



AGM 2014

**Registered Charity
Number 1055585**

TURTLES 2014 AGM REPORT

celebrating
50
years...

Turtles Swimming Club is for anyone with a physical, mental health or learning difficulty

Turtles 2014 AGM & Presentations

2014 AGM Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To Approve the 2013 AGM Minutes
3. Any Matters Arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. To Receive & Approve the Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report
6. Secretary's Report
7. Election of Officers & Committee:
 - Chairman
 - Vice Chair
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary / Child Protection Officer
 - Assistant Secretary
 - Competition Secretary
 - Chief Instructor
 - 6 Committee Members
8. Appointment of Auditors
9. Any Other Business;
 - Amendments to the Constitution

2014 Presentations

Following the AGM, presentations will be made for the following annual awards:

Junior 3 Lengths Champion

Ladies 3 Lengths Champion

Mens 3 Lengths Champion

Junior 1 Length Champion

Ladies 1 Length Champion

Mens 1 Length Champion

Diving Champion

Relay Champions

Helpers Champion

Family Relay Champions

Junior Improver

Senior Improver

Volunteer of the Year

Scout Hall

**Church of the Most Sacred Heart
73 Pembroke Road, Ruislip, HA4 8NN
Saturday 17th May 2014 7.30pm
Fish and Chip Supper at 18.45**

AGM Chairman's Report

Headlines

It has been a challenging but successful year for the Turtles Swimming Club and I would like to thank the committee, volunteers and members for the help and support they have given me as Chairman of the club.

The Treasurer, Rosemary Noyes, will explain the financial situation in her report, but suffice to say we have continued to receive good support from local organisations over the last year. However, our fund raising activities have been mainly concentrated on our Sainsbury's South Ruislip sponsorship. Unlike other financial support that we have received in the past from other organisations, Sainsburys provided an opportunity for the club members to raise funds through in-store activities. Thank you to everyone who participated in these events, the high point being our December carol singing.

However, our raised profile also brought some new challenges as our membership numbers reached an all time high and we were faced with key decisions about pool capacity and related funding.

We also endured a very difficult year with NASCH (National Associated Swimming Clubs for the Disabled) and having failed to persuade the organisation of the inadequacies of their insurance cover we initially decided to end our affiliation after nearly 50 years. Having decided to secure our own insurance from Hiscox (via Swimsure Brokerage) we were advised by NASCH that we would have to terminate our affiliation. Following a challenge to this ruling, the Turtles Committee subsequently voted to remain affiliated to NASCH (but not take their insurance cover).

50 years ago a group of volunteers got together and decided to create a facility to help local people with disabilities by providing a Saturday swimming club at Highgrove Pool. I am privileged to have been the Chairman of this great club in the golden anniversary year and I look forward to seeing you all at our get together on Saturday 12th July.

Volunteers

The club only exists because of the fantastic volunteers who support the Turtles. Thank you to Patricia Bonney who has managed the club raffle for yet another year with her usual dedication and diligence and thank you to Peter Jones who has yet again organised the British Long Distance Swim and also handled the organisation of the competitive data for our in-house Gala and Championships and also for the NASCH Championships at Leamington Spa.

At poolside, Jordan Mason, Alice Evans, Cheryl Lee, Danielle Hillsden and Peter Horne all joined the team. Unfortunately, we have lost Kate Wilson, Sophie Schofield, Fiona McAndrew, Yasmin Francis and Phillip Heard. Norman Abbott also decided to hang up his Helper shirt after many, many years of poolside teaching. Thank you to Norman and all those departing for all their help.

Huge thank you to all of the helpers who have helped the club over the last year!

AGM Chairman's Report

Club Administration

Alison Grey has had a very busy year dealing with the above challenges. I am very grateful for the tremendous support that Alison (and Nigel) provide to the club.

When our membership numbers exceeded 150, the Committee had to decide whether to suspend new memberships, apply for a pool extension or restrict entrance numbers for our Saturday sessions. We took advice from Hillingdon Sports Council and also consulted several other clubs. Any pool extension or expansion proved to be very expensive and any support available would not bridge the large financial challenge. It was made clear to the club that our current financial model (i.e. no weekly entry fees) was out of step with other disability sports, other disability swimming clubs and would not be sustainable if the club continued to expand. Further, if we did not change our model, we could be putting future support at risk, as we needed a financial model that linked pool activity with revenue. As a consequence, entrance fees of £1 per person (£3 for a family) were introduced from 5th April 2014. However, we decided to reverse the decision taken at the last AGM to increase subscriptions for 2014/15. We are also not proposing any increase for 2015/16.

