

Tavistock Swimming Club (est.1990) ("the Club") AGM

Sunday 16th November 2025

Meadowlands Leisure Centre, 5.15pm

Present

Caroline Furze (chairman), Piotrczak Andrzejczak (parent of member), Tess Balment (parent of two members), Gavin Beard, Andy Bowden (parent of member), Stephanie Brittan (parent of member), Rachel Clover (parent of member), Lucy Cox (parent of a member), Sam Creber (parent of member), Vanessa Crossey (parent of a member), Katie Davies (parent of three members), Lisa Dawson, Alona Dubovska, Sue Dunstan (president and welfare officer), Lyn Haskins (grandparent of three members), Angela Ladell (parent of two members), Bianca Lewis (parent of member), Katy Kelly (trustee) Mel Oxborough (treasurer), Claire Palmer (trustee), Sarah Payne (parent of two members), Carol Pratt, Jo Potter (parent of two members), Francesca Sawyer (parent of member), Sarah Shutt (trustee), Jo Smith, Calli Walkerdine (parent of a member).

Apologies

Liam Sebag-Montefiore, Hazel Walker.

Minutes of 2024 AGM

1. The minutes of the 2024 AGM were approved with no matters arising.

Chairman's report

2. The chairman summarised the attached report, printed copies of which had been placed on the website before the meeting and were available during the meeting.

Treasurer's report

3. The treasurer, Mel Oxborough, gave a brief report. The accounts had been placed on the website before the meeting and printed copies were available.
4. The Club always made a loss when assessing membership and training fees against coaching and pool hire costs. However, it had made an overall profit in 2024/25, due to donations, gift aid and fund raising such as the Dartmoor Gala at Exmouth.
5. Members were reminded to sign up for Gift Aid, if they had not already done so and were eligible. They were also reminded to make sure standing orders were in place and updated where necessary. Although direct debits would be more convenient all round, standing orders saved the club around £400pa in bank fees so we were trying to stick to them.

Election/ re-election of trustees

Re-election of trustees: background

Under the constitution, one-third of the elected trustees in post on the day of the AGM retire each year but are eligible for re-election. Those retiring are those who have been longest in post since election or re-election (in the case of equality, the choice is made by agreement or by drawing lots).

The trustees retiring were Ian Higham, Mel Oxborough and Caroline Furze. Ian Higham was not standing for re-election but Mel Oxborough and Caroline Furze were.

Resolutions

6. To re-elect Mel Oxborough as a trustee of the Club. Passed unanimously.

7. To re-elect Caroline Furze as a trustee of the Club. Passed unanimously.

Election of a trustee: background

The trustees have power to appoint new trustees during the year, by any such appointments must be confirmed at the AGM. This year, they had appointed Sarah Shutt, so she was standing for election for the first time. In addition, Henry Shearman had agreed to join the committee and was standing for election for the first time.

Resolution

8. To elect Sarah Shutt as a trustee of the Club. Passed unanimously.

9. To elect Henry Shearman as a trustee of the Club. Passed unanimously.

AOB

10. Sue Dunstan thanked Caroline Furze for her work on the committee and for the Club generally.

There being no further business, the chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 5.22pm.

Chairman's report 2024-25

1. This report covers the period from 1st September 2024 to date.
2. It has been another good year of swimming. The swimmers have been training and the coaches coaching; people who want to compete have been doing so; medals have been won and records broken; fun has been had.
3. However, the standout feature this year has been greater parental involvement.
 - a. We have two new people on the committee, Katy and Sarah, with another, Henry, set to join.
 - b. Fourteen people have gained qualifications as gala officials: 11 timekeepers and three higher level judges.
 - c. Two people have trained as team managers and five more are doing so.I cannot overstate how important this is. Much of what you read in this report is a result of it.

Members' activities

4. We have 80 members, including university students, which is two fewer than this time last year. We have revived the Masters session, which had died during the pandemic.
5. Competitions-wise, members took part in everything from fun team galas at Meadowlands to international multi-sports events. Looking just at swim meets, 66 members chose to compete, swimming over 900 events between them. Fifteen qualified for the Devon County Championships with six progressing to Regional level. Delightfully, a remarkable 27 members took part in their first ever gala.
6. Our club championships were enhanced by "Texaco medals", generously donated by Texaco Service Station in Tavistock. These were awarded for completing four events and were extremely well received, rewarding as they did genuine but manageable achievement. Another improvement was getting the results out during the session, allowing us to present medals immediately rather than waiting until training the following week. Thank you to Gareth, who revitalised our club computer by replacing its ancient hard drive; Sarah, who mastered the system in record time; and Jamie and his daughters, who ran the medals table.
7. As in 2024, we ran a gala jointly with Exmouth, at their pool. We chose a better date than last year, avoiding the Devon County Show, had 150 athletes

competing and raised a little over £1,000. It is already in the diary for next year: 7th March 2026.

