amongst other things, high standards of club governance, sustainability and effectiveness.

Finances

The club is currently in a strong position financially having restored its reserve which had been depleted mainly because of Covid arrangements. In addition, a long-standing high debt was recovered after instigating legal proceedings.

Croydon Boroughs Gala

CASC remains the dominant club in Croydon and once again two CASC swimmers, Harry Chaudhury and Tarryn Lewis, won the prestigious John Berkeley and Anne Reader Memorial awards based on their overall performances at the 2024 gala. Tarryn, winner of the first Anne Reader Memorial Award, had the privilege of it being presented by Anne's family during the gala.

Timing of the gala in the swimming calendar and training cycle is always a conflicted commitment for our elite swimmers, however, next year to resolve this, it will be run as a Level 3 gala at Whitgift.

Jack Petchey

This season CASC has received a total of £1,500. This money can only be used for the benefit of swimmers in the club and will be used later this year towards Malaga camp extras and covering Arena league coach travel costs. Regarding governance, the various reporting requirements are complete, including the new safeguarding requirement for which the club is now compliant until July 2028.

Pool Time

Access to pool time in local facilities continues to be extremely competitive and remains the club's biggest challenge. Swim Secretary, Emma Brown, is continuously looking for new opportunities at potential and existing venues. Thomas More will not be available from September onwards until further notice due to major renovation work. We are making

alternative arrangements so that impact on lessons will be minimal. Whitgift continues to be our primary pool, and we retain a good working relationship between the club and their management team. A two-year contract was negotiated with terms agreed until August 2026. Although there have been some frustrations, including those which have caused the pool to be closed at very short notice, Whitgift still remains an excellent facility.

Coaching and Teaching Team

The team continues to be stable however, due to natural changes and expanding squads, we are looking to increase the number of coaches. In addition, Rosa is working with Patryk on introducing more structured training and professional development opportunities for all coaches and teachers as part of the review recommendations.

Membership

There has been an increase of 15% since the last AGM with a total of 242 members across the competitive and fitness squads. Most squads are at or near full capacity, swim trials are limited and waiting lists are closed. A priority is to split, currently combined, Diamond and Platinum into two separate squads which will allow for some movement upwards from the lower squads. However, to enable the club to grow more pool time and coaches are required.

Looking Forward - The focus for CASC in the next 12 months is to:

- Split the combined Diamond and Platinum squads into two discrete training squads.
- Run the club's first open gala at Whitgift, scheduled for 6th October.
- Return to Arena League's Premier Division.
- Run the third warm weather training camp in Malaga.
- Increase training and professional development courses run in house.
- Proactive campaign to increase volunteer participation.

Committee & Support Roles

Sincere thanks are extended to all the volunteers on the Executive Committee and to those who assist and represent the club at galas and fund-raising events. Your hard work and effort are acknowledged and very much appreciated.

Farewell

A special thank you to:

- **Mike Garvin**, our outgoing Treasurer and previously Competitions Secretary, for his meticulous stewardship and careful oversight of our finances. Mike's contribution on the Executive Committee cannot be underestimated and he leaves the finances healthy and the club in a financially strong position.
- **Liesl Chaudhury**, our outgoing Trophies Secretary, for her dedicated efforts behind the scenes. From collecting and organising the trophies, to getting them engraved and then ensuring the trophies are given to their rightful recipient.
- **Wendy Butler**, Media Secretary, for showcasing CASC through our social media outlets, her brilliant photos particularly from the 2024 presentation evening and for her time and contribution producing the end of year newsletter.

We wish them all the very best.

Stepping Down

- Marie Phillips and Mariana Turner are stepping down from their roles as Co-Chairs although remaining on the Executive Committee as Jack Petchey Co-ordinator and Welfare Officer respectively.
- Rachel Brown shall be stepping down from her role as Head Teacher of Swim School, although will remain with Swim School as a Senior Teacher.

In remembrance

Robert "Bob" Kavanagh sadly passed away at the age of 60 in St Raphael's Hospice following a protracted battle with an illness last July. A much-loved titan of the Croydon Swimming community, he was an ex-President of both CASC and CBSA, as well as a highly regarded mentor to those who had the privileged to know and work closely with him. His passing was formerly remembered at this year's CBSA gala and a contribution on behalf of the club to his chosen charity, St Raphael's Hospice, was made.

Marie Phillips

CASC Co-Chair, June 2025