

Minutes of Region Artistic Swimming Meeting at 8.30pm on Monday 13 January 2025 via Zoom Platform

Present:

Roger Downing (Chair)  
Mary Hooper (AS Manager)  
Georgie Coombs (Workforce Co-ordinator)  
Sarah Garrett (Grades Co-ordinator)  
Paul Davis (Chief Recorder)  
Paula Brand (Regional Squad Coach)  
Chrissie Robinson (Regional Chair)  
Steve Williams (Regional Manager)  
Christine Merrifield (Cornwall County Rep)  
Chris Seall (Dorset County Rep)  
Stacey Jones (Gloucester County Rep)  
Adele Rahn (Wiltshire County Rep)  
Viv Ebbs (Minutes)

**ACTION**

1. a) Welcome, Introduction and Apologies  
Roger welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Adele Rhan County Rep for Wiltshire.
- b) Apologies were received from Mike Coles and Clair Murphy
- c) Notice of Any Other Business not covered below:  
No Items of other business were received.
- d) Declarations of Interest:  
No declarations of interest were raised.
- e) Congratulations to City of Bristol SC  
The meeting congratulated the swimmers from City of Bristol Artistic Swimming on their selection to GB Squads, and thanked the coaches and volunteers for their hard work.
2. Minutes of Previous Meetings
  - a) Region AS Committee  
Minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting held on 28 October 2024
  - b) DIAP 2025 Document  
Page 1: The main action is to include a quiet area at Regional Championships and competitions where possible. Roger advised clubs to read the Swim England Inclusion 360 programme which is on the Swim England website
  - c) ASLG Minutes 18 November 2024  
Item 3.1 Grading  
Mary reported that the new Grading document is now completed.
3. Matters Arising
  - a) Item 1 d): Awards for Olympic success  
The Region has agreed to present a Trophy to Izzy and Kate from the Region, and enquiries are being made to see if the Olympic rings can be included.
4. Regional Manager Report
  - a) Asset Register  
Mary reported that the Asset Register has been completed.

**All clubs**

b) Regional Development Day

Chris Seall reported that a Development Day, run by Jenny Gray, will take place at Ferndown on 4 May. Chris has prepared all the paperwork and will discuss finance with Mary. This is aimed at the lower-level clubs and, providing numbers allow, Chris will inform other clubs in the Region. Roger thanked Chris for organising the Development Day.

CS

5. Regional Competitions

a) Regional Age Groups

Sarah reported that the Regional Age Groups are taking place at Hengrove on 8 February. Numbers are low with only two clubs entering, and so far, only 9 judges, although Sarah is hopeful that there will be two judging panels.

b) Regional Figures and Combo

This competition was booked to take place at Plymouth on 7 June, but then they found they couldn't accommodate us, and no other date was suitable. It has now been moved to Cheltenham on 7 June.

All Trophies are engraved and medals ordered.

6. Regional Grade Days 2025

a) 11 January 2025 Figures and Routines at Hengrove

Sarah reported that the day went well but numbers were low probably because of the new figures which were introduced in 2025.

There was a slight problem with marking because the spreadsheet only allows for one decimal place, but new judging rules require two decimal places. Sarah will contact Sarah Clarke to amend the spreadsheet.

SG

b) Remaining Grade Days for 2025

1 March Routines at Cheltenham  
5 April at Marlborough  
12 July at Hengrove  
4 October at Marlborough  
6 December at Hengrove

There was concern from Sarah and Georgie that no videos of the new Figure and Routine grades had been produced. Karen would normally do that, but she is very busy with GB.

Georgie to email Sarah Clarke, Clare Coleman (SE Director of Development), Ali White (SE Head of Development) and copy to Maria Ramos, Chrissie and Roger.

GC

Sarah and Christine reported on swimmers whose Grade results were incorret on Swim England. This has been a big problem lately and a lot of work to check all the Swim England entries. Sarah to contact Roger if she needs help with checking.

SG

7. Regional Squad 2024/25

Paula reported that the Regional Squad is going well. There are fewer swimmers than last year and, although they have higher grades, they are not as strong as last year. Paula is hopeful that their strength will improve with training leading up to the Competition.

