



YORK CITY BATHS CLUB

Incorporating

York City Swimming Club (Founded 1882)

York Baths Club (Founded 1937)

Amalgamated 1951



YCBC Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2021

Introduction

This report illustrates the performance of York City Baths Club during 2021. The following individuals have contributed to the content of this report:

- Steve Creighton – Chairman
- Alison Pickup – Honorary Secretary
- Josh Spencer – Head Coach
- Chris Turner – Teaching Co-ordinator
- Amanda Hullick – SwimMark Co-ordinator

The report provides information to support the Club's Annual General Meeting, which this year will be held on Sunday 27th February via Zoom.

In addition to detailing the performance of the Club during 2021 the report highlights the Executive Committee focus areas for 2022.

Covid-19

As it did during 2020, Coronavirus has caused significant disruption and presented many challenges during 2021. We commenced the year by entering the 3rd national lockdown on the 4th January and Covid has brought repeated disruption with social distancing requirements, the seemingly ever present risk of self-isolation and the continued uncertainty around the provision of teaching, training and competitions. From April onwards we gradually (in several stages) got back to operating a 'normal' timetable, or as close to normal as pool availability/capacity allowed and squad numbers justified. However, Covid has definitely left its mark on the Club with membership numbers approximately 12% lower than pre-pandemic levels. Attracting new members to the Club must therefore be one of the key focus areas for 2022.

As predicted the Club has not been able to fully mitigate the financial impact of Covid in 2021 the way it successfully managed to do so in 2020 (see financial performance). The forecast for 2022 looks much brighter but continued focus on effective pool utilisation and membership numbers will be required to ensure a break-even situation is achieved for the year ending 31st December 2022.

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Membership Matters

At the end of 2021 we had 136 swimmers across our six competitive squads, and around a further 22 members in our Masters section. Within our Teaching Section there were around 210 swimmers across all our groups, which is a significantly better position than we faced at the end of 2020, when we had only around 70 active swimmers, and were limited to providing lessons to the four highest groups. For comparison, at the end of 2019, numbers stood at 235 in Teaching and 157 in Training.

Our squads were out of the water until mid-April, but we were able to access more pool time on our return as The Mount Pool opened for the first time since early 2020. In Teaching, we were also able to resume lessons for Orange Hats from mid-April, although swimming lessons for our Yellow, Purple and White hat groups remained 'on hold' until the start of July.

We returned to a relatively 'normal' squad timetable from early September, and we resumed our usual lesson format in Teaching, using our four original sessions with space to accommodate all swimmers. We had accumulated a long waiting list by this stage, and Chris Turner our Teaching Coordinator has worked hard to offer places to these swimmers, filling space vacated by non-returning swimmers. We still have space in some groups, mostly at the top-end of teaching, and we are actively marketing to attract new swimmers.

The annual YCBC Membership Fee for the period 1st March 2022 to the end of February 2023 will be set at the AGM, and payment for swimmers in our squads, and our Masters section, will be requested thereafter. (This fee is incorporated into the monthly swim fee for those in our Teaching section, and a separate payment is not required for swimmers in this section of the Club.)

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the implications of gathering in large groups, and the difficulty of planning anything in advance, it was not possible for the Club to hold any social events during 2021.

In early October we held our BIG SWIM event, in support of two local charities, St Leonards Hospice and York Mind, as well as boosting Club funds. These organisations were chosen as we wanted to support charities that have, and will continue to, help local people and their families through difficult times as we have seen during the pandemic. All swimmers in Teaching and our Squads were invited to participate in the BIG SWIM, and some Masters swimmers also joined in.

Financial Performance

As predicted, 2021 was a difficult year for the Club from a financial perspective due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Swimming activities were disrupted massively, which impacted both income and costs. Income was down because of the lack of swimming opportunities, with teaching once again bearing the brunt. Costs for pool hire were higher because of the limited choice of available pool time in the early part of the year and increased pool hire rates (an approximate increase of 20% in comparison to 2019).

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Our draft accounts for the year ending 31st December 2021 show a loss of £12,413. Whilst it is obviously a disappointment and a cause for concern that the Club has not been able to achieve a break-even position at the end of 2021 a loss of £12,413 is a far better position than was forecast at the beginning of the year. This improvement is primarily due to the huge success of the Winter gala and the additional income from the BIG SWIM.

The Winter gala made a profit of approximately £12,000 and the importance of ensuring that we host two successful galas each year can not be understated. Had we been able to host a Spring gala in 2021 we would potentially have been very close to achieving a break-even year end position.

Further information regarding the financial performance of the Club during 2021 can be found in the draft accounts.

