



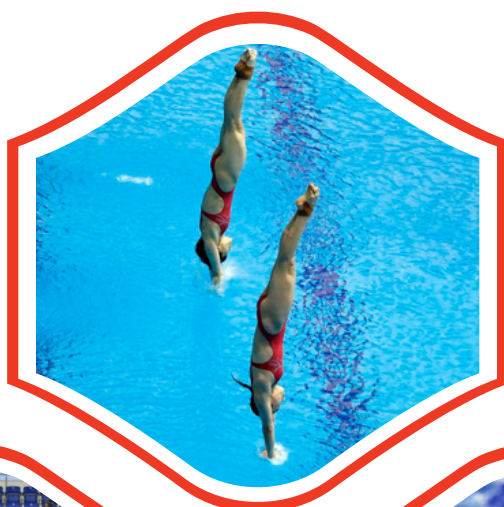
Swim England

West Midlands

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS

2023

1st January - 31st December 2023



SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING CLUBS THROUGHOUT THE
WEST MIDLANDS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3. A note from the President
- 4. A note from the Chair
- 5. Legacy
- 6. Clubs
- 7. Artistic Swimming
- 8-9. Diving
- 10. Masters & Masters Records
- 11. Open Water & Para Swimming
- 12. Swimming
- 13-15. Water Polo
- 16. Licenced Open Meets
- 17. Regional Swimming Records
- 18. Regional Development Programme
- 19-20. Workforce: Coaching, Officials & Volunteers
- 21. Club Forums
- 22. Regional Awards
- 23. Swim England National Awards
- 24. Swim England Hall of Fame
- 25-33. County Reports - Staffordshire ASA, Shropshire ASA, Warwickshire ASA, Worcester County ASA
- 34-37. Finance

A note from the President of Swim England West Midlands



In April 2023 I had the honour of becoming Regional President.

During my time as president, I have managed to attend many events, although not as many as I would have liked. I have had the pleasure and honour of presenting medals at Club Championships, Regional water polo champs, Midlands para gala, Regional Masters and a few school events. I have managed to visit some amazing venues including Sandwell and meet some fantastic and inspirational athletes.

Over the last couple of months I have had to step down my duties due to my health, and now have the pleasure of handing the chain over to Geoff Kirkham, I'm sure he will enjoy every moment as much as I have and more.

I would like to express my gratitude to our swimming family, those of you that know me as Jelly Baby Jenny and new friends I have met this year, you have made my presidency all the more special. I cannot finish this report without thanking the Regional staff who work tirelessly to ensure all of our fabulous athletes, volunteers and coaches have the opportunity to continue to compete in the sport they love.

Best wishes

Jenny Pearson
Regional President

A note from the Chair of Swim England West Midlands

Sometimes the year after a major games, like the Commonwealth Games, can be a little demotivating. However, this for our Aquatics community was just the opposite. Moving our regional Championships into the Sandwell Aquatics Centre and seeing the Diving programme finally come to fruition was a marvellous achievement for the hard work and planning undertaken in the previous four years.

We started investing in Diving as soon as the Games were announced and in partnership with Swim England appointed Sarah Barrow as the first regional Diving Officer. The plan was clear; train the workforce in a range of satellite centres building to the opening of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre. As part of the Sport England legacy investment, the Coach and Development Officer have been funded to get the programme running and the partnership with Sandwell Leisure Trust and the Council itself is seeing some very promising initial results.

In addition, Amanda Swan and her team have worked with the amalgamated Sandwell Aquatics club to develop a full pathway for lane swimming and water polo. Again, supported by the Council, we are already seeing some very local people emerging into County and Regional competition.

I chaired the Legacy Governance group made up of partners including Active Black Country, Association for Physical Education, the Black Swimming Association, Sandwell MBC and Swim England nationally. The four strands of Workforce, Children and Young People, Community Development and the broader Aquatics community have progressed, and still considerable work is needed particularly with the workforce to progress addressing the significant inequalities within Birmingham and the Black Country. Having said that partnership working is the only way we can grow the sport, and this will give us some clear learning for the future.

The legacy project, the major research undertaken through the Club Culture project and considerable consultation has enabled us to develop a clear strategy for the future. Amanda has now put in place a new staffing structure that focuses on the key objectives, and we are certainly more focused on the needs of the club community following this consultation and particularly the views expressed by clubs abouts how Swim Mark is or isn't working for you.

A common strand emerging from the consultation was the need to listen more and I hope you have seen a greater emphasis on this. This has further solidified our strong commitment to safeguarding of our participants and practices of the past that are now unacceptable must eradicated from our sport. However, we do recognise that coaches and club committees need further training and support to enable this to be culturally embedded.

Thank you to Amanda Swan and her team of Sian James and Grace Grove (who sadly left us at the end of the year) and our two new appointments of Ffion Edgeley and Laura Hood are already focused on supporting the clubs more directly.

Thanks also to the board of Directors who have grappled with some very difficult issues but have always made sensible decisions in the best interests of the swimmers.

I am looking forward to the new year and our four strategies for the growth of the region and I hope you can also be part of the journey with us.

Simon Kirkland

Regional Chair



Legacy Working Group

Commonwealth Games legacy working group

As part of the Commonwealth Games Sport England funded Governing bodies to develop sustainable legacy programmes from the stimulation of the games Swim England were granted £500,000 based on four areas in the Inspire 2022 project:

- Children and young people focused on school swimming.
- Workforce development to increase the number of local workforces in teaching and coaching.
- Community development seeking to engage those least likely to engage in aquatics activity
- Progression of the Diving programme.

A governance group was formed to oversee the project and extend the Board to cover all disciplines of Aquatics. The group Chaired by Simon Kirkland has membership from Active Black Country, Sport Birmingham, the Black Swimming Association, the Association for Physical Education (AfPE), Sandwell MBC, Sport England and Swim England.

The partnership has taken time to develop and agree ways of working and priorities. However, some strong outcomes were achieved. These included a series of Breakfast clubs, Pop-up pool pilot, a recruitment academy for those from the local area, the appointment for diving staff to initiate the programme at SAC and some resources to test and learn with club and coach activity.

In most cases it is too early to see clear impact, however new teachers and coaches have been identified and the community programme is starting to see some of the challenges faced by the local community in engaging in aquatics activity. This programme will be ongoing for the next year at least and we encourage clubs to engage to explore how to engage those from communities that don't normally engage in club activity.



Clubs

Club Development, 2023 has been an encouraging year for clubs, with membership beginning to strengthen after the past challenges of Covid disruption.

We have continued to work closely with our clubs, to ensure that they all meet the minimum standards required for Swim England affiliated clubs, as well as supporting clubs to achieve SwimMark accreditation, for good governance and best practice.

Good governance has been an emphasis and focus for the Region over the past year and have maintained our very high standard of clubs.

The Region in 2023 has continued to offer a range of club development and membership grants together with educational bursaries, talented athlete bursaries and support to officials training. I am pleased to see that our clubs have accessed many of these grants to develop their club, volunteers, and supporting coaching teams.

I would like to take the opportunity to sincerely thank Amanda and her team, for their outstanding hard work supporting our clubs during the past year.

Kate Caddick

Chair Club Development Committee

Grants

Club Development Grants

Club Development Grants were available to assist clubs within the Swim England West Midland Region to improve or maintain SwimMark development plans. During the year the Club Development Committee approved 12 Club Development Grants to the value of **£16,402**.

Club Membership Growth Grants

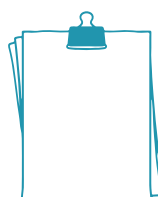
Club Membership Growth Grants were available to clubs within Swim England West Midland Region to assist in the delivery of a project to increase club membership numbers across all categories. During the year the Club Development Committee approved 6 Club Membership Growth Grants to the value of **£5,226**.

Talented Athlete Bursaries

Talented Athlete Bursaries were available to athletes selected to be part of England Talent teams from a club (all disciplines). During the year the Region approved 6 Talented Athlete Bursaries to the value of **£1,484**.

Coach and Teacher Bursaries

During the year the Region approved 95 Coach and Teacher Bursaries to the value of **£16,476**.



