

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Sunday 12th December 2021 at 6:30pm via Zoom**

**1,Apologies**

Hazel Sturrock

Ewen Sparks

Eric Gillespie

Amy Niven

Claire Thoms

Claire Doig

**2.**Minutes of last AGM held on 15th November 2020, were proposed by Ellis Jaffray and seconded by Kirsty Muller.

# 3. President’s Remarks (Steph Gilbert)

This is our 93rd AGM and like last year we still find ourselves talking to each other over zoom hopefully next year we can get together with our traditional potluck supper

You have already had guidance on Good Housekeeping while attending this virtual AGM. We don’t foresee any issues, but technology has its own mind at times.

Where to start?

Unfortunately, this year we were unable to hold our club champs, which is normally held in late February early March. This was very disappointing for me so I can only imagine how disappointed all you swimmers where. We were hoping to host this in the later part of the year but unfortunately restrictions meant this was not to be. I know Sharon will give an update on galas and all things swimming, but I do see light at the end of this very long covid tunnel with some swimming galas starting up again which is great to see. I had the pleasure of attending the friendly gala at Glenrothes

in November. The atmosphere was amazing, and the swimming was out of this world, and I was very proud of how our club was represented. Well done to all who attended.

This year also saw some of our most experienced swimmers leave the club. Either to go to University or to focus on school or other activities. I’d like to thank all the swimmers for their dedication to Step Rock over the years and wish them well in their next adventures.

A special mention to Anna Hedley and Angus McCallum, our team captains for the senior squad. I hope to see you both back at the club real soon along with the other senior members that I have left our club.

We had our first Scottish Swimming youth programme volunteer participant. This programme has been set up to encourage young people from the age of 14 to get more involved in their swimming clubs and how the club is run. It also gives the attendee an insight into what motivates young people and how teamwork is one of the most important factors when it comes to the club. Rowan Geary complete the residential course in November this year. In the few short weeks since Rowan completed the course, he is already put in place a senior squad support system for learn to swim and is working on how to support the fundraising the club does annually. I have seen first-hand how much this benefits young swimmers and I look forward to seeing how this progress is in the future. hopefully through this initiative we will see lots more young volunteers from our senior squad. Thank you Rowan for taking the initiative to go on this course and sharing your learnings with the club, you are a real asset and I speak on behalf the entire club when I say we are all very proud of you.

That leads me on 2 my next thanks. I would like to thank Orla Suttie, Esmme Thoms and Claudia Hall for completing the level 1 coaching course this year. It is great to see our senior swimmers and parents give back to the club whether that be in the form of coaching or volunteering to help others.

My next plea is to any parent who would like to join the learn to swim section of our club as a poolside helper or as a coach please come forward we always need lots of volunteers.

It has been a great honour and privilege for me to have been your president for the last two years. It has not been the smooth sailing job Eric promised, but I have been able to learn a great deal about the club, our volunteers, and swimmers. I would just like to thank everyone in the club for your support and hard work to keep our swimming club going strong.

 to Ellis for continuing to manage the clubs finances

 to Jon for all things Membership and Spond related.

 To Alison and Claire typing up the minutes and dealing with all the correspondents

 to Kirsty for looking after the wellbeing of our Swimmers and supporting me on many occasions (sometimes with a glass of wine)

 again thanks to Claire Thoms for maintaining the web pages

 to Amy for keeping the bugs flowing.

 To Gayle for looking after the social and fundraising events, and for looking after the kit

 to Claire Doig for taking over the role of trophy convenor, hopefully we will have lots of trophies to hand out next year

 I’d also like to see a special thanks to Chris and his army of covid officers. We’ve come to rely on you greatly over the past two years and your contribution has been invaluable.

 To the coaches that support the swimmers and the parents on a weekly basis and help us produce these fantastic swimmers, thank you

 Also thank you to Fi, she has supported the running of the LTS swim programme and helped to keep Spond in check.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks on a personal note to Ian and Sharon. The last two years have been extremely difficult trying to ensure the club still offers the support and mentorship to the swimmers while also supporting me is president and the committee as a whole. It really has been all hands-on deck to ensure at club got through all things covid related.

As most of you are aware, I am stepping down as president this year and handing the reins over to Jon. Jon has supported me for the last year in his role not only as membership secretary but also as vice president. I have no doubt that Jon is up for the task of being your next president. I’m sure Jon will strive to progress the club and keep up the great team spirit that we have with in the Step Rock family.

On a personal note, I would like to say a huge thank you to my husband. He has spent many a night assuring me I was doing the right thing or listening to my worries about all things swimming. I’m sure he will be glad of the break. Well I say that but I’m going to be around for a while yet so he better not get to used to the peace and quiet.

