**Norwich Swan Swimming Club**

Affiliated to Swim England East Region

and Norfolk County A.S.A

**Annual General Meeting**

**Sunday 28th November 2021**

Location:Town Close Room UEA 7pm

Items:

* Welcome and apologies
* Minutes of previous AGM
* Chair Person’s Report
* Head Coach Report
* Learn to Swim Report
* Treasurer’s Report
* Friends of Norwich Swan Report
* Committee Elections
* Any other Business

Andy opened the meeting by welcoming everyone particularly as we were meeting face to face and not via zoom!

**Present**: Andy Merrill , Ann Byrne, David Mann, Rob Wicks, Anne Jarrett, Abby Chapman, Stewart Park, Marie Andrews, Shaun Riches, Steve Howard, Dan Herring, Kati Dye, Emma Montgomery

**Apologies**: Michael Stowers, Christine and Tony Bedder, Jenny Day, Claire Dyke , Karen Woodhouse

**Minutes of the previous AGM** held on the 10th December 2020 were circulated

Proposed by Shaun Riches Seconded Dan Herring , agreed unanimously

**Matters Arising**

There were none.

**Annual reports**

These were presented to the meeting

**Chairman’s Report**

As 2021 draws to a close, so does my tenure as Chairman of Norwich Swan Swimming Club, after four eventful years. I will therefore take this opportunity to reflect on the previous 12 months along with the changes I have seen during my time as Chair.

The last year has been incredibly challenging as the theme of lockdowns, pool closures and instability have had an impact on both the Learn To Swim programme and the Squad structure. I would like to thank the committee for all their hard work and late nights, constantly reviewing what is required and making the challenging decisions to keep our club viable. As each month passed and a new challenge presented itself, the committee were always accountable and met each change of direction head on. Without their hard work and dedication, I do feel the club may have struggled to survive as unfortunately was the case for so many swimming clubs across the country. The impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on swimming will be felt for many years, but we are fortunate to be in a position of strength as we build for the future.

There have been so many people that have helped me during my time, but I feel it's only fair to highlight a few important individuals who made an incredible difference and without whom I would not be here today. Firstly, thank you to Anne Jarrett, who has worked tirelessly in the background dealing with numerous enquiries, processing memberships and supporting our admin processes from behind the scenes. Anne’s dedication to Norwich Swan Swimming Club cannot be understated and I know she commits to many more hours than would be expected of any volunteer. Many of the more challenging tasks and uncomfortable conversations are often dealt with efficiently and professionally resulting in satisfactory outcomes for our members. I'd also like to thank Abby Chapman, who I can honestly say has being the driving force behind our club for several years now. Never wanting to be in the limelight, Abby, is involved in nearly every aspect of the day to day running of Norwich Swan, with hardly any event or task not having her input. She was the worthy winner of our ‘Volunteer of the Year’ award, but this doesn't really do justice to the incredible amount of hard work and support provided by Abby during my time as Chair and I cannot thank her enough for everything that she has done for the club. We are incredibly lucky to have her as part of the team and much of our success must be attributed to her. Our Treasurer, David Mann, has transformed how the club operates over the last four years. He has successfully guided the committee in making some incredibly challenging decisions which have allowed Swan to succeed and grow to where it is today. His professional guidance and warm personality have allowed some of the most difficult decisions the club is faced financially, especially in the last 12 months, to reach a satisfactory conclusion leaving the club in a fantastic position for the future. Again, David works behind the scenes giving up much of his time, which has allowed our club to make the right financial decisions at a time when so many have struggled. Lastly, my thanks go to Stewart Park, who I appointed as Head Coach 3 years ago. Stewart has been very clear from the start as to what he feels the ethos and culture of our swimmers should be. This has been shared throughout the club, via the coaching team to instil in our young people his values not only for swimming, but life in general and the expectations and behaviours of what it means to be a Norwich Swan swimmer. The club continues to grow under his guidance, achieving success both in and out of the water and I'm confident that the future looks bright under his leadership.

On a final note, I would like to say how grateful I am for all the fantastic memories swimming has given me. Over the last 25 years I’ve been lucky enough to have been ‘married to the sport’ thanks to the wonderful Mrs. M. This led to being a ‘swim dad’, resulting in countless away galas, road trips and all the highs and lows associated with it. I’ve had the honour and privilege to be a team manager both at home, but more importantly abroad, which allowed me to share some fantastic times which hopefully many will look back on with fond memories for many years to come. I am grateful for every training session I was lucky enough to share, all those hot pool decks and hard plastic chairs, the failed timing systems and computer crashes mid race, Vlogs and tutus, angry parents, delighted children, silent car journeys and PBs. I know I will miss it very much when I step away but wouldn’t have changed it for the world.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of the history of NSSC and all the very best for the future.