8. We also returned to league competition after over a decade. We were one of the first clubs to sign up for the City of Plymouth's new league and enjoyed a great afternoon's racing at the inaugural event. Team competitions, bringing together all ages, are excellent for both experience and morale. A special shout out to all the senior swimmers who put bodies and sanity on the line to race for the first time in several years. They set an excellent example.
9. It was another good year for breaking records. Megan ripped up much of the "girls, 8 & under" records' table, breaking 10 out of an available 14 and setting a first ever time for the 400m free SC in that age-group. Evie broke six, most of them her own and including one twice in the same day. Charlotte ran close with four and Holly and Hannah, with one each, brought the total to 23 over the season.
10. Beyond simple swim meets, Sam, Charlotte, Hannah, Miri all raced internationally in multi-sports events while Rory, Lamorna and James competed at national level. They and many other swimmers also took part in lower level triathlons, tetrathlons and open water swims.

Coaching

11. Our coaching team remains largely unchanged. Gareth will shortly be entering his third year as head coach and we are more grateful to him than we can say. He is primarily assisted by Jacob, while Nathaniel gives valuable guidance and helps at the long-course sessions. The other regular coaches are James and Ieuan, with Izzy and Claire supporting when needed. Thank you to them all. A swimming club needs coaches as much as it needs swimmers and coaching is harder than it looks. Trust me, I've tried it.
12. We are lucky with our coaching team, but there are pressure points, such as during the summer holidays and competitions at the Life Centre. Early next year we expect to gain three new assistant coaches, thanks in part to a grant from Tavistock Rotary Club which will cover the course fees for two of them.

Other activities

13. We are continuing to run our "Introduction to Club Swimming" courses of free taster sessions for children interested in joining the club. They give all children, regardless of financial circumstances, the chance to sample swimming beyond

lessons. This year, those sessions are being funded by a grant from Samworth Brothers Community Opportunity Fund.

14. We're conscious that cost might prevent some children who want to join following the taster sessions from doing so. To address this, Tavistock Rotary Club have generously given us funding for two free places.
15. By way of helping beyond the club membership, we also ran OCRA's Primary Schools' Swimming Gala and the swimming section of their aquathlon. OCRA do tremendous work in getting local children involved in sports and it is a pleasure to be able to help.

Grants and donations

16. It has been an exceptional year for grants and donations. We have:
 - a. A new shed, bought for us by Texaco Service Station;
 - b. Shelves in the shed, courtesy of a grant from Tavistock Rotary Club;
 - c. A new banner, provided by Dartprint;
 - d. Medals (see para.6), awards blocks and a large carton of popular lollipops from Texaco Service Station;
 - e. A £1,500 grant from the Samworth Brothers Community Opportunity Fund, for the free taster sessions (para.13) and to support diving courses;
 - f. £2,050 from Tavistock Rotary Club, administering a bequest made by Dr Bernard Raeke, to subsidise club fees (para.14) and to train older teenagers as assistant coaches (para.12); and
 - g. £365, from Tavistock Primary School allowing us to run the Goose Fair evening parking on their site.
17. We are enormously grateful for all these grants and donations. Our facilities poolside at Meadowlands are much improved and the extra awards have given more buzz to our competitions. The grants from the Samworth Brothers Fund and the Dr Bernard Raeke bequest will let us reach more potential members, enhance the experience of all swimmers and strengthen our coaching team while giving older teenagers an opportunity to extend their skills and employability.
18. Thanks also to all the club members who have been involved, whether by writing grant applications, getting rid of the old shed, assembling the new one, choosing and buying the medals, doing the Goose Fair car-parking or, in many cases, several of the above.

What could be improved?

19. The answer to that question is, “probably lots”, but the committee and coaches cannot do it alone. My wish list for parents.

- Join the committee – we want more fresh faces.
- Volunteer to be Welfare Officer: it would be useful to have a second person.
- If your child competes, train as an official or team manager or, ideally, both.
- Run a social event.
- Organise car shares to galas and training.
- Offer other suggestions to help improve the club.
- Spread the word about the club: we’ve space for more members.
- Take on updating the noticeboard and/or the “Latest News” section of the website.
- Consider morning training. We’d expand the Tuesday morning session if we had more takers.
- Give us feedback. We welcome timely, actionable feedback. If things have gone wrong, we want to put them right. Contact us or, if it relates to your child’s training, speak to the coach.
- Remember that everyone who runs the club is a volunteer. Please share positive feedback too.
- Set up a standing order for your fees, if you haven’t already, to ease the burden on Mel. She has plenty to do without chasing people for money.

Finally

20. Whatever part you’ve played over the past year, whether it was buying us a new shed, remembering to answer an email or anything in between, thank you. It is you and your children who make this club what it is.

Caroline Furze. TSC Chairman. 16.11.2025

