

General Secretary's Report

Once again, a very busy year with lots of changes. Having celebrated our Centenary with a very successful gathering of old and young in Southampton, we moved on to our second County Training Day. This was again well attended, partly due to the fact that many of our Clubs were in the process of gaining Swim21 accreditation, so needed their members to complete various training courses. A change to the order of the day meant that a large number of people were able to listen to short presentations on the activities of the County and Region.

The Management Committee took a decision to hold meetings bi-monthly this year. With so many of its members committed to running the day to day activities within the county, it was becoming more and more difficult for sufficient members to attend to produce a quorum. Communication is so much easier these days, with the use of the website and email, that we are able to 'talk' to each other between meetings when the need arises, so I would expect the new system to continue next year.

At the beginning of 2009, we held a training session for Management members and other relevant people on the use of the website. Consequently, more people are able to update sections of the website in their own time, with additions being carefully monitored by our Webmaster.

As we had known for some time, in spite of HCASA's contribution, there are no longer sufficient funds for the Sports Partnership to employ a Partnership Swimming Development Officer. Consequently, Our PSDO, Lee Spindlow, finished in this role at the end of March. Lee (and other PSDOs before him) has been such an asset to the County, the Management Committee is finding it difficult to see how we will be able to run some of our activities in the future. In particular, the County Training Day and the Training camp for our younger swimmers are at risk with nobody to lead the planning and organisation for these.

We are pleased, however, that Lee has become Hampshire's Swimming Co-ordinator (CSC); this follows on from a new initiative by ASA to employ co-ordinators for each County. Lee started in this new role in April, but we are yet to see the benefits to Hampshire as the work programmes have not been finalised.

The general feeling of the Management Committee is that our County will loose out in the change; whereas previously our PSDO played a very worthwhile role in supporting our clubs and schools in all disciplines, the new CSC will have only limited time to support us and will, in fact, be more involved with the Free Swimming initiative, liaising with Local Authorities and pool operators and some form of 'sales' role . It seems that the hard work put in over several years to develop the PSDO role in Hampshire will no longer benefit our swimmers. It is frustrating that a forward thinking county such as ours, with the commitment to development shown by the County Association and the Sports Partnership, should loose out, while other less go-ahead counties will no doubt benefit from the employment of their own CSC. And all of this with no consultation at all!

However, the Management Committee will continue to work with the Region office (now much depleted in numbers) to find a way forward.

Last year's report mentioned that for the first time, we had imposed a levy on each of our swimmers in order to fund the office of PSDO. As we are now no longer committed to that funding, one of the first jobs of the new Management Committee will be to decide how that levy will be used in the future, or whether it will be levied at all.

Sue Lambert

June 2009