Please accept my apologies if I’ve missed anyone out with my thank you everyone’s contribution is greatly appreciated.

I would like to finish off my time as president with a final thought to our swimmers. Remember swimming is not all about winning medals. It’s about enjoyment, challenges, friendships, taking the opportunities the present themselves to you and trying your best. If you keep all of this in mind you will 100% make your parents, carers and your club very very proud.

Thank you

**4.Treasurer’s Report**

**a. Annual statement of accounts**

Current account starting balance:- £13580.28

Current account finishing balance:- £9499.08

Deficit for year:- £4081.20

Mainly due to club paying SASA for existing members.

Centenary Account:- £1013.82

Savings Account:- £10667.51

**b. Membership Fee**

Membership fee to be re-introduced of £15 per swimmer payable Aug/Sept.

Need more help with new parents volunteering.

**c. Budget Proposal**

**d. Monthly Swim Fees**

Monthly swim fees to stay the same.

Learn to swim £20 per month.

Up to 4 hrs £25 per month.

Over 4hrs £30 per month.

Monthly subs will cover pool hire.

Need to raise £10000 to cover other expenses.

This would cover gala entries, open water entries, coaching courses, etc.

Hopefully by 3 fund raisers (seniors sponsored event , easter prize draw and bag packing).

Sponsorship and grants towards coaching and equipment.

Questions –

JMB asked if it was budgeted for a full year of galas next year.

Ellis confirmed that he had discussed with Sharon for guidance on this.

Ellis thanked Jonny Adamson who does the books each year.

**5.Coaches’ Reports**

**a. Learn to Swim – Fiona McDonald**

Learn to Swim has always been an extremely important part of Step Rock, with the majority of swimmers joining the club at this level. Jon, as membership secretary, has done an excellent job of managing the waiting list of the club again this year, and we have welcomed many new swimmers, even with the Covid challenges that have been faced.

Kirsten and Steph have been instrumental in ensuring that swimmers have progressed up through the lanes, and it has been great to see so many swimmers graduating to the junior squad.

We currently have 53 Learn to Swim Swimmers, all of whom are energetic and enthusiastic and have developed their swimming fantastically over the last year.

The Learn to Swim Program as ever owes its success to the experience and dedication of the many wonderful volunteer coaches and helpers involved in all sessions. A huge thank you to each one of them for giving up their time so generous poolside, preparing sessions and for their enthusiasm, encouragement, and patience.

Learn to Swim provides the building blocks on which the success of the Club depends both competitively and non-competitively with the transition from beginner to swimmer and the confidence this brings hugely rewarding for all concerned.    As a club that is run entirely by volunteers, I encourage parents/guardians of Club members to consider giving up their time to become involved either in a teaching or administrative capacity for the Club in order to ensure the continued successful running of Step Rock.

Covid-19 again restricted the opportunities for our swimmers to compete. The annual Cupar Friendly Gala did not take place and nor did the Novice Leagues. Swimmers had the chance last week to enjoy a Step Rock fun race night which was thoroughly enjoyed. Thank you to everyone involved.

We are hoping to host our own Friendly Gala on 19th December with Incas attending [subject to Covid regulations….].

Once again, a huge thank you to everyone who gives up their time and energy for Learn to Swim.

**b. Squad updates – Sharon**

Whilst we normally celebrate successes of our squad swimmers in competitions – whether that be at our Club Championships, Friendly Galas, the Novice or Fife Leagues, club galas, or district and national events – this year it feels like simply being in the pool and training is worthy of celebrating. Having only got the LTS swimmers back in the water in late November 2020, and even then not all of them, then it was somewhat devastating to hear that the pool was to be closed again at Christmas. A lot of hard work had gone into getting the swimmers back, and they couldn’t be faulted for their adherence to the procedures, which was much appreciated by us all.

During the lockdown, senior swimmer, Anna Hedley, arranged for some continuity of squad connection via land training over Zoom, perhaps providing a welcome change from virtual schoolwork for some members of the squads. It wasn’t until late April that we returned to East Sands pool. The 4 month break – this time in winter – had probably taken more of a toll on the swimmers’ fitness than it had during the previous closure period. As coaches, we set again about the task of developing their swim stroke technique, swim skills and fitness. At the same time, some swimmers sadly but understandably left the club, so trials were organised and where possible new swimmers were brought in – we’ve actually had new swimmers join all 3 squads this year.

At this point I want to say a huge thanks to the whole coaching team, for how adaptable they’ve been during the past year, and stepping in to coach others’ sessions when absences occurred. This has enabled us to keep going consistently since April, which I think is a great credit to all. We’ve had parents and swimmers step up and take on coaching roles; Steph, Claudia, Orla and Esmée have all qualified as L1 coaches, with Dawn and Sally ready to qualify also when a course becomes available.