Looking ahead to 2022 our budget currently illustrates a projected loss of £22,000. However, this budget does not include any forecasted profit from the two gala's that we will host in 2022, a one-day sprints gala in Spring and two day gala at the end of the year. Two successful gala's combined with an increase in swimmer numbers should provide the Club with an excellent opportunity to recover this position by the 31st December 2022.

SwimMark

Swim England is the English national governing body of swimming. SwimMark is Swim England's quality mark for the development of effective, ethical and sustainable swimming Clubs.

There is an annual reaccreditation process to achieve SwimMark essential Club status. We successfully achieved the full accreditation (involving the submission of evidence relating to all 16 modules) in March 2021. We are currently working on achieving the less onerous biennial 'health check' in March 2022. The Swim England National Panel will meet in April 2022 to determine our status.

Securing SwimMark accreditation enhances Club management, strengthens structures, and unites Clubs. It offers Clubs a philosophy and programme to help ensure the best environment for swimmers. This year the Committee has adopted a programme whereby Elements are reviewed throughout the year, providing more visibility of the work that is needed to maintain our SwimMark accreditation. SwimMark also offers Sport England recognition that we are providing a quality service for all members, through its Clubmark status. We have successfully achieved SwimMark accreditation for several consecutive years now and remain committed to doing so.

Training & Competence

During 2021 the Club had to deal with the continued impact of national restrictions. This impact was felt across the Club including on the Club's ability to be able to train volunteers and officials. Two members of the Committee took on the role of Training Co-Ordinator providing support and focus to the Teaching Co-Ordinator and Gala Secretary to Club. This has allowed for the Club to increase

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those volunteers doing their Assistant Teaching and Teaching qualifications along with several Club members doing their Judging 1 and Judging 2 qualifications.

It is worth noting that Swim England gala regulations now require significant numbers of J1's to run a Level 3 gala. The increase in Club members undertaking their judging qualification contributed to a very successful gala in December 2021.

Given the lack of NRASTC courses during 2020, the Club also supported a significant number of volunteers through their NRASTC training.

Swimming Matters

Teaching:

The last two years have arguably been the hardest the Club has faced and this has perhaps been felt most in our teaching section (the life blood of our Club) with swimmers missing so much swimming and learning opportunity. Our teaching co-ordinator (Chris Turner) deserves significant praise for maintaining his positivity and passion during such a heavily disrupted period. Since September the teaching section has steadily gone from strength to strength and everyone has embraced being back in the pool.

Teaching numbers during and just after Covid were fairly low with a number of swimmers leaving the Club and the unknown making new swimmers more hesitant. However, since the last lockdown enquiries have been coming thick and fast and we are getting up to a good number again.

Attracting new volunteer teachers has been an area of concern due to limited availability of training courses. Thankfully more courses are increasingly becoming available and we do have a number of volunteers ready to embark on their L1 and/or L2 training.

A notable highlight in 2021 was a series of 'Race Event' sessions across the course of a week in mid-November for swimmers in the top four hat groups, with swimmers aiming to achieve time targets to get a Bronze, Silver or Gold Swim England Speed Award for individual strokes.

All swimmers worked so hard during the last quarter of the year and their hard work and perseverance paid off with many progressing to our training squads at the end of 2021.

As always, we would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks and appreciation to all in our volunteer workforce for their adaptability, dedication and commitment in supporting the teaching section.

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Training:

The past 12 months have represented a year of two halves for our training section. During the first four months of 2021, the pools remained closed and from April to July, there were still Covid restrictions which significantly impacted upon our ability to train 'normally'. From July, as restrictions eased the Club has been able to return to normal operations for the first time since the Covid pandemic started.

Between April and July, the training hours were significantly reduced, primarily due to the capacity and social distancing restrictions. During this period the training squads were forced to operate to several timetables as we battled to utilise the pool space and available hours as effectively as possible. Our Head Coach, Josh Spencer, is to be commended for the significant administrative burden he shouldered in working through the countless scenarios and iterations (on multiple occasions).

There were no external competitions available to the swimmers, so the Club continued to organise Level X meets at St Peters to provide the swimmers with a competitive outlet and to allow them to achieve qualifying times for meets in the second half of the year. From July the first inter Club competitions were allowed to take place and these opportunities were welcomed by the swimmers and coaches alike.

In September the training squads were able to resume with a timetable which resembled the hours that we previously had before the pandemic started and were also able to return to land training sessions. This timetable has continued to be tweaked in order to utilise the pool time fairly and effectively for all our training members. Each squad now has a balanced combination of long and short course sessions and at least one land training session per week.

Thankfully the Club was able to host a hugely successful gala at the John Charles Centre for Sport in Leeds in December. The open meet attracted a record-breaking number of entries and provided a much needed boost to the Clubs financial position.