Disciplines

Artistic Swimming

Roll of Honour:

Eve Young - Great Britain Junior National Team (Rugby)
Emily Taylor - Great Britain Junior National Team (City of Birmingham)
Robyn Swatman - GB Senior National Team (Walsall)
Magdalena Townsend - England Youth National Team (City of Birmingham)
Alyssa Anderson - England Youth National Team (City of Birmingham)
Tyra Watson - England Youth National Team (Rugby)
Lola Huett - England Development Squad (Rugby)
Imogen Sutton - England Development Squad (Rugby)

Workforce

Alison Pratt - A World Aquatics Judge (City of Birmingham)
Hannah Secher - A World Aquatics Judge (Rugby)

Elite Squad

Midlands joint Elite Squad trained January to May - under local Coaches and from 4 of the clubs, they competed against other Regions at the Regional Games and won the overall trophy.

Coaches and Judges from around the Region were in attendance at the National Conference in December, for upskilling and updating knowledge, held in Nottingham. Many judges attended either upskilling courses or new courses to take on board new knowledge around the new judging system to enable us to continue to develop in our Region.

September to October 2023 trials results:

- Eve Young (Rugby) - Senior National Team plus GB Junior Duet
- Tyra Watson (Rugby) - Great Britain Progression Programme
- Magdalena Townsend - GB Junior Development Squad
- Alyssa Anders - GB Junior Development Squad
- Imogen Sutton - England Youth Squad
- England Development Squad: Lola Huett, Frankie Klym, Keva Ennis, Molly Doolin

Joint Regionals held:

- Regional Age Group Championships
- Regional Championships and Masters
- Regional Novice Competition



We also held four Grade Assessment Days, planned and organised within the Region to support our swimmers to progress through the Reward Structure.

Achievements at National Age Groups 2023:

- Individual figure and solo medals in both age groups
- 12U and 13/14/15 Duet Gold medalists
- 12U Mixed Duet Gold medalists
- 12U Team Silver medalists

Achievements at Championships 2023

- Eve Young Silver Medal in Free Solo Junior and Senior Age Groups
- Rugby SC Silver medals in Free Team and Tech Team

Hannah Secher

Diving

After a year of rapid growth in 2022, this year has been about consolidating the diving activity going on in the Region with the main focus of the project being centred around the opening of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre and the commencement of the diving programme there.

The three feeder sites of Wyndley Leisure Centre, Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and Walsall Gala Baths continue to operate well with good numbers on their programme and coaching teams gaining confidence, providing a great introduction to the sport. There is also now a really good pathway in place with many divers beginning their diving at one of our three feeder sites, and then once they reach a certain level transferring across to Sandwell to continue their journey. This hasn't been to the detriment of the feeder site, with all programmes either maintaining or even growing in numbers throughout the year, which has been great to see.

The highlight of the year for the diving project was undoubtedly the opening of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre in July, with the diving programme wasting no time on getting started with holiday and taster programmes being delivered throughout the summer holidays, and then the lessons programme formally beginning in September. The programme at Sandwell is now well established, with fantastic numbers on their lessons programme, and a good squad structure in place following the delivery of two Talent ID programmes in local schools.

Towards the back end of the year some of the divers from the programme attended the Santa Skills competition in Sheffield, and although they weren't able to represent the Sandwell club they were able to travel as a team and compete together under a temporary membership.

The final achievement of the year (although technically this sneaked into 2024) was the affiliation of Sandwell Diving Club to Swim England West Midlands Region, and the creation of the Region's first ever diving club!

Key Achievements

- Successful delivery of 4 x Inspired to Try: Diving sessions across all sites in the West Midlands which exposed just under 150 children to diving for the first time
- 5 new diving assistant coaches qualified
- Just under 1000 children took part in tasters and holiday programmes at Sandwell over the summer
- Since opening on the 11th September, the dive programme at Sandwell has grown to over 250 participants, including 154 in Learn to Dive, and 82 squad members
- Two of the coaches from feeder sites are now regularly also coaching at Sandwell Aquatics Centre
- Sandwell delivered a successful Talent ID programme in schools, seeing over 800 children, and with 60 being recruited into the programme



Current workforce numbers to date



West Midlands	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Assistant Coach	1	12	12	26	31
Coach	0	3	3	5	5
Stage 8-10 Teacher	0	26	43	67	67
Judge 1	0	0	1	5	6
Learn to Divers	20	0	79	135	286
Inspired to Try	0	0	0	130	196

Looking ahead to 2024:

Complete Affiliation to Swim England

Now Sandwell Diving Club is official affiliated to the West Midlands Region, they now need to complete the remaining elements of affiliation to Swim England. This is due to be completed by April, and once complete there will be a big PR piece done on the official formation and launch of the club to shout about the success and addition of the sport to the region.

Major Events Coming to Sandwell

A number of national diving events are due to be held at Sandwell in 2024 – with the British Diving Championships coming to the centre in May, and the Swim England Diving National Age Groups being hosted at Sandwell in June. This provides an exciting opportunity to showcase the sport and the facility, and drive the growth of the sport and workforce.

Inspired to Try: Diving

Linked to both of the above events, a programme of taster sessions will be delivered in the lead up to each, at Sandwell and also the feeder sites, to capitalise on the increased prominence of diving. The tasters will be an opportunity to grow not just participants, but also recruit additional workforce to the sport in the region. The focus of the activity will be around new audiences and have a strong inclusion agenda to reach out to our non-traditional audiences.

Becky Walker

Club Growth & Programmes Manager
On behalf of Sarah Barrow

Masters

We had a much better year in 2023 for master's swimmers. British Swimming and Swim England held their National events, BS Champs were at Ponds Forge, Sheffield on 2/3/4th June, and SE Champs were at Ponds Forge, Sheffield on 27/28/29th October. We were well represented at these events by many of our Masters Swimmers.

The organisation of West Midland Masters event is now done by the Regions Event Team. We held the 2023 SE West Midland Masters Champs at The Alan Higgs Centre, Coventry on Saturday 30th September. We had a good very good turnout of Masters, from not just the West Midlands but from other areas of the country. Although this event was successful, we have since been asked to bring forward this event to earlier in the year. Therefore, we have taken this on board and for 2024 it will be taking place on 30th of March 2024 at The Alan Higgs Centre, Coventry.

One of the highlights of the year is the Inter- County Masters Championships which in 2023 took place on Sunday 12th November at the new pool in Derby. This venue was used as we joined with the counties in the East Midlands, to try to make it a more competitive and exciting event. Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcester County all took part with Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire. The venue in Derby is a 10 lane 50m pool and was able to cater to the 8 teams that took part. Much better atmosphere all round, and the results from this event go to National masters to be added to all the other regions doing the same event on or near our date. This is a yearly event and will take place again in 2024 in November.

We are looking forward to 2024 and the County Champs, Regional Champs and Inter-county champs for masters. Dates will be put on the Website as soon as we have confirmation

Jean Childs

Regional Swimming Leadership Group - Vice-Chair

Masters Records

	Female	Male	Mixed	Total	Previous
Individual	31	34		65	67
Relay	2	3	3	8	5
Total	33	37	3	73	72
Previous	45	24	3	72	72

Trevor Clark

Masters Records Coordinator

Open Water

As our Regional Open Water Champs were a success at Cirencester in 2022, it was decided to extend doing our event with the East Midlands and South West Regions. The event for 2023 was on Sunday 25th June at Lake 86, Cirencester. It was a very successful event, and a big thank you to all Officials and Volunteers from the West Midlands who turned up to make the day run smoothly. We had many swimmers who went on to compete in the SE National Age Group Champs at Rother Valley Country Park, Rotherham on Saturday 29th July 2023.

During our Regional Open Water champs, we also have master's events, and it is good to see that we have many masters swimmers wanting to complete. Many also go on to take part at the National masters Champs which also took place at Rother Valley Country Park, on 30th July 2023. Unfortunately, there was a serious incident on that day, where for many reasons the event had to be cancelled before the day was completed.

With the change in the training of Open Water Officials, again it was not possible to arrange for anyone to do any training in 2023. This has been addressed for 2024 where we have some dates for officials to continue their qualifications in OW officiating or new people can start the journey to becoming an Open Water Technical official.

