



Dear PNSC members, Parents/Guardians of Swimmers at PNSC

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for Wednesday 31st January 2018 at 6.30pm, to be held in the function room at the Mountbatten Centre.

The AGM is open to all and we do encourage all members and parents/guardians of swimmers to attend to gain an understanding of what happens behind the scenes at your club. A reminder that whilst everyone is welcome to attend, only members of the club are permitted to vote at the AGM.

When I wrote the last AGM letter at the beginning of December 2016, we were facing the Mountbatten pool closure and at that time I was unaware of the challenges that would subsequently bring. I was looking optimistically to 2017 and obviously the realisation just a couple of months later that the pool closure could bring about such a swift change in circumstances to our club was a rude awakening for me. During my tenure as Chairman I have spent a lot of time researching how successful clubs operate. It's clear that our club has to operate more like a business to survive as unfortunately the days of generous grants and external funding seem to be over. Whilst we are non-profit making we do have to be self-sufficient, and a part of that is ensuring we hold essential reserves and contingency to survive any challenges that we face, so that a pool closure won't ultimately mean club closure! The committee's strategic plan is to ensure that the club has three months of operating costs as adequate reserves and we will continue this year to work towards this position and then of course subsequently maintaining it. I appreciate that club finances can seem to be a long way from "the swimming" at times, but it is only by building these strong foundations that we will be in a position to make improvements to the club and implement the plans that ultimately will give the swimmers the high quality programme and experience they deserve.

I have been very fortunate this year to once again be supported by an incredibly strong and dedicated committee. Huge thanks to Sally Goodman, who has worked an enormous number of hours (for free!) in the club office as a direct point of contact for our members. I would also like to mention Fiona Knight who has put such a lot of effort into managing the meets and the Officials during the past season. Running successful meets are a necessity for the club's finances, but they are a huge undertaking and when they run like clockwork it is easy to underestimate the preparation work that has gone on behind the scenes by our small team. I want to give very special thanks also to the rest of the committee; Edith Casey, Jane Millar, Anne Trotman, Emma Gueterbock and Lorraine Marx. Without this team behind me our challenges as a club would have felt insurmountable. We all have full time jobs and families as well to juggle in addition to managing the club operationally - which is quite a large business to be running in our spare time! However, we have worked together to overcome each of the issues we've faced and I am delighted that the core team are willing to stand again to continue the work we've started. I would like to say the difficult days are over but sadly we are not quite there yet and there is still much to do.

I would like to also show my appreciation to ALL of the coaches who have supported the club during this difficult year of change. With the unavoidable loss of the Beacon Head Coach role, the remainder of the team have had to work together to find new, more collaborative ways of working. Whilst there have been challenges, the whole team have pulled together and I know they all have the best interest of the club and their swimmers at heart. I am very pleased with the progress we've made and the new squad structure is working well. I give particular thanks to Lee Baldwin who has been immense support to me and also to James Warrener - without you the difficult times would have been a lot more difficult!

We are aware we have more to do to bring the next cohort of swimmers through the club to meet their potential and we are working on a more holistic approach for the coming year. As custodians of the club we are duty bound to provide solid foundations for the next generation. It is important to us to make improvements so that there is a more cohesive, seamless experience for swimmers as they progress through our squads. Our work on implementing plans to improve in this area will be our priority for this season, as will the continued training and development for our coaches.

In line with the Club Constitution the Club Committee will be re-elected at the AGM. We are always in need of parents to join the committee and support the club with your business and administrative skills. If you have time to support your club on a regular basis please either contact me or another of the committee members to discuss how you could get involved. There are lots of different ways you can support us and the different committee roles guides are shared on our website for your information.

Kind regards,



Charlotte Budd
Chairman
Portsmouth Northsea Swimming Club

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