Andy Merrill

Chairman

**Stewart Park – Head Coach Report 2020-21 Season**

I would like to start by thanking the swimmers, and in turn the parents. I, along with the other coaches are fortunate to coach such driven, committed athletes, let alone the young people we get to work with on a daily basis. I am very proud to represent this group of young people. I would like to thank the parents, without your support and commitment to your swimmers goals, the progress they’re making would not be possible.

I would obviously like to thank the coaching team for their commitment and continual effort to the improvement of our club and it’s swimmers. Without Nikki, Phil, James, Lauren and Rui, none of the success our swimmers enjoy would be possible. I would like to especially thank Nikki for the impact she made in setting up the partnership with Norwich Girls School. And for the continued work Nikki and Phil are putting in to make this partnership flourish.

Our Club would not run, nor would I be able to do my job without the hours of hard work Abby Chapman and Anne Jarrett put in. I cannot put into words how grateful I am for the work they do, to allowing the coaching team to support the swimmers.

I would like to thank Christine Bedder who has recently stepped down as the Club Team Manager. In the past Christine has supported a huge number of swimmers throughout the years. This contribution was appreciated by all of those swimmers. I would like to thank Helen Smith and Anne Riches for the time that they have both given to support the swimmers at Arena League and our Open Meets.

I would like to thank all of the parents who have volunteered their time within the Covid Liaison roles. Without your time, we would not be able to run the pool sessions

My last thank you has to be saved for Andy! In truth, I will forever be in debt to Andy, for giving me this opportunity, the one I have been looking for, for my whole career. The way he has stepped up and led, with support of the exec & committee through this unbelievably difficult last 2 years to ensure we all still have a club. But on a personal level, the support and guidance that has always been offered alongside interrupted meetings with Nikki and the endless Dad jokes. But seriously, I will forever be grateful to Andy and what success we have had over the last 4 years, could not have happened without Andy. Personally and Professionally, I thank you.

From a Performance point of view, we are definitely a club on the rise. It is hard to select individual achievements, when our success is produced by the work that is put in day after day by every swimmer. I am very proud of the work ethic of our swimmers. To give some context to these comments:

* 10 swimmers selected for the National Development Programme Aged 13/14
* 6 Swimmers selected for the Regional Development Programme Aged 11/12
* 1 Swimmer Selected for the National Para Development Programme
* 5 swimmers Qualified for National Winter SC (13 swims) in 2019 1 qualifier 1 swim
* 2 Swimmers Qualified for National Para LC Championships
* 5 highest entry at Winter Regionals 3 swimmers Qualify for Finals (7 events) 2 medals 2019 1 swimmer 1 final No Medals
* Qualify for A Arena League final in 4th 2019 A final 8th
* National Junior League 33rd out of 116 teams
* Highest Number of Medals won at Summer Regionals – Ellie Lyon Silver Medal on the ‘National Leader Board’ 14yr 100 Breast

**Nikki Merrill - Assistant Head Coach Report**

We have come a long way in structuring the Lower half of the club and in truth still have a long way way to go. With Covid being so uncertain it’s so difficult to plan ahead but for now we feel we have the right structure in place for the swimmers to progress. Setting up the younger squads and working on their skills and technique before they even think about swimming fast has moved them through the pathway fairly quickly and in the Skill Development squad we have already seen swimmers move up to Stroke Development and have recently had a couple of swimmers achieve their very first Norfolk County Qualifying time!! So we are already seeing that progression working!

The structure will of course evolve and will be continuously monitored throughout 2022 to ensure we are providing a solid base of swimmers to progress through the club with a bright future ahead in swimming.

As well as providing a progressive competitive pathway we have accounted for swimmers who may not wish to compete but love their swimming and for this we have Lauren Cooper to thank who has taken on the role of Lead Coach of these squads as well as the competitive squads. Lauren is a young enthusiastic and very passionate coach who strives to get the best out of the swimmers and is a valuable member of the team. Lauren has helped me implement the current structure and was instrumental in helping the swimmers find their feet again coming out of lockdown and back into swimming training.

I’ve got know idea where the last year has gone or what we did and how we did it but I do know we have achieved and have got the smiles back on the faces of the swimmers. We were able to offer a summer programme giving the swimmers the chance to swim through the summer weeks and in addition to that held a very successful couple of weeks of swim clinics which was opened up to all Norfolk swimmers. Huge thanks to Abby Chapman for her help with the administration of it all and we are hoping to do more of these swim clinics for all the squads.