We have also revised our rules, regulations and our Constitution and we will be seeking approval for the revised Constitution under 'Any Other Business'

All our records with the Charities Commission are up to date.

Sylvia Smith OBE decided to step down as President of NASCH (the National body for swimming with disabilities) but we are delighted that Sylvia is continuing on as President of the Turtles. As one of the founder members of the Turtles, we are hopeful that Sylvia will be well enough to come along to the 50th celebrations!

Pool Activity

Linda Clarke (Chief Instructor) continues to organise the Saturday poolside activities. The higher pool attendances brought about a change to the pool set-up to provide greater protection to the vulnerable swimmers and those receiving tuition, restricting the lanes to 25 metres. Linda arranged 2 pool evacuation drills and we also returned to Hillingdon Leisure for a Sunday Fun Session with the inflatable island.

The swimming aids in the equipment trolley are used every session and the training records have been maintained.

We registered concerns about the lighting and the hoist but although the pool lighting was revised to take out excessive glare, the hoist remains unpopular with some of our membership.

Peter Horne was appointed Health and Safety Officer for the club and produces a monthly update to the Committee. Peter also took over responsibility for the awarding of distance badges following Norman Abbot's departure.

Congratulations go to Sarah Harrington who passed her level 2 Teaching Aquatics Qualification.

AGM Chairman's Report

Gala & Competitive Activities

The Gala team enjoyed a very successful 2013 season taking part in 9 team galas, winning 4 trophies. The team won the Harrow Kingfisher Invitation Shield, the Barracuda Invitation Cup, the Turtles Invitation Shield and the NASCH Region One Trophy

The Club was represented by 21 swimmers during the season, winning 183 medals (174 in 2012 and 144 in 2011) of which 69 were gold medals. Sophie Grey topped the medal table for a second year with 25 medals.

Sophie Grey won 3 National Championships (NASCH Girls 25 metres, Girls 50 metres and Girls 100 Metres) and Jack Locket won 2 National Championships (NASCH Mens 25 Metres and Mens 50 Metres). Jamie Woodbridge won the NASCH Boys 25 Metres Championship.

The club was represented by 14 swimmers in the 2013 British Long Distance Swimming Association and won 5 category Gold Medals. The Gold medal winners were: Erica Beckwith, Fiona Wilstead, Don Lamb, Jeannette Prentice and Gyllian Lucas.

Sophie Grey and Aaron Maddox both represented the London region to help record their highest finish at the ASA National Disability Championships.

We expanded the Club Championship event in May to provide more events, trophies and family participation. We held our Invitation Gala at Hillingdon Leisure so that we could invite more clubs and the gala was a big success.

Congratulations go to all our competitive swimmers who represented the Turtles and a thank you to the helpers and supporters of our gala squad.

Social Activities

The social activities remain popular and this year our Summer outing to Beaulieu was a big success. We again hired a special Chalfont coach with wheel chair lift but did not charge those attending for the coach travel thanks to a generous donation from Phoenix Ladies Club.

We arranged 2 restaurant outings, the Summer Sunday lunch to the Young Pretender at Kings Langley and the March evening meal to the Blue Check in Bushey.

We are currently planning the 2014 coach outing, the Summer Lunch Outing and the disco at the Fairway, West Ruislip (12th July).

In Closing.....

50 years and still going strong. A very demanding year where we faced many new challenges, some of the challenges fuelled directly by the successes we have achieved in recent years.

Thank you all again for all your tremendous support and encouragement

. As it is a special year, I have included an article from our Club President, Sylvia Smith OBE reflecting on how it all began and then how it grew into the club that we have today. Long may it continue.....

Treasurer's Report—Rosemary Noyes

You will have seen from the Chairman's report that our membership has grown during the past year which has resulted in a 50% increase in our subscriptions, which is welcome news. This has also had a positive 'knock on effect' on generating revenue through raffles and visitors fees.

Income from donations was lower this year but we were successful in approaching the London Borough of Hillingdon for a grant towards the pool hire for our annual gala.

