

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Online Zoom 17th February 2022 at 7:30 pm

1.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This year has been another challenging year in our club's history.

We have continued to respond to the changing demands of the COVID-19 crisis quickly and effectively, and to support our members through what has continued to be, difficult times.

Our first priority as always has been the health, safety and welfare of all of our members, their families, our coaches and volunteers and to this end, we continued to take onboard all the advice of the UK government and Swim England.

A major focus was to introduce very young members to the club via our 'Little Putts Academy'. We set this up in conjunction with Lealands School and were successful in obtaining a small grant from Sport England to allow the start up. It has gone well and we are now teaching many able-bodied and disabled children in the community. Lealands is a Community Pool at the High School and our Academy project has also helped the school to survive as a Community Venture.

The Little Putts Academy age starts at 3 to whenever. It now has about 175 members with a very diverse mix of cultures and ethnicity.

I am very proud that our service and reputation is becoming well known and we have constant enquiries and waiting lists for disability swimming - in particular for 1:1.

We are now working with children on the autistic spectrum, from severe where 1:1 is required to non-conversant, to high functioning. Also, with many physically disabled. Currently we have 22 children across the range. Many local Community Organisations are now sending their patients to us, to get them into swimming. These include Edwin Lobo Centre, Autism Bedford, Team Beds and Luton and Active Luton. It has been amazing to be able to integrate the autistic children into small group environments and social situations so as to help provide real life benefits.

As you know, our membership is culturally diverse and fully inclusive - 25% are from ethnic minorities. Both Lealands and PSC work together with Active Luton to help the local community, in particular with the disadvantaged by delivering camps under Active Luton's 'Energise Luton' initiative.

Alongside the practical side of teaching life saving skills, we also offer mental health and wellbeing support to our members and families .

We have coaches trained as mental wellbeing first aiders, and Lesley, our Head Coach has a background in psychology and neural linguistic programming. Over the course of the pandemic, we have been able to support ALL Academy and PSC mainstream, and we are still supporting and working with The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and TOKKO and with those who have been adversely affected by the pandemic.

These organisations have deemed swimming their 'happy place' so, they take what we are doing to help them into their school and home environments. In addition we have been delivering swim camps to promote activity. Lesley has also been delivering Nutrition and Well-

Being Workshops as it became extremely evident that many children in our region have missed a lot of their socio/emotional development to date.

In mainstream, the National Arena League went ahead in 2021 and PSC was promoted to the Premier Division - maybe a little sooner than we had planned! However, we held our ground and finished 4th in Round 1. By round 2 the team was hit by Covid and we finished 6th. The final Round was on Saturday 11th where we won the final round gala and came 9th overall out of 18.

Return to competition was very different to what we had previously experienced – with stringent Covid conditions. We saw Level X - In-house competitions - Covid's version of Club Champs. This was great as it gave members the chance to compete again and experience the buzz! Times could be used for County and Regional qualification and it also meant that we could at last have our PSC Presentation Evening In 2022.

No Open Meets were permitted in 2021, so we had to do the best we could. This wouldn't have been possible without everyone's support from our Management and Coaching Teams, Volunteers Officials as well as parents and of course our swimmers.

With no income from Open Meets, our Committee needed to carefully steer the club through extremely challenging times. I am delighted to report we were able to do that and produce a small modest profit at the year end. Our Treasurer, Ally Donnachie will present the accounts later.

We had 11 qualifiers in the East Region Short Course Winter Championships. Excellent performances from all with 95% PB records. Lawrence won the 50 and 100 Breaststroke and a cheeky 100IM.

Olivia made the final in the 100 and 200 fly - no mean feat as it was an open age group. She also broke the Bedfordshire ASA 50 Fly junior record and the 100 Fly junior and senior records – so many congratulations.

Lawrence and Olivia also qualified for the Swim England National Championships.

Lawrence was National Champion again In the 50 breast with a PB and County and Regional Record and Bronze In the 100 Breaststroke. Olivia broke the 50 Fly Record again, as well as the 200IM. Lucy Buckingham broke the County 200 Short Course Breaststroke record also.

We have a large cohort who have qualified for County Championships - approx 65 in total. A big challenge for our young swimmers especially due to the pandemic, lack of pool activity, training and competition opportunities.

Education of our volunteers continued throughout, keeping safeguarding and DBS certification up to date, as well as Officials continuing their development.

Swim Mark Accreditation was awarded to the Club again - with a Full Health Check.

Lawrence passed his Level 3 - Senior Coach Qualification and was then selected for Swim England Talent Coaching Pathway.

Lesley was selected for Swim England National Event Camp and was nominated by SwimEngland and selected for the UK Coaching Focus Programme on the Elite Pathway. She was also nominated and selected for the UK Coaching Women In Sport Programme. This further cements the calibre of our lead Coaches, their planning and programming for the benefit of our members and future performance of the club.

With a return back to competitions, 2022 has now been fully planned with Open Meets, Club Champs, Coach and Teacher Courses, Team Manager and Aquatic Helper courses - all bringing in new volunteers.

I am incredibly proud of you all! Despite all difficulties everyone of you has demonstrated a great mindset, turning adverse situations into positive outcomes and focusing on your training and development - the true spirit of PSC!!!

There are a lot of positives we have taken from the pandemic, namely Google Classroom engagement - which has given us a fantastic platform to keep all our swimmers up to date daily on everything we need. Many of you have asked that we continue with some methods deployed during lockdown. We hope to do this - time permitting.

Now, as you all know, prior to the first lockdown it had been a regular feature of our calendar to have an Awards Dinner for all our members in February. It's purpose, to congratulate our swimmers on their achievements - our way of saying thanks to the whole PSC family. Obviously, this has not been possible since lockdown - logistically or financially.

I am therefore delighted to report that thanks to the generous support and sponsorship of Redrow Homes we will be going ahead with the Awards night at Venue 360 on March 3rd, this year.

On behalf of the Committee and our Management Team, I look forward to welcoming you all there for a much awaited get-together and a much deserved pat on the back.

Thank you very much and I now ask Ally Donnachie to present the accounts.