Looking at the older swimmers in County Performance and County Youth squads, I am really proud of how they have adapted to what is at the moment the new normal! We’ve had some great achievements from some swimmers overcoming personal challenges to swimmers qualifying for Regionals and para nationals.

Lauren, myself and the coaching assistants are very much looking forward to and are committed to: raising the bar, remaining inclusive and providing a fun environment for our swimmers to thrive in going forward.

Thank you to all the parents who have supported us throughout this very weird and difficult time and I would also like to thank the committee for all their efforts along with Stewart who has been a pillar of support to myself and the coaching team!

I know Stewart will be doing the official thank you’s but I would like to say thank you to Andy for stepping in temporarily when no one else did and four years later dealing with unprecedented and challenging times I am very proud and thankful to him!

**Phil Davis Report – Focussing on Relationship with NHSG**

The first three months of the Norwich Swan and Norwich High School for Girls Partnership has been fantastic. Everyone at the school has made me feel very welcome, so I would like to thank all of the staff, especially Debra Smith, the rest of the PE Department and the students for making me feel so at home. The PE Department has helped me to feel that I am part of their team, which is great as we can then communicate more effectively on poolside together - helping all of the students to progress in the pool.

I have been coaching in the lessons for students in year 3-6. I will take a group every lesson where we will focus on setting the foundations of the strokes, working hard on technique, skills and water confidence. The PE staff and I work closely to ensure that we are all helping the students to achieve progressive results each week. This is exactly what has been happening, the children have adapted really well to a new way of being taught swimming.

I have also been running three competitive swimming club sessions a week (year 5&6, year 7&8 and year 9-13). This gives the students an opportunity to experience training similar to Norwich Swan squad sessions. The competitive swimmers have the potential to represent the school in the coming months, with galas against Town Close being arranged for Year 5-8 and the GDST (Girls Day School Trust) gala in January. This has given the swimmers another incentive to continue to work hard every time they walk on the poolside. In addition to the competitive swimming club sessions, there is a development session available to all senior school students. This is a lunch club where we focus on one stroke each week and the students will be given individual feedback on how to become more efficient in the water.

I would like to thank Rebecca Smith and Sofia Spence (NHSG GAP student) for helping me to run these clubs.

It’s been a great start to this exciting partnership and I am looking forward to seeing how all the students continue to progress in the future.

Kind Regards,

Phil Davis

NSSC Coach

We have been delighted with our new partnership with Norwich Swan Swimming Club since September. Phil Davis has been a great asset to the PE department assisting in our Prep swimming lessons and over 50 swimmers are regularly participating in our three after school squad sessions. These competitive swim squads, led by Phil are enabling more girls to improve and develop their technique and represent the school in local galas and the GDST event. Sixth formers have also started sessions during their Games lessons to gain the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification with Nikki Merrill.

It has been particularly pleasing to see the girls make such great progress in their lessons with PE staff and Phil taking specific ability groups to ensure all pupils improve.

This partnership is really putting swimming on the map in the school and we look forward to further developments in our swimming programme in tandem with Norwich Swan over the coming months and years. We are excited for the future of swimming at Norwich High School with Norwich Swan!

Mrs Debra Smith

Director of Sport

**Learn to Swim AGM Report 2021**

**Norwich Swan**

**Learn to Swim**

Swim for Success

This year has been just as difficult for Learn to Swim as last year. Lockdown hit the LTS section hard. We had 250 swimmers back by early December 2020 for a few weeks before shutting down again until April. Broadland, Colman, Drayton, Hethersett & Thorpe opened by the end of April. Heartsease opened in May and Sprowston opened at the end of September. We also opened a new venue at Norwich High School for Girls in September which is doing very well. Nelson street is still closed due to maintenance issues and there is doubt whether it will ever reopen, and City Academy has been leased to another group so that one we cannot use. In total we now have 880 swimmers in LTS which is the highest number since Autumn 2017. This is mostly down to 2 years’ worth of new swimmers coming in at once.

The summer swim this year did extremely well with well over 500 places booked and almost all our session full. This made it nearly twice as busy as it has been in the past. This again was probably down to not swimming for so long we had an enormous number of swimmers ready to start. Quite a large number of these swimmers then went on to book our term time lessons starting in September.

Looking forward we would like to restart the LTS gala next term which has been very popular in the past. It also goes a long way to encouraging LTS swimmers to move up to squads. We’re also looking to open another new session at NHSG on a Sunday from January.