What has been remarkable is that even in the absence of any galas, our swimmers have stuck in there, kept coming and hopefully those who were at the “Fun in Fife” 50m gala really did have a lot of fun. PBs were smashed across the board: we had 32 swimmers from the 3 squads, with 107 swims and 96 PBs or first swims (90%). To be fair, we might expect a high proportion of PBs after an absence of racing for so long (most swimmers have grown in the intervening period!) but what has been really great to see has been the response in training following each competition, suggesting that racing gives a significant boost and new impetus to training.

Some of our more experienced swimmers have had more opportunities to swim at galas – the first being when 4 of our Senior Squad boys went to the RCP in July, for Scottish Swimming’s Summer Festival of Swimming. There followed from the end of September either district or Fife regional time trials, over 100, 200 and 400m distances, for 12-and-over swimmers only. It’s been really encouraging to see the hard work done in training pay off in terms of times at these events; as a result of these and the Fun in Fife gala, Step Rock looks likely to have 10-15 swimmers who will have achieved Consideration Times for the East District Age Group Championships in 2022.

Our four DRP swimmers (Sam Coull, Finch Geary, Fraser Stewart and Ellie Wilson) retained their places in the newly-rebranded Junior Academy, run by Scottish Swimming, though unfortunately most of the sessions have been virtual. Last Sunday, they had their first actual pool sessions, and hopefully will build on what they learned next year.

As those of you on Facebook will have seen, this past Thursday saw our second Superleague/Superteams event of this season, an initiative started last November, inspired by the ISL format, with Duncan Scott, Freya Anderson and co. The Senior and Inter Squads jointly have 4 teams, captained by Orla, Esmee, Rowan Geary and Fraser Stewart. The captains are responsible for deciding who swims what on the night, and for generating as much team spirit as possible. The Junior Squad teams are run by the coaches, especially Kirsten, and this Thursday we were delighted to have the “second hour” LTS swimmers join them, for a fun night of racing mayhem. I’d also like to say a big thank you to the members of the Senior Squad who helped on poolside that evening, supporting the younger swimmers in various ways – as ‘captains’, offering encouragement behind the blocks, or from behind the camera lens. It was lovely to see the club coming together like that. Some of the Seniors have also volunteered on a rota basis to help coach or demonstrate in the younger swimmers’ sessions. I know that they’re enjoying it and I’m sure the younger swimmers will benefit from the demonstrations in particular. Thank you to Rowan Geary for organising that, following his attendance at Scottish Swimming’s Young Leaders Programme in Abernethy.

Also that night, we awarded our first ‘Golden Cap’ in a while – an award to the Step Rocker who has shown exemplary training aptitude. This time it was awarded to Junior Squad swimmer, Andrew Lu. Well done to Andrew, and to all the other worthy nominees. Earlier in the year, Golden Caps had been awarded jointly to Oscar Geary (Inter squad) and LTS’s Sam Sutherland.

I usually report in detail on swimming achievements, but this year, with access to galas being so restricted, I’m just going to congratulate all the swimmers for continuing to attend training, and give their all to a sport that may sometimes feel boring, hard and unrewarding. There have been some outstanding performances, but I’d like to single out Russell Laker for achieving an official sub-1 minute 100m freestyle. With both Laker boys now having accomplished this, I hope it inspires several of the other swimmers to do so, hopefully early in 2022, because I know a number of swimmers are capable of this – and there’s nothing better to cement belief in yourself than to see your clubmates do it. From what I’ve seen from across all squads in training and in galas, it looks like it’s going to be a very exciting Club Championships in 2022. For our younger swimmers, this is always a great occasion, and I’m looking forward to seeing as many of our swimmers as possible enjoy taking part.

Whether swimming is your main sport, whether it supports another sport (like triathlon or football), whether you’re choosing to come to swimming to gain an important life skill, or if you simply want to maintain a level of fitness – it’s my view that as a club, Step Rock does a pretty good job of catering for a wide range of aspirations, thanks to its army of volunteers in various roles. In particular, I’d like to thank our outgoing President, Steph, for all her hard work and persistence in getting us back into the pool (twice), and stepping into a coaching role with aplomb. It’s really much appreciated Steph. Thank you also to Chris Apted, our cool, calm and collected Lead Covid Officer, who has dealt with the ongoing situation with a level head, and to all the parents who stepped up to be Covid Officers when that was needed – thank you!

**c. Open Water – Kirsten**

The open water squad continue to train in the pool on Saturday afternoons and will return to the lochs/ sea when the temperatures get warmer in the spring. This year saw three new recruits taking the squad to 13.