Jean Childs

Regional Swimming Leadership Group - Vice-Chair

Para Swimming

This last year we have seen several Para events taking place. One of the highlights of the year was the World Para Swimming World Championships which took place in Manchester in July/August. We had the best of the best from around the world. Many swimmers from GB took part some of which were from the West Midland Region. In particular Rebecca Redfern came away with GOLD in the 100m Breaststroke SB13 event. Well Done Rebecca. We had some training sessions during the year cumulating in our own Regional Championships on 15th October 2023. This event also included a Para CPD for Officials and was very well attended. The officials were able to put into practice what they had learned in the classroom. It is hoped that this CPD will be repeated later in 2024.

One other highlight of the year was the World School Games held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. One of our Regions Para swimmers was selected to go and came back with 2 Gold and 1 Silver medals and was named the Top Male Para Swimmer. Well Done Akaash Das from Oswestry Otters. Two other swimmers from Oswestry Otters, Lizzie Allan and Holly Sullivan attended the British Down Syndrome Championships. They both went on to represent GB at the World Down Syndrome Swimming Champs in Antalya, Turkey. Well Done Lizzie and Holly. Early February 2024 saw the Citi Para Swimming World Series take place in Aberdeen, where a number of WMR swimmers took part.

A very good year for Para Swimming, we look forward to continuing this into the future

Jean Childs

Para Swimming

Swimming

Age group Championships

The 2023 age group Championships began with our Summer event, spanning across 5 days at the Alan Higgs Centre, Coventry. We had 3636 total entrants to this event, and we saw some outstanding performances from competitors. As always, our volunteers both on the organising committee and our event volunteers/ officials, did an incredible job and supported our swimmers in every way.

November marked a monumental change for the Region as we moved our Winter Championships to the fantastic new venue, Sandwell Aquatics Centre, built as part of the Commonwealth games. We had 1200+ entrants over the 2 day event, and there were yet again some incredible performances and achievements from swimmers across the Region. Working with the Volunteers Collective, we gained over 150 sign-ups to volunteer at the event, which was an incredible surprise.

The Swimming Leadership Group worked tirelessly to ensure the meet ran smoothly, while our event volunteers and officials supported the competitors and attendees each day, always with a smile. The event was a great success, despite the very new challenges thrown our way.

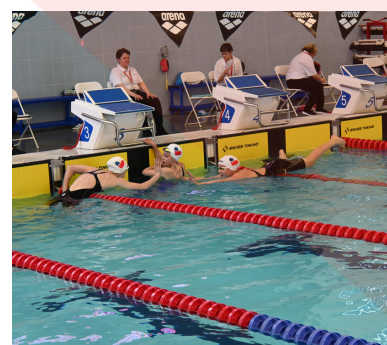
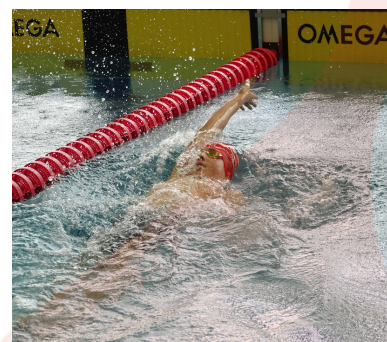
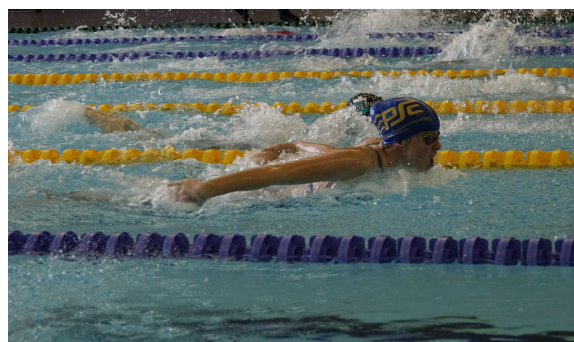
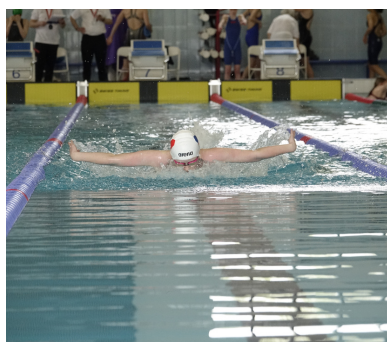
We want to thank every single attendee to our events for an incredible year.

Mandy Garrott

Regional Swimming Leadership Group - Chairperson

Sian James

Sport Development Officer



Water Polo

The West Midland Water Polo Group consists of:

Chair – Nigel Greenwood (Camp Hill & City of Birmingham)

Governance – Mike Beard (Solihull)

Performance – Terri Halstead (Sandwell)

Competition & Events – Liz Wilkins (Sandwell)

Workforce Development – Mike Aish (Coventry)

Some Key Achievements in the last twelve months:

- Our U14 Boys Won Bronze in December 2023 U14 Inter-Regionals
- Our U14 Girls Came Fourth in the December 2023 U14 Inter-Regionals – Our Highest ever position – a testament to our GO (Girls Only) Programme.
- Our U16 Boys won Bronze in Inter-Regionals in Liverpool in June.
- City of Birmingham U15 Boys won Bronze in the National Age Group Championships.
- A Perkins (Coventry) represented England U19 in the Home nations in Dublin.
- C Turpin (Solihull) represented Wales in U19 EU Nations in Dublin.
- The following are current members of various GB Squads: Erik Buhaescu (Solihull), Spencer Lloyd-Evans (Boldmere), Fillipos Psychogios(Sandwell), Isabella Ibbs (Wellington), Jess Day (Worcester), Regan James (Wellington), Serena Newell (Solihull), with Alexander Forty(Sandwell) re trialling due to injury.
- Simon Halstead (Sandwell) represented Bristol University in European Student Games in Hungary.
- George Davies (Solihull) & Jordan Elliott (Coventry) Represented England Men.
- As well as the athletes themselves we have the following support staff involved nationally. Terri Halstead (Sandwell) TM of GB U16 team European Championships Malta, T Down (Wellington) - Assistant Coach GB 05s, Terri Halstead - English Schools 06 Team Manager, Ian Elliott (Coventry) - England Men Team Manager.
- Regional Overseas Camp to Romania – 14 Boys, 3 Staff
- We had eight girls compete in a GB team for the EU nations cup in Brno where they came third finishing behind Germany & Slovakia. Three of the support staff were also West Mids.
- Nigel Greenwood & Mike Aish have been instrumental in setting up a new National Conference Water Polo League, at senior & U18 age groups which will provide a further pathway for our athletes.

As the smallest of all the eight Regions we are now consistently punching above our weight both in results and representation.

Nigel Greenwood

Chair, West Midland Water Polo Group

Water Polo - Girls U14 Inter Regionals

The weekend of 2nd/3rd December 2023 saw the West Midlands girls compete at U14's Inter Regional championships. A team consisting of newcomers to the sport, youngsters and some experienced players the focus was to achieve as much as possible on day one and finish high in the table.

The girls absolutely smashed the first day with a nice win over South West Sharks (7-5), a tight draw against South East (8-8) and finishing the day with a comfortable win over North East Steelers (9-6). Staying on to watch the outcome of the South West Sharks and South East match the girls were overjoyed to see South West win meaning West Midlands top the table.

Sunday saw West Midlands in the second semi-final against London Sharks. From a far stronger group London definitely had a number of strong players making it difficult for West Midlands to defend everyone. The girls put up a strong fight but, in the end, had to admit defeat, final score 6-11 to London Sharks.

The bronze medal match saw West Midlands Warriors face South West Sharks again. An even first half meant lots of exciting polo for all to watch, the atmosphere was electric but a terrible third period for West Mids meant South West pulled ahead. The girls fought back but the last shot in the final seconds was saved by the South West goalie meaning they had lost by 1, final score 9-10 to South West Sharks.

Although the girls did not receive medals, they should be extremely proud of themselves. From the Regions point of view there were many firsts obtained this weekend. First time a West Midlands girls' team has topped a table. The first time a girls U14's team will proceed into U16's in Division 1.

Special mention to Imogen Blassberg who was not only the regions MVP but was also the tournament's top goal scorer with an amazing 35 goals.