Finally, I would like to thank all the staff who have worked very hard this year to bring LTS back from our forced closure and to now having exceeded the swimmer numbers we had before covid started.

Michael Stowers

Head Teacher

Learn to Swim

**Treasurer’s Report – Y/E 31 August 2021**

It has once again been a very challenging year due to the impact of COVID. The committee have had to constantly assess the position, review figures and make timely decisions for the benefit of the club and there has been a huge amount of work behind the scenes to ensure that the club remained financially viable.

The club has historically relied on the income generated from the Learn to Swim programme and the galas to help cover the costs of running the squads and administrative costs of the club. Due to COVID we have been unable to run galas and lockdowns and pool closures have affected our plans.

The support of the membership has again been fantastic and has exceeded our expectations.

The year before last we made a loss of £16,639, mainly due to problems with pool closures. Last year the committee worked extremely hard to ensure that the club got back to a break-even position and achieved a very small profit of £168.

Our aim this year was to try and maintain that break-even position. Further lockdowns and pool closures yet again made it a very difficult year.

The club was on track to more or less break-even going into the final couple of months, but our Summer Swim clinic proved to be the most successful we have ever run, with a record number of children attending. We had tried a different marketing approach this year and we believe that a combination of this and the desire of swimmers to get back in the pool resulted in a very pleasing end to the year.

I am pleased to report that we exceeded our expectations and achieved a very healthy profit of £9,704 for the year.

In addition, I had been in contact with the local council to try and secure an additional restrictions grant, as we had not been eligible for other grants. This was not plain sailing and after a lot of form filling and phone calls to the council, we managed to secure a much needed grant of £22,200 right at the end of our year. I have shown this directly on the balance sheet so that it does not distort the position as it is a one-off external grant from the council rather than a self-generating source of income from the club itself.

I am very pleased with the overall result this year and it really does reflect the hard work of the committee and support from the members.

The club’s reserves have now increased to a healthy at £88,453 and my target for a club of this size with the financial commitments it has would be around £100,000, so the club is looking in a very good position.

Forecasts for next year indicate that it will be another challenging year as we hope to try and get back to some kind of normality and build on new partnerships with our aim to hopefully maintain our break-even position.

It has been an extremely difficult couple of years and a lot of swimming clubs have struggled financially, so it is pleasing to see how well Norwich Swan has coped in these difficult times. I have been very impressed with the hard work and dedication of all the committee and particular thanks to both Abby and Anne who have given up huge amounts of time to ensure the administration of the club continues to run smoothly.

As mentioned in previous years, in addition to valuable paid personnel that we have in place, the club is still very dependent upon the goodwill and assistance of a lot of unpaid volunteers as well. A huge amount of work goes on in the background to ensure the smooth running of the club and often this falls on just a few individuals who give up substantial amounts of time often at the expense of their own families and it is extremely difficult to find willing volunteers with the appropriate skills, so we would always welcome anyone who is prepared to help the club in any way.

David Mann FCA, ATT.

Treasurer

Norwich Swan SC

28 November 2021

Financial Report : proposed by Shaun Riches and seconded by Anne Jarrett and agreed by those present

Friends of Norwich Swan (FONS)

There was no report

Abby Chapman updated the meeting on FONS

There are a few new volunteers coming forward, mainly from the Covid liaison Whatsapp group.

**Committee Elections**

The present committee stepped down and the following nominations were received.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Name | Nominated by | Seconded by |
| Chair | Rob Wicks | Andy Merrill | David Mann |
| Treasurer | David Mann | Anne Jarrett | Abby Chapman |
| Secretary | Ann Byrne | Claire Dyke | Abby Chapman |
| Gala Secretary | Abby Chapman | Helen Jones | Adam Mixer |
| Membership Secretary | Anne Jarrett | Lily Chapman | Claire Dyke |
| Pool contracts | Shaun Riches | Tom Harding | Shaun James |
| Disability Officer | Ann Byrne | Claire Dyke | Abby Chapman |
|  | Dan Herring | Abby Chapman | Rob Wicks |
| Swim Mark Officer | Abby Chapman | Helen Jones | Adam Mixer |
| Parent representative | Jenny Day | Amanda Howes | Eloise Waters |
|  | Steve Howard | Claire Sparkes | Helen Jones |
| Welfare | Kirsty Pitcher | N/A |  |
|  | Chris Pert | N/A |  |
| Friends of Norwich Swan (FONS) | Karen Staff | Co opted |  |

There were no objections from those present . All were elected unanimously

AOB

There was none

Everyone was thanked for attending the meeting which closed at 20.10pm with a presentation to Andy Merrill retiring Chair from Abby Chapman.