Paula is coaching every session for continuity, with different coaches attending each week. Clubs involved this year are Bristol and Cheltenham.

Paula felt the Taster Day didn't go as well as expected and suggested that next year eligible swimmers, who would like to be part of the Regional Squad, should attend the first training session of the Squad.

Mary reported that all the official paperwork for the Regional Squad has been updated. She also pointed out that any visiting coaches must be registered Team

Managers. Paula reported that a Young Volunteer on the Regional Volunteer Programme is also involved in the Regional Squad.

8. Officials training
- a) Judges
- There was a discussion about the shortage of judges in the Region and the possibility of running a course on Zoom. Georgie explained that this was not possible because of the exams involved. Adele talked about using Microsoft Forms which are easy to set up and are used in schools all the time. It was agreed that Mary would send out information for Georgie to run a Level 1 Judges course in mid-May to establish any interest. **MH**
- There was a discussion about Georgie running an upskilling session for current judges to discuss the changes to the Grades. Subsequently it was agreed that Georgie would setup a South West Judges WhatsApp page with one representative, who is a qualified judge, invited from each club. Georgie and Mary as Admin. **GC**
- Members could send in questions, or their interpretation of various elements, or submit videos providing they have obtained permission to video the swimmer. Representatives in the Group must pass on the information to other judges in their club. **All Reps**
- Georgie will attach the new breakdown of the Degrees of Difficulty to the WhatsApp page. She has received these from Ali Pratt who is the World Aquatics Technical Controller. **GC**
- b) Scorers
- The meeting congratulated Paul who has been invited to the Combo Cup as Chief Recorder.
9. a) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Roger referred to a Zoom meeting which he, Sarah P and Adele attended where they discussed a neuro-diverse swimmer. He commended Sarah and Adele for their discussion after which they were able to create a space for that swimmer.
- Chrissie recommended the Regional Forum on 19 February where there is usually new information which could be beneficial, as it usually deals with neuro diversity.
- Chrissie reported that the new Swim England Strategy was launched on 30 November 2024, and it is aiming for Swim England, the Regions, Counties and Clubs to work together. Chrissie will ask Jackie for the new document which sets out the Aims and Objectives for the new strategy and Chrissie will circulate it to the meeting via Mary. The SW Region Strategy will also be updated **CR/MH**
- Roger noted that there is a lot of information coming out and he will circulate the Swim England Objective paper. Swim England is looking to create stronger clubs, with a connected digital ecosystem, which means they are trying to bring together several different programmes dealing with swimming. **RAD**
10. Swim England latest Updates
- a) Welfare Officer and Safeguarding Day
- Chrissie reported that the Welfare Officer and Safeguarding Day went well. It is an annual event and Chrissie recommended it to all clubs. There is a lot coming out on Welfare for the benefit of the swimmer and for the staff and volunteers.
- Roger reported the Swim England recommendation that people should be able to contact their Welfare Officer in three clicks by going on their website and clicking Welfare Officer and the information should come up.
- b) Contact with Swim England
- Steve will speak to his Swim England colleagues and report on the problems with the new grading. He was pleased to hear about the interest in the Level 1 Judges courses and the upskilling set-up. He is happy to help where he can. **SW**

11. Any Other Business

a) Dates of Birth withheld on OMS

Adele queried whether there would be a problem again when entering competitions and grading because the dates of birth for their swimmers were withheld on OMS. Mary explained that when the entry forms are sent to Sarah for competitions, she will then send those with no date of birth to Mary and Chris Vickery who will then check on the official website. This will save a lot of time wasted on previous occasions.

12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on 14 April 2025 by Zoom at 8.30pm

Circulation: Roger Downing, Mary Hooper, Georgie Coombs, Sarah Pullan, Sarah Garrett, Paul Davis, Paula Brand, Geoff Pearce, Chrissie Robinson, Steve Williams, Mike Coles, Christine Merrifield, Chris Seall, Stacey Jones, Clair Murphy, Adelle Rahn, Viv Ebbs

DRAFT