The Region has invested in the girls' section over the last 12 months with the new monthly 2-hour sessions for girls only/RTC development. The results from this weekend hopefully prove this format of reinforcing water polo fundamentals at a Regional level is a winning formula. Many thanks to the coaches who help this section train, Lottie Martin, Ian Jolly, Mike Aish & Nick Beard. If your player would be interested in more details on these sessions contact Cat Martin (cat.martin@gmail.com)



Back Row L to R Ian Jolly, Freya Hunter, Harlie lane, Imogen Blassberg, Lottie Martin
Middle Row L to R Pixie Aish, Lola Jamieson, Betty Alveraz-Beard, Martha Perkins, Scarlett Jolly
Front Row L to R Vivienne Burke, Nicola Palmer, Susie Gillett, Eleri Tombs, Courtney Onens.

Water Polo - Boys U14 Inter Regionals

West Midlands Warriors U14 Boys entered the weekend of the Inter Regionals at Walsall (18/19 November) without any expectations, what with the earlier date that usual and no knowledge of other teams. This competition is the first time the boys play together.

The first match was tough, and we lost by 1 goal having lead by 3. The second match against North East was a great victory with a change in tactics and the team spirit building. The last match, buoyed by the addition of extra players fresh from competing in the Essa swimming championships in the new Sandwell pool was a relatively simple victory.

This led to our traditional first early match where our home advantage played out with a good victory against Scotland. And into the Semifinals. The eventual winners, North West, proved too big and strong for us with a tiring team.

A bronze medal match awaited, and it proved to be a repeat of our first match against South West and redemption! With the fantastic improvement over the weekend in the team's experience and togetherness we pulled clear to win 8-6. The team, coaches and supporters were all thrilled with the outcome and the whole weekends quality competition right across the competition. We are keeping up West Midlands medal winning record in this competition.



Back Row L to R

John Halstead (Head Coach – Sandwell), Vivek Ratti (KES/Sandwell), Antoni Kiryla (Worcester), Darius Tabrita (Solihull), Archie Thorley (Solihull), Ethan Graves (KES/Sandwell), Trevor Down (Assistant Coach – Wellington)

Middle Row L to R

Remy Granger (KES/Sandwell), Sam Hodges (KES/Sandwell), Charlie Smart (Sandwell), Joel Perkins (Vice Capt- Coventry), Bailey Lane (Sandwell)

Front Row L to R

Arnav Athreya (Boldmere), Samson Riesner (Capt-Sandwell), Robert Miller (KES/Sandwell), Terri Halstead (Team Manager-Sandwell)

Licensed Open Meets

This year we seem to have recovered licensed competition within this Region since the Covid impact. However, we still need to recover the number of officials in this Region and events are still being cancelled due to official availability and low swimmer attendance. There is a consequential strain on our remaining licensed officials. Some multi-club events are being licensed at level 4 because of the availability of licensed officials. To address these issues that leave swimmers without qualifying events the Regional board have made the following regional rules to licensed events.

- Level 1, 2 & 3 licensed meets on the same day have a 25-mile radius between them.

- Lead Referee and Starter to be identified at the time of license application.

County organised events and club level 4 licenses are not included within these new rules. Hopefully, as our clubs develop more licensed officials and swimmer levels return, the Regional Board can review these rules.

The following chart shows the distribution of license levels across the Region and counties respect since our last AGM.

Region/County	Running License Events	L1	L2	L3	L4
West Midlands	1	2	1	1	0
County	4	2	10	2	0
Shropshire ASA	8 clubs	0	3	1	29
Staffordshire ASA	12 clubs	1	1	11	19
Warwickshire ASA	14 clubs	2	2	22	24
Worcester County	11 clubs	0	4	12	52
Total	50	5	11	47	124

Tony Green
Licensing Officer

Summary of Regional Swimming Records Ratified

LONG COURSE 50m

1	Open/Male 50m backstroke	Senior	24.84	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	04/04/23	Sheffield
2	Open/Male 100m backstroke	Senior	53.77	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	05/04/23	Sheffield
3	Open/Male 200m backstroke	Senior	1:57.17	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	09/04/23	Sheffield
4	Open/Male 100m backstroke	Senior	53.26	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	24/07/23	Fukuoka
5	Open/Male 100m backstroke	Senior	53.25	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	30/07/23	Fukuoka

SHORT COURSE 25m

6	Open/Male 50m Backstroke	Senior	23.68	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	05/11/23	Sandwell
7	Open/Male 100m Individual Medley	Senior	54.83	Ping Chi Lau	City of Birmingham / Solihull	17/11/23	Sheffield
8	Open/Male 50m Backstroke	Senior	23.53	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	18/11/23	Sheffield
9	Open/Male 50m Breaststroke	Senior	27.03	Samuel Neeld	University of Birmingham / Wrekin	18/11/23	Sheffield
10	Open/Male 100m Backstroke	Senior	51.36	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	19/11/23	Sheffield
11	Open/Male 50m Backstroke	Senior	23.31	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	05/12/23	Bucharest
12	Open/Male 200m Backstroke	Senior	1:53.98	Oliver Morgan	University of Birmingham / Ludlow	09/12/23	Bucharest
13	Open/Male 200m Individual Medley	Senior	1:58.58	Ping Chi Lau	City of Birmingham / Solihull	14/12/23	Sheffield
14	Open/Male 200m Individual Medley	Senior	1:57.89	David Annis	Royal Wolverhampton School / Pershore	14/12/23	Toronto
15	Open/Male 400m Individual Medley	Senior	4:10.51	David Annis	Royal Wolverhampton School / Pershore	15/12/23	Toronto
16	Open/Male 100m Breaststroke	Junior	1:03.58	William Tonks	Boldmere	16/12/23	Sheffield
17	Open/Male 400m Freestyle	Senior	3:45.31	David Annis	Royal Wolverhampton School / Pershore	16/12/23	Toronto
18	Open/Male 100m Individual Medley	Senior	54.43	Ping Chi Lau	City of Birmingham / Solihull	17/12/23	Sheffield

D. F. Corbett BEM



Records Officer

Regional Development Programme 2023

The 2023/24 cohort of 60 swimmers were selected for the Regional Development Programme, based on their Long Course 200IM performances during the 2023 season. Swimmers will take part in 2 in-person camps, to include swimming and S&C, as well as 1 online informative session with qualified practitioners.

We have 12 more swimmers in the 23/24 programme, compared with 22/23, allowing even more talented young athletes to experience the development pathway. We were also able to take on an additional skills coach, and there is coach development opportunities in the framework for 2024.

The swimmers commence the programme in January of 2024, at Sandwell Aquatics Centre, and we wish them the best of luck and hope they enjoy their experience.

Sian James

Sport Development Officer



Workforce Coaching

Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DiSE)

This Government-funded programme is fully integrated into all Swim England talent pathways and offers the perfect environment for athletes to harmoniously combine their sport and education.

Coaches on the programme:

Paul Wilson

Michael Glossop

National Youth Development Programme

This is the fourth step on the Swim England Talent Pathway.

Coaches on the programme:

Carl Grosvenor - Head Coach

Coach Developers

Coaches on the programme tbc:

Aspire Coach Development Programme

This is an exciting and innovative 12-month coach learning journey comprising of workshops, immersive fieldwork and an opportunity to create cross sport communities of practice within our aquatics coaching family.

The programme content will include a seamless blend of technical and non-technical information, delivered through both online and face to face interactions.

Each coach will be assigned a mentor from our Swim England Coach Developer team who will work with the coach to provide bespoke, in situ support guided by the creation of an Individual Development plan.

Coaches on the programme tbc:

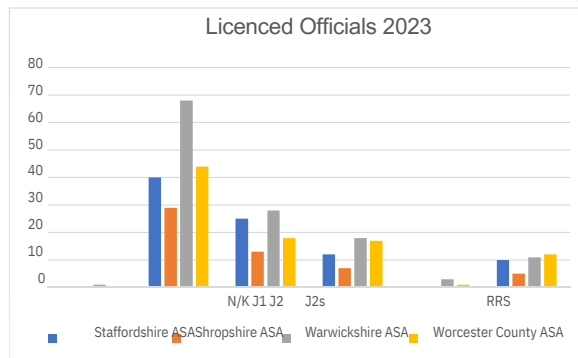
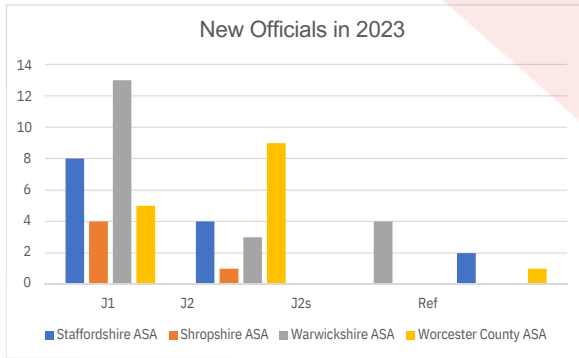
Inspire Coach Development Programme

Swim England's Inspire Coach Mentoring programme for 2022-2023 provides a unique coach development opportunity for coaches who predominantly work with age-group and early youth level athletes within the Swim England Talent Pathways for Swimming and Para Swimming.

