



26th December 2018

Dear PNC members, Parents/Guardians of Swimmers at PNC

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for Thursday 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 (those with cat 3 ASA membership) are permitted to vote at the AGM.

I am pleased to be able to share a more positive financial report for this year. Our club finances have now stabilised and we are now in the much stronger position of having around 3 months operating costs held in reserve, which was the goal I mentioned we were working towards at our last AGM. This is key, as operating without adequate contingency in the past left us in a very precarious position when faced with pool closures and unforeseen issues. We have also been able to invest a significant amount of money into capital equipment for the benefit of our swimmers, including a full set of new training lane ropes recently purchased for Pool B (our main training pool) at the Mountbatten Centre. The new equipment we've purchased for competitions has meant our meets operate more smoothly as we have back up equipment on standby should something go wrong. It doesn't account for every situation, but it definitely helps!

Our membership numbers have grown steadily, and this is great news, but does bring new challenges as the squads grow – but challenges we'd much prefer to have than the financial difficulties of the recent past.

I recently sent a club survey to all members so that you had a chance to provide us with your feedback and ideas. Thank you very much to all those who responded. We have spent time to review the results of the survey in detail and will provide a report on the key findings for members in the new year. There are some areas that we already are aware that improvements are needed and where we have identified trends, we will make plans to implement change as needed.

I would like to say a very big thank you to all of our coaches who have done a fabulous job training our swimmers and providing cover for squads whilst we have been recruiting for new staff. In particular I'd like to mention Lee Baldwin who gives me unfailing support with running the club and answers my questions all hours of the day!

I am also very mindful we still have more to do with the next cohort of swimmers coming through in our junior squads and this will be a key focus for us this year. In order to do this, it is vital that we have a strong coaching team with a consistent approach - so we do recognise the importance of developing our staff. Coaches were often swimmers themselves and so over the years we have always looked to encourage some of our own swimmers into teaching and coaching the next generation. This year we have funded several of our senior swimmers through their Level 1 coaching certificates and this means we will be able to have more coaches supporting the younger squads. The club are very grateful for their support and its lovely to see their swimming knowledge being passed on to the younger ones.

We have continued also to invest in the continued training and development of our core coaching staff this season; Claudia Clements has completed her Level 3 coaching certificate and Chris Lee and Ella Hamza both finished their Level 2 earlier this year. Lee Baldwin also recently attended the NxT Generation Coaching Conference in Manchester in November as part of her continued development.



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We have had some changes to the coaching team this year, which is always inevitable and as such we have needed to recruit to expand the current team. The recruitment process was not easy as unfortunately there is currently a national shortage of qualified Level 2 coaches. Many other local clubs have also been trying unsuccessfully to recruit coaches over the past few months. This said, Chris Lee has been fantastic addition to our team this year and we are also very pleased to welcome Sacha Karabas Flandez, a fully qualified swimming coach who is studying in Portsmouth for his Masters in Sports Performance. The club will also be hosting a Level 2 training course in the Spring to encourage more coaches to further develop their skills.

Our Learn to Swim School has also been performing very well, with Jan Baldwin as always doing a fantastic job of managing the administration of the school and our super team of swimming teachers. Again, we are very pleased with the support from our swimmers who have been helping as assistant teachers at our swim school.

In terms of administrative operations of the club, a reminder that this is managed by a small bank of unpaid volunteers. They work incredibly hard behind the scenes to manage the membership base, communications and do all of the administration for home and away meets. The fact that these roles are unpaid significantly reduces the club's operational costs and helps to keep your fees as low as possible. Thank you so much to all those parents who routinely support the club with meet entries, helping at competitions, donating prizes to the raffle....it is very much appreciated.

I'd like to give a very special thank you to Sally Goodman, who has been working exceptionally hard in the club office this year as a direct point of contact for our members. Sally is also a volunteer and gives her time daily for the benefit of all members – in many clubs of our size this role would be a salaried position. Our Meet Manager, Fiona Knight has also worked a huge number of hours quietly behind the scenes with her husband Bill to run our meets. I've said before, running successful meets is a not only 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 to make them look so effortless.

I want to also give my thanks also to the rest of the committee;

Gill Goodwin, who helps with our welfare issues and has been a wonderful support to many families.

Nick Hercock who has come on board the committee and is doing a brilliant job as Meet Manager – always willing to help with a big smile on his face!

And also to Jane Millar – her swimmer has left PNSC for university, but she still is here supporting our club and is always attending our meets as referee. Her son James can also be found at our level 4 time trials supporting as an official. We have a number of long-standing members of the club still supporting the club as officials for your swimmer's competitions, even though their swimmers have long since left the club. I would like to say that their support is massively appreciated by us – thank you for continuing to help us.

It was a real shame that our recent Novice Club Championships needed to be run with reduced lanes due to lack of officials. This meant that the evening of competing stretched on a lot longer than planned as we could only run 6 lanes instead of all 8. Please can I encourage the parents of our young / novice swimmers to get involved with officiating. Competitions simply can't happen without these roles and actually being poolside during meets makes the day go a lot quicker than sitting in the hot spectator area! If you are interested in training to become an official, please email Fiona Knight at meets@pns.org.uk.

More information on what's involved in becoming an official can be found here <https://www.britishswimming.org/browse-sport/swimming/officials/officials-qualifications-training/>



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In line with the Club Constitution the Club Committee will be re-elected at the AGM. I know I've spent much time focusing on volunteering in this letter but this is because your help is absolutely vital for clubs such as ours to be able to keep operating. 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 help and the various committee roles guides are shared on our website for your information.

Kind regards,

Charlotte Budd

Chairman
Portsmouth Northsea Swimming Club