We have also had the additional expense of purchasing independent insurance this year but overall our expenditure is lower than last year. The net result is that we end the year with a balance which is comparable to last year's (when prepaid expenses for 2014 are excluded.)

We will continue to subsidise many of the Club's social activities in the forthcoming year and we look forward to seeing many of you attending them.

Secretary's Report—Alison Grey

It is hard to believe a year has passed since I wrote my last AGM report, and what a busy year it's been for Turtles Swimming Club.

We have welcomed many new members throughout the year, as a result we now have our highest ever membership. The committee have discussed plans for continued growth to ensure pool space and swimming opportunities are maintained for our existing members. It is always lovely to hear feedback from our new members who enjoy the friendliness of everyone at Turtles along with the opportunities for developing swimming skills that we offer.

One of the biggest challenges we have faced this year has been around the issue of insurance. Once a decision had been made that we needed to change insurance brokers it was essential that we updated all our policies and procedures to meet the new requirements. This was completed throughout the year. You may have noticed some of the changes we have needed to implement, such as photograph consent forms, helper induction procedures, visitor signing in register, to name but a few. All policies are available to read on our website. Paper copies are available for inspection at Reception, please ask me if you would like to see them.

We continue to apply for grants where appropriate to help finance specific projects such as our September Gala. Unfortunately we are not always successful, competition is strong from the many charities that are competing for a finite amount of money in the current economic climate. We currently have an application submitted at Lloyds Bank, Ruislip, to be in the public vote for a grant. If we get shortlisted we will need as many members, friends and family to vote for us. The decision is imminent, so watch this space!



THE TURTLES SWIMMING CLUB

invites you to a party to celebrate our

50th Anniversary

on Saturday 12th July from 7 to 11pm

*in The HILLINGDON SUITE at THE FAIRWAY
(opposite West Ruislip Station)*

Disco, Cash Bar, Snacks and a Celebration Cake

*All members (past and present) and their immediate family /
carers welcome*

Please let Alison know if you can come

We hope to see you all there

celebrating
50
years...



Committee & Officer Elections

The following are standing for re-election



Chairman & Competition Secretary
David Lee



Vice Chair
Bijan Ghorbanian



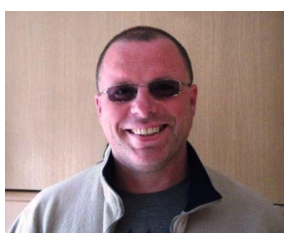
Secretary & Child Protection
Alison Grey



Chief Instructor
Linda Clarke



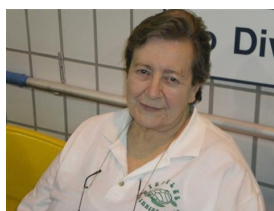
Treasurer
Rosemary Noyes



Assistant Secretary
Nigel Grey



Health & Safety
Peter Horne



Ann Chivers



Patricia Bonney



Andy Wallis



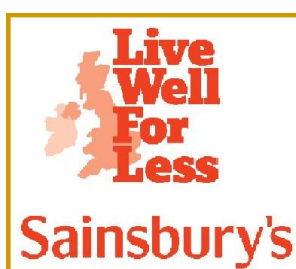
Anne Rourke



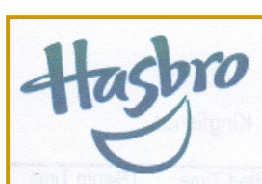
We are at least one short!

If you are interested in joining the Committee please step forward for nomination

Thank you to our 2013/14 Sponsors



The United Reformed Church of Eastcote & Northwood Hills



Combined Charities of Ruislip

Trefoil

David Lee
(Chair)
07730 047500

Turtles email:
turtlesswimming@yahoo.co.uk

Turtles website:
<http://www.ruislipturtles.org.uk/>

Alison Grey
(Secretary)
07900 118812

We are a swimming club for anyone with a physical, mental health or learning difficulty. The Turtles Swimming Club is based at Highgrove Pool, Ruislip and meets every Saturday between 5pm and 6pm.



Turtles President Report

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As we are celebrating our 50th anniversary as a club this Summer, we asked our Club President, Sylvia Smith OBE to tell us how it all began.....