Each coach is assigned a mentor from the Swim England National and Regional Coach Developer team who works with the coach to provide bespoke, in situ support guided by the creation of an Individual Development plan.

Coaches on the programme tbc:

Officials



Ian Lamb

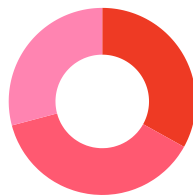
Regional Officials Coordinator

Volunteers

Good Club Governance Workshops

Secretary Workshop
37

Information Session for Chairs
42



Welfare Officer Workshop
48

Volunteer Workshops

Team Manager Module One

Courses delivered **24**
Number of attendees **254**

Team Manager Module Two


Courses delivered **4**
Number of attendees


Time To Listen


Courses delivered **11**
Number of attendees **27**


Club Forums

In 2023 we met 4 times with clubs at our Club Forums, where we discussed the following topics:

 February 2023 - Regional staffing changes, Club culture insight project , Regional Youth Panel, Regional newsletter, SwimMark & Club Affiliation, Club health tracker and Regional Championships update - supported by Amanda Swan, Sian James and Grace Grove.

 March 2023 -Club Health tracker, Optimum Athletic Development Framework, Swimming Pathway coach conference supported by Marc Spackman, Head Coach at Royal Wolverhampton

 April 2023 - Regional Marketing & Communications Update, Sponsorships and Regional Updates - supported by Amanda Swan, Sian James and Grace Grove.

 May 2023 - Governance Update, Running virtual meetings including AGM's effectively, supported by Helen Weeks at Swim England.

Club Forums were paused in June and we are in the process of reviewing the format of these.

Regional Awards 2023

Thank you to all those who nominated many well deserving members for this year's awards! We are pleased to announce the winners of this year's awards, pictured below.



Club of the Year - Redditch



Coach of the Year - Nicola Bainbridge



Technical Official of the Year - Jean Childs



Volunteer of the Year- Elaine Gale

Other awardees:

Club of the Year Runner Up- Rugby (Artistic) SC & Walsall (Artistic) SC

Coach of the Year Runner Up - Josh Bradley & Hannah Secher

Technical Official of the Year Runner Up- Mandy Garrott & Russell Powers

Volunteer of the Year Runner Up - Calie Smith & Samuel Blacker



Swim England National Awards 2023

A total of 23 awards were presented during the ceremony at Birmingham University's Great Hall on Saturday 18 November.

The Awards recognised the vast contribution made by individuals and organisations from all aquatic sports.

We were delighted to have 7 award winners and nominees in the West Midland Region, congratulations to all.

Technical Official of the Year

- Silver: Jean Childs
- Finalist: Sarah Barrow

Swim England Volunteer of the Year

- Bronze: Elaine Gale

Swim England Club of the Year

(Sponsored by GoCardless)

Artistic Swimming

- Finalist: Rugby Artistic Swimming Club

Swimming

- Finalist: Redditch Swimming Club

Club of the Year

Artistic Swimming

- Silver: Hannah Secher, Rugby Swimming Club

Swimming

- Finalist: Nicola Bainbridge, Owestry Otters Swimming Club

Swim England Hall of Fame

Three individuals from the Region have become the latest inductees into the Swim England Hall of Fame after their careers have left an outstanding impact on aquatics.

Rebecca Adlington, Mike Beard and Ellie Simmonds were amongst a total a seven individuals inducted at Swim England's National Awards ceremony held at the University of Birmingham's Great Hall.

The Hall of Fame was set up in 2019 to mark Swim England's 150th anniversary and included 26 people in it's initial induction.

Rebecca Adlington

Record-breaking Rebecca Adlington is Britain's most successful female Olympian of all time in the pool having won a total of four individual medals at the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Games. Adlington won a total of 17 major championship medals during her glittering career, including four at the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games representing England before she retired from competitive swimming at the age of 23.

In 2008, she was named as the Sports Journalists' Association Sportswoman of the Year and placed third in the Sports Personality of the Year Award.

Adlington was appointed OBE in the 2009 New Year Honours list for services to sport.

Mike Beard

Dedicated volunteer Mike Beard has played key roles in both swimming and water polo at Stourbridge and Solihull swimming clubs.

He has been a player, coach and an official – as well as holding key positions on the committee, including publicity officer, treasurer and chair.

Mike was voted onto the Midlands committee and became treasurer in 1977 – a position he still currently holds for the West Midlands region.

In 1989, he was named the Midlands District President and became the ASA President in 2000.

Mike has been a trustee for the national governing body since 1984 and in 2009, he received the Harold Fern Award.

He was also awarded the BEM for his services to swimming in 2016.

Ellie Simmonds

Five-time Paralympic champion Ellie Simmonds came to national attention when she competed in the 2008 Beijing Games at the age of 13.

She won the first of her eight Paralympic medals in China, where she was the youngest British athlete, topping the podium in both the S6 100m and 400m Freestyle races.

Further success followed at the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Games before Simmonds called time on her competitive career following the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

In addition to her Paralympic glory, Simmonds also won 21 gold medals at World and European Championships and picked up 10 other podium places – and was appointed an OBE in the 2013 New Year Honours list for services to Paralympic sport.

Counties

Staffordshire ASA

At the A.G.M. in 2022 Tony Ward was elected as President of the Association for 2023.

Tony has attended a number of County events as his schedule allows, as a Para- Swimming Official he is in demand for a number of National and International Swimming Competitions.

Once again, Staffordshire's swimming teams competed in two inter-county competitions during the year. The Three Counties Gala between Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire in July was hosted by Gloucester at Wolverhampton in July. Each county fields two teams. This year Staffordshire finished in 2nd place. Next year's event will be hosted by Staffordshire, again at Wolverhampton on the 7th July.

The Swim England National County Team Championships were held in Sheffield in October. 24 swimmers from Staffordshire took part in the event and 4 team officials to support. This year we finished 5th in division 2 of the event and just missed out on promotion.

Staffordshire ASA were delighted that we were able to hold our County Championships under normal conditions for 2023. The weekends of the Championships, Relays and Skins at Stafford Leisure Centre were completed with their usual display of excellent swimming with a huge entry once again. The Relay & Skins Event provided the usual excitement and a good atmosphere amongst the clubs and their rivals. For 2024 we have a new venue having outgrown Stafford due to the numbers and spectator accommodation. After a great deal of hard work and persistence we have managed to secure the 50m commonwealth pool at Solihull for its first full season of opening. We are looking forward to a challenging and exciting event starting in January. Distance events will remain at Stafford for 2024.

With new members supporting the team we have been able to move forward with a new Constitution, Risk assessments and a Team to support the Recording of event. The Association have also separated the roles of President and Chair. Tony Ward will be Staffordshire's first formal Chair with a tenure of 3 years.

The Staffordshire County Masters and open meet continues to remain extremely popular amongst the Masters swimmers from a wide variety of clubs throughout the country.

We had one Staffordshire Master, Kath Tunnicliffe BCnP, who travelled to the Masters Worlds in Japan not only competing but medalling in many events. Kath was also a member of mixed medley relay gold team with a new British record.

The end of October saw Master's short course Nationals ,Sheffield where we saw Matt Evans Walsall Swimming club win 4 individual golds, Kath Tunnicliffe winning 4 individual golds and Lindsey Gowland 1x gold.

This year was a disappointing turn out for Staffordshire swimmers in open water events. At the Midland open water event there were only 2 clubs competing from Staffordshire: Biddulph SC and Bilston SC.



The Team at the Inter County Masters

Unfortunately there are no clubs within Staffordshire playing competitive water polo games.

Geoffrey Kirkham from the Biddulph and Stafford Apex clubs is the only Swim England qualified water polo referee who has been officiating at Water Polo games at a variety of levels throughout 2023.