2021 provided only one opportunity for the squad to compete. Due to a lower age limit of 11, only 6 swimmers were able to take part in the West District Open Water Championships at Loch Venachar in August. However, as always, the Step Rock swimmers performed well beyond expectation: The team collectively brought home 2 golds and a bronze medal, with all 6 swimmers finishing in the top 5 of their races.

Unfortunately, the national event (SNOWS) which would have seen 11 of our swimmers competing was cancelled due to blue-green algae.

Moving into 2022, the squad will continue to consolidate their skills and experience and the aim is to enter a competitive squad into all four district events as well as the National event.

As with all swimming activities, open water relies on volunteers so a special thanks goes to Tom Hedley who continues to support the open water squad both at the pool sessions and in the open water. Tom also completed both his Safety Officer and Judge 1 open water ensuring that Step Rock can continue to provide invaluable volunteering services for next year’s events.

## 6.Election of Office Bearers, Committee Members

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Office** | **Office Bearer** | **Continuing** | **New Office Bearer** | **Proposer** | **Seconder** |
| President | Stephanie Gilbert | No | Jon McDougall -Bagnall | Kirsty Muller | Neale Laker |
| Vice President | Jon McDougall-Bagnall | No | Vacant |  |  |
| Covid Officer | Chris Apted | Yes |  | Gayle Edie | Ellis Jaffray |
| Minutes Secretary | Claire Thoms | Yes |  | Steph Gilbert | Gayle Edie |
| Secretary | Alison Millar | Yes |  | Shannon Laker | Kirsty Muller |
| Membership Secretary | Jon McDougall -Bagnall | No | Jonny Seely | Dawn Pemberton Hislop | Ellis Jaffray |
| Assistant Membership Secretary | Jonathan Seeley | No | Vacant |  |  |
| Head Coach | Sharon Hedley | No | Vacant |  |  |
| Head Coach | Ian Macfarlane | No | Vacant |  |  |
| Technical Co-ordinator  new title Training Officer | Gordon Torrie | Yes |  | Steph Gilbert | Chris Apted |
| Treasurer | Ellis Jaffray | Yes |  | Kirsty Muller | Kirsten Geary |
| LTS Co-ordinator | Fi McDonald /Kirsten Geary | Yes  No | Fi McDonald &  Steph Gilbert | Dawn Pemberton Hislop | Gayle Edie |
| Social Convener | Gayle Edie | Yes |  | Steph Gilbert | Kirsty Muller |
| Trophies Convener | Claire Doig | Yes |  | Steph Gilbert | Dawn Pemberton Hislop |
| Kit Coordinator | Gayle Edie | Yes |  | Dawn Pemberton Hislop | Neale Laker |
| Bug Administrator | Amy Niven | Yes |  | Kirsty Muller | Gayle Edie |
| Press Officer | Amy Niven | Yes |  | Kirsty Muller | Gayle Edie |
| Wellbeing Officer | Kirsty Coull | No | Dawn Pemberton Hislop | Steph Gilbert | Kirsten Geary |
| Website | Claire Thoms | Yes |  | Steph Gilbert | Kirsty Muller |
| Gala Entry Secretary | Sharon Hedley/  Kirsten Geary | Yes |  | Steph Gilbert | Ellis Jaffray |
| Ordinary Members |  |  | Vacant |  |  |

**7. Presentation of Trophies/Awards**

Step Rock Special Recognition Award 2021

So, this award is a bit unexpected.

As you all know we have no awards to be given out this evening for swimming performances or club champs, but I felt that there was one person in the club that really deserved some recognition, and this award is a small token from the club to the recipient to let them know how proud we are of them.

They have shown great team spirit and not just for the squad that they swim in but for the entire club. They have gone over and above with one focus and that is to make the club better, to support their peers and to try and motivate their fellow swimmers and club members.

One of their greatest strengths is their ability to communicate effectively with everyone in the club from the coaches to the committee and to their fellow swimmers

Younger swimmers look up to the recipient of this award and how they want to help in lots of different aspects of the club from learn to swim to senior squad. from fundraising to motivating others.

What this person has achieved in 2021 in my opinion echoes the club values of sports person ship, team spirit, caring for their peers, trying their very best at everything they do and above all having fun while doing it. This swimmer has shown maturity beyond their years, and I hope to see many more swimmers follow this person’s lead.

This person took it upon themselves to enrol in the young volunteer’s programme with Scottish Swimming and within weeks had pulled together a rota to get some seniors involved with the younger swimmers.

For me personally I’m learning an awful lot from person as I continue to grow as a coach so thank you, you really are an asset to our club.

So, if you haven’t guessed yet this award for outstanding contribution to Step Rock 2021 is awarded to - Rowan Geary.

Congratulations Rowan!

Rowan thanked Steph and was very much appreciated.

**8. AOCB**

N/A