During the last 12 months there have been some changes to the coaching team with Steven Brewer joining the team and both Heather Robson and Kathy Jordan departing. We welcome Steven and say a huge thank you to both Heather and Kathy for the significant support they provided to the Club.

The outlook is very promising for the 2022. Covid restrictions are hopefully behind us and competitions are once again taking place as normal.

Masters:

Frustratingly Masters were prevented from returning to swim with the Club until mid-May. Initially restricted to two sessions a third session was introduced in early September when the Club were able to establish a more permanent timetable. We have received a steady flow of new enquiries for Masters swimming, and our existing members have supported taster sessions and provided encouragement, this has resulted in several new members joining the group.

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Our Masters section have also been actively competing:

One Masters swimmer attended the North West Masters in Blackpool in September:

Emma Wills - 40-44 years

- Gold - 400m Freestyle 4.36.65 British Record
- Gold - 1500m Freestyle

A total of 9 YCBC Masters swimmers attended the Swim England Masters National Championships at Ponds Forge in late October:

Emma Wills - 40-44 years

- Gold - 1500m Freestyle
- Gold - 800m Freestyle in a British Record time of 9:26.94
- Gold - 400m Freestyle in a British Record time of 4:35.06, improving on her previous record set in September

Leonardo Lari - 45-49 years

- Bronze - 200m Breaststroke
- Bronze - 400m Individual Medley

The YCBC 200+ Mixed 4x100m Freestyle relay team of **Emma Wills, Steve Brewer, Laura Chidgey and Grant Peters** also took Bronze

In November, five Masters swimmers competed at the South Yorkshire Masters at Ponds Forge:

Ellie Berryman - 25-29 years

- Gold - 50m Breaststroke
- Gold - 100m Breaststroke
- Gold - 100m Individual Medley
- Bronze - 50m Freestyle

Jo Farrow - 40-44 years

- Gold - 50m Freestyle
- Gold - 100m Individual Medley
- Silver - 50m Butterfly

Tanya Green - 45-49 years

- Gold - 50m Freestyle
- Gold - 50m Backstroke

Simon Duston - 25-29 years

- Gold - 100m Freestyle
- Silver - 50m Butterfly
- Silver - 100m Butterfly
- Silver - 50m Freestyle

Owen Heeley - 30-34 years

- Gold - 50m Breaststroke
- Bronze - 100m Freestyle

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Fundraising & Publicity

'Traditional' fundraising opportunities during 2021 were obviously very limited but the raffle offering at our Winter open gala at the John Charles Centre for Sport in Leeds was both spectacular and hugely successful. The extra time and effort spent by our 'fundraising ladies' in presenting the prizes so beautifully resulted in the highest number of raffle tickets sold at any of our gala's. Thank you to Suzy and the team and to all those who kindly donated prizes.

As previously mentioned, we also held our BIG SWIM Event with the money raised being split equally between the Club, York Mind and St Leonards Hospice. We had a fantastic response from our membership to this event, making it the most successful BIG SWIM Event we have ever held.

Facilities

2021 saw us operate from Yearsley, Energise, St Peters, The Mount and New Earswick swimming pools. We have seen significant increases in pool hire costs and in the case of St Peters a more demanding approach in respect to the terms and conditions of hire. This now means that St Peters will not accept NRASTC as an appropriate lifeguarding competency and as a result we are having to pay St Peters to provide NPLQ lifeguards at all of our sessions. New Earswick have also increased their requirements in respect to lifeguarding competencies by adding a depth test requirement.

Focus for 2022

As outlined in the introduction to this report the number of swimmers in the Club is currently approximately 12% lower than pre-pandemic levels.

A 12% reduction in membership equates to an annual reduction in income (fees) of approximately £23,000 (based on the revenue received from fees in 2019).

A key focus area for 2022 must therefore be to attract additional swimmers into the Club. In parallel with this it will be imperative for the Club to ensure that pool time is utilised as effectively as possible and that consideration is given to releasing pool time that is not required and/or that the Club can not afford to retain. However, it is important to recognise that releasing pool time is not without risk as any prime-time pool time that is released is likely to be snapped up by other Clubs and will not be available to YCBC in the future.

Another key focus area will be to reduce the administrative effort associated with governing the Club by making more use of technology. Covid-19 has, to some extent, being a catalyst for this and whilst the Club has made some progress e.g. the use of Google forms etc. there is more that can and needs to be done, particularly in the area of financial administration.

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It is really pleasing to see that several new nominations for Committee roles have been received. Assuming all nominations are approved at the AGM, the current serving Committee members staying 'in-post' look forward to welcoming the new members. Our thanks and sincere appreciation go to those serving Committee members who have chosen not to stand for re-election in 2022.

Regards,

Steve Creighton
Chairman

For and on behalf of YCBC Executive Committee

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