The Walsall Gala pool continues to be used by the West Midland Region on most Friday nights for young players who have been selected to play water polo games for the West Midland Region. The pool has been used regularly at week-ends for competitions at various levels throughout the year.

SA number of Staffordshire resident water polo swimmers have however been selected to compete for the West Midlands Region.

Walsall Artistic Swimming Club faced a lot of changes throughout the year and the club have managed to recruit new volunteers to keep the club going.

In the National age groups the club took one free team in the 13-15 age group. They swam well with just 5 swimmers in the team some of whom were competing at that level for the first time.

At National Championships (23-24/4) the club had a free and tech team. Both improved on last year finishing 7th for free team with a score of 61.6000 and 5th for tech team with a score of 62.1839. The club had one free duet and 1 tech solo all swimming for the first time at this competition. Robyn Swatman (Great Britain) also competed for Walsall. Robyn won gold for her tech solo and won the Colin Lushington Memorial Trophy for the 3rd year in a row.

Shropshire ASA

Shropshire ASA has had a great year with many successes celebrated.

Megan Frost is completing her 3rd and final year as President, she's had a great time although a little stressful with undertaking referees training and Chairing a club through Swim Mark.

Also Jenny Pearson is coming to the end of her term as West Midlands President, a challenging year for her but one she has thoroughly enjoyed.



President - Megan Frost



Departing WM President - Jenny Pearson

The clubs have been working together well and supporting each other through difficulties, the way everyone works together to give our swimmers the best opportunities is to be commended and it is great to see excellent communication between committees, clubs & coaches at all levels.

The club had 3 athletes selected and attending trainings with the Regional squad during 2023.

Robyn Swatman continues to represent Walsall Artistic Swimming club at the highest level, training with the World Class Program in Bristol alongside her university studies.

Referee training for 2022 was very successful with Kate Caddick and Bev Doughty becoming new additions to our referee pool in early 2023. Two Staffordshire officials applied for the 2023 training program and took their exam in November.

Staffordshire ASA President for 2024 will be Bill Moreton, who has represented Artistic Swimming in Staffordshire for some time and our President-Elect will be Caroline Jones.

Staffordshire ASA Executive Committee

This year particularly for many clubs in the county the behind the scene workloads have been abnormally heavy and stressful for committees, but by communicating and supporting each other we have all made it through.

Clubs have joined together to share club champs, supporting each other & sharing coaches & TM's to meet SE minimum supervision

We had a very successful County Championship, thank you to all those involved in getting the County Championships ready, people doing the unseen tasks; developing entry files, programmes & volunteer co-ordinators just to name a few working tirelessly in the background and to those poolside; marshalls, team managers, young volunteers and our officials, we had such a large number of Officials giving up their time we even managed to successfully mentor and sign off a number of new J1's & J2's.

Shropshire was well represented at the West Midlands Region Awards with Jean Childs being awarded Official of the Year and Mandy Garrott the runner-up and Nicola Bainbridge being awarded Coach of the Year.

Jean went on to be awarded Silver at the Nationals for Technical Official of the Year – congratulations to all of them.

OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR



JEAN CHILDS
NORTHGATE BRIDGNORTH SC

"Jean is the most dedicated and passionate volunteer, giving her time each and every week to ensure meets go ahead throughout the year. Her knowledge and confidence makes her a valuable member of the team. She is well known throughout the swimming community; Jean is always up for a chat and a laugh on poolside. **Jean is a mentor and an inspiration.**"



OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR RUNNER UP




MANDY GARROTT
NEWPORT & DISTRICT SC

"Mandy attends many galas locally, as well as in the county and region, even though she doesn't now have any swimmers involved herself. She helps out at club championships, primary school galas, secondary school galas, county events and attends the regional events even though they normally being held over her birthday weekend. She is a referee and **you will always find her leading by example.**"




COACH OF THE YEAR



NICOLA BAINBRIDGE
OSWESTRY OTTERS SC

"Oswestry Otters are flourishing in their number of, the strength of and the results of their swimmers, thanks to Nikki. The club has a growing number of para-swimmers and **her management of these individuals is exemplary.** She embraces all disciplines of swimming and is always keen to think ahead. She is now an integral part of Shropshire Swimming; looking after the County Team at Inter County Champs and has offered to support the County Open Water Development Programme."



Our Junior & Master swimmers too have seen success from local meets through to the British Championships achieving their best and getting on the podium. Shropshire was represented (in & out of the water) at the National Open Water event and we also have county swimmers competing in Artistic Swimming and Waterpolo too.

We had a very successful Inter-County Masters championships at Derby on 12th November 2023, and the very small Shropshire team did a good job with swimmers giving their all to this event. We need to promote this event more and get more master's joining in.



Our swimmers represented the County wonderfully this year at the National County Team Champs, the team supported and encouraged each other on the day and a good time was had by all. The team captains were James Frost and Faith Dunn, can be seen celebrating Aunty Jean.

In line with Swim England Development Swimming Pathway, Shropshire ASA ran a County Development Programme. Lead Coach was Gethin Bevan and Program Lead Emma Scott Gemmill. This year there were 2 Development days, both being run at Thomas Telford School, Telford. The idea of the sessions are to develop swimmers skill levels not to race or work on endurance. This was achieved by appointing skills coaches from a variety of Clubs within the region. The Development camps are designed not only to support the swimmers but also develop coaches. For the first session we had coaches from Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Newport and Wellington with a variety of experiences and knowledge, and all were excited and enthusiastic and willing to support each other and develop the swimmers. Over 20 swimmers were selected from all over the County with most Clubs represented. Nerves are quickly shaken off, and during the lunch break the swimmers were chatting like lifelong friends. The whole day went quickly, with both coaches and swimmers learning off each other. Being in small groups enables focused training which supports all.



These days are busy and deceptively tiring, however, the swimmers train with new swimmers from around the County Clubs, and work with new coaches. This helps build up friendships and we have seen these swimmers chat to each other at galas they have competed in throughout the year.



We have 2 representatives on the Regional Youth Panel. Charlotte Toogood and Alex O'Neil.



We will all be following one of our former county swimmer Ollie Morgan's journey as he has been selected for the World Class Programme. Good Luck Ollie.

We hold County Schools Championships each year, in the Secondary gala the Best Boy was won by Akaash Das who broke 2 records in the event (100m Free & 100m Backstroke) and the Best Girl was Millie Wells who also broke a record in 100M Backstroke.

Para events were included in the ESSA Inter Divisional Championships this year and Akaash Das was subsequently selected to represent England at the ISF Under 15 Games in Rio De Janeiro and placed top in his age group.



With Akaash leading the way our Para swimmers have had a fantastic year.

During the 2022/23 season, Shropshire ASA's desire to positively support para-swimming continued to show results: encouraging its embedding into mainstream club & competition environments, placing athletes onto National and International teams, and generating impressive performance improvements – including medals to World level.

March 2023: all 7 para (6 x Oswestry Otters and 1 x Shrewsbury SC) athletes from Shropshire County participated in the Midlands Para training at Rugby along with Nicola Bainbridge as one of the Midlands Para Coaches for 2023.

During the year, athletes also variously took part in (amongst other events) the South East Masters Relays (DSS-GB Squad), West Midlands Summer Championships (Coventry) and West Midlands Regional Open Water Championships, Downs Swimming European Champs in Italy and World Downs Championships in Portugal.

Although the number of para-swimmers is small, their impact at all levels is fantastic to see, and we encourage all County clubs to consider how they might help increase para outreach and participation numbers. Doing so enriches everyone's experience of our fabulous sport through wider access and inclusivity, as well as underpinning on our desire to improve the health & wellbeing of our communities and encourage lifelong participation.



Shropshire ASA Executive Committee

Warwickshire ASA

2023 can be viewed as a year of significant challenges in Warwickshire, but also of valuable learning, development and progress, with many notable successes! WASA has worked hard as a diverse collective to listen more closely to the requirements and ambitions of clubs, coaches, volunteers and athletes, and to apply feedback in a constructive way for the benefit of all and for the future success of aquatic sports across the county.

We are sorry to have said goodbye to a number of key volunteers who have provided valuable input and support to the County over a significant number of years. These include David Corbett, Paul & Janet Welsh, Rachel Cutler, Veronia Ristov, Kim Mortimer and James Rounce. We would like to thank each of them for their generosity of time and energy, and for their support of aquatic sports in Warwickshire.