It was June 1964 and the new swimming Pool in Ruislip (Highgrove) was about to be opened. A group of us was invited along by Freddy Kaye and his wife (always known as Mrs. Kaye) to the opening day gala at the new pool. Highgrove looked splendid on that opening day with plants and flowers beautifully displayed. Sadly, they were all removed as soon as the gala finished.....

The gala was organised by Ruislip and Northwood Swimming Club and a special display was organised by Freddie Kaye for the interval. Freddie had arranged for a group of swimmers with disabilities from another club to come along and demonstrate the Halliwick method of teaching swimming to those with disabilities. The Halliwick system is still employed today by many swimming clubs but has never been adopted by our club.

When the demonstration was concluded, Freddy approached several of the invited guests to see if we would help form a Disabled Swimming Branch of the Ruislip & Northwood Swimming Club. It was subsequently arranged with Highgrove Pool for the provision of a free of charge, weekly delegated pool session for swimmers with disabilities. As a Red Cross Nurse, my role was clearly defined and I can assure every one that I was not there for my swimming prowess. Over the years, I rarely ventured into the water in fact.

Although Highgrove was officially opened to the public in the Summer of 1964, the facility was not really ready for use. There were no disabled changing rooms and no lifts to the first floor. Many of the club members had to be carried up and down the stairs to the changing rooms. Health and Safety was very different in those days of course! It took some time before such luxuries were afforded to our group.

We soon discovered that all the other clubs had aquatic names for their teams and so we decided to rename our group 'The Turtles Swimming Club' and to amicably leave Ruislip & Northwood Swimming Club in favour of independence.

The club grew very quickly, mainly due to a tie up with St.Vincents Home for Disabled Teenagers. St.Vincents sent a group along in their ambulance (mini-bus) every week. We had 3 ladies who helped in the water (2 who were called Mary I recall.....)

Polio was a major concern back in the sixties and we had a large number of club members who benefited from swimming as a consequence. Audrey Buckingham remains a member of our club today and joins me as the only other founder member still associated with the club today. Pat O'Shea was the club's first Secretary and she later left the Turtles to form the Harrow Kingfisher Club when the Harrow Civic Centre opened. Several of our Harrow based members left at that time (1975) and the Turtles Club membership dropped.

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Turtles President—Sylvia Smith OBE



(Contd.)

Harry Parker was on hand back in 1964 and he was involved in the formation of many swimming clubs for the disabled. My good friend, Ann Lynch (Treasurer of NASCH even today) was heading up the Eltham Lion Swimming Club at that time. Together with Harry (who was later appointed President of NASCH) they came up with the idea for a National body. A group of us got together and within a year of the opening of Highgrove, NASCH 'National Association of Swimming Clubs for the Handicapped' was formed operating out of a caravan in the car park of Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

By 1968, we had an established gala team, competing against many of the teams that we still compete against today. We still have the detailed results going back to 1968.

By the mid 1980s competitive swimming for the disabled was buoyant and our team competed at galas at Putney, Ealing, Eton, Stoke Mandeville, Feltham and, Hornsey. We also attended the Southampton Penguin Invitation Galas and they in return travelled to our invitation galas. In the 90's we travelled to Southsea for the Havant Endeavours Invitation Gala. Later, Barnet and Feltham were also added as regular venues.

NASCH continued to grow and the NASCH Annual Championships (before settling at Leamington Spa from 1991 onwards) used different locations every year including Solihull, Harrow, Ipswich Cambridge and Birmingham. Whereas the NASCH Region One Finals were often held at Slough and one year we even travelled to Orpington in Kent for the Regional event!

But a big part of the Turtles has always been the friendships and the social outings. Trips to the seaside were always the most popular and we would regularly fill two full size coaches for our day trips. There are a few other 'newcomers' still with the club today like Patricia Bonney who has been a member of the Turtles for 45 years and been responsible for the raffle for much of that time.

The club has evolved from the days of Ruislip and Northwood SC through our separation and formation as an independent club and then the decision to become a registered charity in 1995. It is incredible to think that the club is still going strong, helping others 50 years after we started with Freddy and his vision. The club has developed and prospered when so many of the other clubs have folded and I am so pleased that although times have changed so much, the old values remain true today. The social, competitive and training & supporting activities still carry on today and I am proud to have been part of the Turtles back in 1964 and part of the Turtles in 2014. I am so grateful for the wonderful times and friendships that the club has given me over the last 50 years.....long may it continue!