However, we are very happy and proud to now have the support of new faces within both the Management Team and the Executive, notably with James Spence (Orion/City of Birmingham Swimming) as WASA Secretary, Stephanie Crow (City of Coventry) as our Equality & Diversity Officer, and Clare Dean (Blythe Barracudas) as an Executive Member. We are thrilled to have them on board and are looking forward to seeing how their fresh perspectives and ideas can benefit the County and our athletes.

We have a lot to be very proud of within aquatics in Warwickshire, and would like to share a few snapshots below of key successes across our disciplines.

Artistic Swimming: Magdalena Townsend

Lena Townsend is an artistic swimmer at City of Birmingham, and also competes in age-group swimming at Blythe Barracudas. Lena's dedication, commitment and hard work paid off last year when she achieved the remarkable feat of becoming a double National Champion at the 2023 Artistic Swimming National Age Group Championships. Her outstanding routine showcased exceptional control, height, and travel across the pool, earning her a combined score of 133.4431, which was 0.6 ahead of the rest. Congratulations to Magdalena on her inspiring accomplishment – we are looking forward to following your journey in 2024 and beyond!

Water Polo: Amelie Perkins

Amelie Perkins, a talented water polo player from Coventry, was selected for the GB squad in the Senior Women's EU Nations Cup. Her impressive scoring abilities and hard work earned her the title of top scorer in the tournament, despite facing challenges including a thumb injury. Amelie's dedication and motivation are truly commendable and serve as an inspiration to others who aspire to excel in their chosen field. Her success will encourage more young individuals to explore their passions and pursue them with determination and focus.

National County Team Championships 2023

Warwickshire enjoyed success at this year's County Team Championships, finishing a very respectable 16th place in Division 1, and securing our place in the top ranks for 2024.

We were very proud of the teamwork, attitudes and mutual support between swimmers from clubs across the County, and most notably for the leadership displayed by the Team Captains. Congratulations and thanks to all involved!



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Warwickshire Aquatics

We recognise the incredible importance of EDI within aquatic sports and are striving to play our part in ensuring the provision of a welcoming, supporting and fair environment at WASA for everyone across Warwickshire. The Warwickshire ASA Executive has established the Equality and Diversity Officer role to promote inclusive practices and provide equitable services to the community. The EDI Officer, Stephanie Crow (City of Coventry), is one of the key sources of support for member clubs across the County and has been actively involved in reviewing various frameworks to shape the EDI agenda. In the coming months, the team will focus on developing a County EDI Action Plan and implementing a baseline assessment to understand their starting point.

The team's core values of collaboration, leadership, data-driven decision-making, and a learning organisation approach will guide their efforts to achieve their objectives. The team is committed to creating a cross-county community of practice to support peer learning, shared practice, and problem-solving in EDI. The Warwickshire ASA team seeks to partner with Swim West Midlands to maximise the impact of activities to further the EDI agenda.

The team's focus on the way in which we work, rather than just the outcomes of our efforts, is inspiring. They aim to role model the inclusive and social model approach to developing and implementing improvements, and their core values will be instrumental in achieving their objectives. We can all learn from their dedication to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in the community.

Warwickshire County Talent Development Pathway (age-group swimming)

The County Development Pathway group in Warwickshire who began their journey in 2022 continued in early 2023 with an online half-day of learning, followed by a second day in the pool and gym during the Summer. The program was well-received by all and has inspired many of our then 11- and 12-year-old swimmers to achieve great things throughout the year. Head Pathway Coach Kim Mortimer (Stratford Sharks) created a fantastic programme that the swimmers really benefited from.



Following the welcome announcement from Swim England that there would be a change to age-groupings and also an introduction of RAE (relative age effect) weightings for subsequent Development Pathway events, WASA found itself with a challenge on its hands: how to manage the disappointment from younger swimmers who had expected to join the Development Pathway in the coming months, and how to maintain the enthusiasm and engagement of those swimmers who has completed one cycle of the County Development Pathway and would now likely be invited for a second round!

Following considerable thought, the team came up with a great solution for the younger swimmers and invested in a half-day Pre-Pathway Development session at the Alan Higgs Centre, led by Sarah Collings-Hands (Nuneaton & Bedworth), which was a great introduction to the programme and very well-received.

We then launched our new County Development Pathway Programme for 2023/24 in November, also held at the Alan Higgs Centre. This was led by Head Pathway Coach Mark Mooney (Blythe Barracudas) with support from both Sarah Collings-Hands and Sam Fairchild (City of Coventry). Although many of the swimmers involved were also attendees at the previous year's events, we did see some new faces, and the newly-shaped programme was a big hit with multiple opportunities for learning and development. We are very much looking forward to the remaining two sessions in 2024.



Swim England National Award Winners 2023

WASA was delighted to see so many of its members recognised in 2023's Swim England National Awards! Adrian Ting from the University of Birmingham Team was awarded the Bronze for Youth Champion, Hannah Secher from Rugby received Silver for Artistic Swimming Coach of the Year, and Mike Beard (Solihull) and Ellie Simmonds (Boldmere) were inducted into the Swim England Hall of Fame!

In addition, Elaine Gale (Boldmere) was awarded the Volunteer of the Year Bronze medal. This prestigious award recognizes her exceptional contributions and dedication to volunteering in the field of swimming. Elaine's hard work, passion, and commitment to the sport have made a significant impact on the swimming community, and she is a true inspiration to all who know her. We are extremely fortunate to have Elaine on the Management Team at WASA, and to benefit from her experience and expertise as our County Welfare Officer.

'Release the Bear'

The Bear and Ragged Staff has been the emblem of the historic County of Warwickshire for hundreds of years, and Warwickshire ASA has been proud to adopt it as our logo. However, times change. And fresh attitudes come to the fore. Following the intervention of our young Development Pathway swimmers, the Executive has agreed to unchain and 'release the bear'.

Some may regard this as a trivial move. However, it is an important statement for our revised attitudes towards animal welfare. The initiative is still ongoing but as we progress towards adopting a new logo, we want to emphasise that WASA:

- values the opinions of all our young swimmers, and
- wants to reflect more modern attitudes towards animal cruelty - not often associated with swimming – but so important to the modern society with whom Swim England works.

New approach to County Swimming Records

It is important for our County Swimming Records to be in-line with National Rankings maintained by Swim England. Disparities have caused confusion and disappointment that some achievements have not been recognised by the County. To address this, the County has agreed that the historic practice of insisting that records be applied for within 28 days of their achievement would be abandoned, as this was considered to be an arbitrary time limit – after all, a record is a record!

2024 will see a new approach to County Records being achieved, one which we continue to discuss and evolve as we aim to celebrate the tremendous successes of athletes across Warwickshire.

County Championships 2023

County championships were held for all three active disciplines. These were successful, well attended, and enjoyed by all.

Warwickshire Exec Committee

Worcester County ASA

Worcester County started 2023 with the usual County Championships, held at both Perdiswell Pool in Worcester and Wolverhampton Central Baths. This year we had a large number of entrants, which still enabled us to produce a highly competitive championships, also confirming 'back to normal' following Covid. Excellent swims producing exciting finals helped provide the usual successful event. We were grateful for all volunteers who worked so hard to produce these Championships, both before and on race days, as finding volunteers is becoming harder year on year.

Swimming Secretary Report.

Inter County Events

The Annual 3 Counties Gala hosted by ourselves this year was held at Wolverhampton as Sandwell was still not open. The County were keen to regain the Trophy we had lost to Gloucestershire the year before. This we did by a considerable margin and all participating thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. Each County, Worcestershire, Staffordshire and Gloucester field 2 teams which gives the opportunity to those not quite up to the 1st team standard a chance to swim for their County.

The next major event was the National County Team Championships held each year at the beginning of October in Sheffield at Ponds Forge Pool. Having been promoted to Divisions 1 previously and finishing in 13th place in 2022 we were keen to see if that could be bettered in 2023. Well, it was by just one place to 12th. This is a tremendous achievement for a small County who only have just 13 clubs from which to choose our team compared to Yorkshire, who won, who have 77 clubs! This event is the highlight of the year for our swimmers who enjoyed the weekend away, all behaved impeccably.



Masters

This year we sent a large team to Derby for the Inter County event. A considerable number had only been training for a few weeks but were keen to participate. We achieved top 3 positions in 22 races which was an excellent result. Our Masters section is increasing considerably and we hope they will continue to improve during this next year to become a 'tour de force' at the next event.

Paul Wilkes from Redditch came 2nd in the 200 Fly event at the Masters World Championship in Doha recently. He broke the British records for this event and also for the 100 Fly where he came 5th. A tremendous achievement attained on his 40th Birthday, many congratulations to Paul from everyone in Worcester County.

Water Polo

Sandwell Pool finally opening has put the region on the British water polo map and will host the "Super Fives" in March 2024. We also congratulate Toby Chilcott from Worcester Crocodiles club who will represent Great Britain at U17 level in the European Championships.

Our Teams also competed well with Worcester Crocodiles Ladies winning the Midland league for the first time. Sandwell Aquatics Men finishing runners up in Division One of the Men's League. In terms of representations at West Midland Level we have 7 from Sandwell and 4 from Worcester Crocodiles.

Para Swimming

One of our Para Swimmers is Rebecca Redfern from Worcester S.C. who this year at the World Para Swimming Championships held in Manchester regained the Title she last won in London 2019 in the S13 category 100m Breaststroke beating her long time American rival. Becky is a wonderful ambassador for swimming and an excellent role model for her club and County demonstrating her commitment, hard work and sacrifice.



County Clubs

This year one of our clubs became Regional “Club of the Year” congratulations go to Redditch Swimming Club who also achieved their 125year Anniversary.

Sandwell Aquatics finally gained entry to the Commonwealth Pool, their new home, in August 2023, following a period of alteration which took place after the Commonwealth Games.

David Annis, 17 yrs. of age from Pershore Swimming club attended the Junior International competition in Ontario Canada as part of the British Swimming team. He obtained 3 silver medals, competing in the 200IM, 400IM, & 400 Freestyle., together with a Bronze in the 200m Backstroke. This was Davids first time in this event and the County send Congratulations to David and wish him every success with his future advancement.

Swim England Development Programme

The usual Development Programme continues, consisting of 3 whole day camps. 36 talented eleven-year-olds (boys and girls) are chosen following their performance at County Championships. The camps focus on all 4 discipline skills together with motivation, nutrition, challenges, personal development, and land training.

Worcester County Exec Committee



Finance

SWIM ENGLAND WEST MIDLAND REGION LIMITED

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The loss that the Region incurred last year was £40.1k which reduced its general reserves from £220.8k down to £160.7k. Reserves ring-fenced for development decreased from £79.6k to £73.2k so reserves in total reduced from £280.4k to £233.9k

The main reason for the loss is the increase in Staff costs due to the additional member that was appointed in August 2022 which continued throughout the year in 2023 plus the increase in hours from part time to full time of another staff member due to the increased workload within the Region.

Development activity was reasonably steady in 2023 following the upturn in 2022 post pandemic.

Turning to the Balance Sheet, note that we opened two further new current accounts with Lloyds during the year in the name of the new limited company, one to cover the Swimming Championships and one the Water Polo transactions with the intention to close the old Nat West Accounts for these items. This enables income and expenditure to be kept separate for those items. The old NatWest account for Swimming Champs is in the process of being closed whilst the old Water Polo account is being transferred for use as Inter Regional Water Polo.

Looking forward, we will almost certainly make another loss in 2024 due to agreement to take on a further part time staff member splitting the roles of Club Development and Administration into two separate roles following the promotion Amanda Swan into the role of Operations Manager during 2023. However new streams of funding have been sought to bolster the Championships with the intention to produce a good surplus to help cover the increased costs. We have also increased our memberships slightly in 2024 after several years of them remaining the same. Budgets for 2024 have been scrutinised carefully and the Development funding streams have currently been frozen to allow a full review of the system and a new approach for supporting our clubs be established which is less complicated than the previous system.

Heather Summerill FCCA

Finance Director

	2023	2023	2022	2022
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Membership fees		96,487		93,480
Licensing of Open Meets		16,378		13,824
Midland Championships		-		-
West Midland Championships Surplus/(Deficit)		228		(9,219)
		<u>113,093</u>		<u>98,085</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Counselling support	-		2000	
President's expenses	880		449	
Printing, postages and stationery	368		282	
Annual Report	13		780	
IT and website	1,128		833	
Rooms for meetings	2,703		773	
Travelling to meetings	1,089		471	
Accountants' fee	500		500	
Small equipment purchased	1,120		-	
Sundry payments	1,292		253	
Bank charges	316		136	
Development Plan	40,500		50,000	
Rental of Storage units	2,283		-	
Staff and office costs	103,825		63,298	
		<u>156,017</u>		<u>119,775</u>
NET (DEFICIT) BEFORE INTEREST AND TAXATION		(42,924)		(21,690)
Interest received (gross)		<u>3,492</u>		<u>1,437</u>
NET (DEFICIT) BEFORE TAXATION		(39,432)		(20,253)
Taxation		<u>664</u>		<u>273</u>
NET (DEFICIT) BEFORE TAXATION		(40,096)		(20,526)

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 December 2023	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS		-		-
BANK ACCOUNTS				
NatWest current account	15,838		32,278	
Lloyds current accounts	48,966		79,489	
Coventry Building Society	74,331		72,731	
Nationwide Building Society	69,221		78,774	
Teachers Building Society	84,137		82,692	
		<u>292,493</u>	<u>345,964</u>	
DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS		<u>17,272</u>	<u>8,583</u>	
TOTAL ASSESTS		<u>309,765</u>	<u>354,547</u>	
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors and accruals	72,120		92,905	
Income received in advance	3,760		11,260	
		<u>75,880</u>	<u>104,165</u>	
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>233,885</u>	<u>250,382</u>	
RESERVES RING-FENCES FOR DEVELOPMENT		73,247	79,648	
GENERAL RESERVES				
At beginning of year	200,734		221,260	
Net (Deficit) for year	(40,096)		(20,526)	
		<u>160,638</u>	<u>200,734</u>	
TOTAL RESERVES		<u>233,885</u>	<u>280,382</u>	

DEVELOPMENT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Coach bursaries	Club Development	Mship growth	Coaching Culture	Other workforce	Para-swimming	Artistic	Water polo	Open water	Swimming	Masters	Athlete bursaries	Diving	TOTALS
BALANCE AT 1 JANUARY 2023	18,790	11,330	8,366	-	1,709	10,002	3,070	5,134	1,310	8,046	-	6,166	5,725	79,648
INVESTMENT PLAN	7,000	9,000	2,000	10,500	4,000	-	-	6,000	1,000	-	-	1,000	-	40,500
Swim England re coaching insight	270													270
Grant re: Coaching Culture				7,500										7,500
Share of joint EMR/WMR development					(143)	(851)	3,799				(3,084)			(279)
L2 course	673													673
IOS re: Swim Mark		100												100
IFR WP gate and programmes								1,657						1,657
Training days and camps								14,663		4,800				19,463
TOTAL INCOME	943	100	-	7,500	(143)	(851)	3,799	16,320	-	4,800	(3,084)	-	-	29,384
Match Funding				2,000										2,000
Sporting People Costs				14,994										14,994
Coach/Teacher Bursaries	5,369													5,369
L1 Course	810													810
Coach Courses	1,810											1,484		1,810
Athlete bursaries												1,484		1,484
Officials Bursaries					86									86
Training days and camps						243	23	13,677		4,368				18,311
Safeguarding and TTL					1,120			6,211						1,120
Inter-regional competition								810						810
Equipment														810
Club development grants		15,070												15,070
Membership Growth grants			5,227											5,227
Diving Certificates													103	103
Officials licences fees					60									60
Volunteer Pin Badges					197									197
Youth Panel Expenses					1,122									1,122
Mark Spackman re: Coach Development				1,500										1,500
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	7,989	15,070	5,227	18,494	2,585	243	23	20,698	-	4,368	-	1,484	103	76,285
BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2023	18,744	5,380	5,139	(494)	2,981	8,908	6,846	6,756	2,310	8,478	(3,084)	5,682	5,622	73,247
NET SPENT TO 31 DECEMBER 2023	7,046	14,970	5,227	10,994	2,728	1,094	(3,776)	4,378	-	(432)	3,084	1,484	103	46,901