

PHLUG AGM. 2024

Minutes.

Sunday 21 April . HH Education Centre

1. Chairs' welcome

Apologies: Paul J, Sasha, Jenn, Gary, and apologies from swimmers

Board Members present: Emma, Karen, Martin, Terry, James

Lifeguard: Mick

2. Chair's report. Karen

A reminder of our Purpose:

"To represent the swimming community and be prepared to mobilise in case of any event of any attempt at franchising. And to liaise with the Corporation on behalf of our community."

We currently have approx ten thousand followers across Instagram / twitter/ facebook.

We have seen considerable changes since the Pandemic. Swimmer numbers are increasing year on year. Some negatives that come with that, but lots of positives with the Community going from strength to strength. Emma and Karen the co-chairs regularly attend the HHSports Forum and now also the Swim Forum has been reinstated - enabling better comms with City Corporation through senior members of the Heath.

SPECIAL THANKS to Jackie Reason who posts the temperature on Twitter / facebook every single morning for us. A super helpful act. Applause for Jackie.

3. Management report. Mick

Parking.

ANPR installed and tested but not live. There has always been a charge but no policing so many don't pay. Question now is over the charging, specifically around swimmers and what charging rates to apply. This is still under discussion and was brought up by Emma at the Sports Forum several times over the past two years. Emma has had initial discussions with Bill LoSasso (Superintendent, North London Open Spaces) and he understands swimmers' needs and their upset over blanket charging, and will continue dialogue. Emma to arrange meeting ASAP. Many letters from swimmers have been received with different ideas for alternative charging arrangements. Everything is up for debate and disabled parking will be part of that although we have to recognise that CoL will be taking an overall approach to all parking across all their car parks, not just the Lido car park. It was reminded that the Car Park was built for Lido users and not for casual day walkers or picnickers.

The Board will shortly issue a Survey to all swimmers to provide better data as a basis for ongoing discussion with CoL.

Winter swimming and sauna

The sauna has been extremely popular this winter. This has led to a number of maintenance issues and we have had to spend a significant amount of money and time replacing boards and treating the wood. We will be closing it down as soon as the summer season starts on 4th May. It needs a rest! and more repairs/maintenance. Paul is exploring the idea of a second, more traditional sauna for winter 2024/25.

- Sauna Tickets sold - 21,000, income £68K (Oct to April)
- Winter numbers - Oct 2023 to April 2024, 94,000 swims, averaging over 470 per day. Some weekends over 800 people per day. Incredible numbers.
- Total winter income £214K (Oct 2023 to April 2024.)

Headlines of the last year April 2023 to March 2024 - Very busy summer. Pre book sessions worked well and we will be operating the same system this year.

- Over 275,000 ticket sales
- Income £976,000
- School water safety sessions during June/July for local schools led by lifeguards.
- Discounted group bookings for groups such as DOST young refugees, Mental Health Swims, Mama Swim.
- Lifeguards dealt with lots of first aid situations, especially hypothermia cases in winter.

The pre-book sessions will continue this summer, capped at 800 people per session. We will continue to have the breaks in between these sessions as the whole facility needs to be cleaned each time. Huge pressure on the lifeguard / steward team with 18 toilets, 17 showers all needing to be cleaned between each session.

Repairs

Terrace repairs are coming. In the Paddling pool a new pump and chemical dosing unit are being installed. Fountain being repaired with new pump. More painting being done. In addition Solar panels on the south roof are looking to be extended. 10% of the energy requirements of the facility currently come from these.

PHLUG donations : LIDO team have requested new Gazebos for poolside and benches for the changing rooms. Memorial benches are accepted and there are some incoming. Research being done into benches. Including the option of recycled plastic benches.

Action: Committee to liaise with Paul J over benches and gazebo purchase

Spin dryer - PHLUG have offered funding but the issue is complicated as the Corporation need to manage the contract.

Action: Paul J to keep us updated

Showers:

New mixers are coming in to make the hot water supply better.

Cycle security:

Looking at getting a large bike park, and more secure storage. Minimum two locks advised. Security is being considered.

SAUNA CLOSES 3rd May

4. Chairs' correspondence. Emma

JW

Thanks for the update Karen and Emma and sorry I won't be able to make the AGM. I'd be grateful if you could get some clarification on the proposed car parking. I think the main issue is the high cost for 2 hours, when most swimmers only stay a short while, especially in the colder months. On our behalf could you ask the Corporation if would be it be possible to have car parking concessions for older swimmers or even free car parking from 7am until 8.30am when many older swimmers like myself, regularly swim. I understand that various swimmers are concerned about this and will probably bring it up at the AGM.

Thank you for all your hard work on our behalf

EW

My wife and I would love attend but, unfortunately, we are on supporting a marathon runner duties.

Would like to say thank you to all committee members for their work. Having served on similar committees I know that it can sometimes be a thankless task. So here's a thank you.

Comments I have on the Lido are: Do continue to keep it the inclusive place that it is.

Social media info was good last summer. But know that this is also a necessary chore now. Please keep this up.

Changing areas. Am used to the traditional style but perhaps doors for some cubicles?

Let me know if you need the occasional volunteer.

SC

I will be working this Sunday but please can I request one point to be raised with regards to sauna etiquette. Please can we add a notice outside the sauna where all the other instructions are to ask the users to have a quick rinse to remove their sweat before entering the pool. Due to ever increasing number of users this is a major hygiene concern. The shower is right outside the sauna so not causing any inconvenience.

VE

Thanks so much for this. Sadly I can't make the AGM, but please can I put out a heartfelt plea to have replacement hooks in the women's changing cubicles? (I don't know why they've all snapped off this winter - is it those pesky Dry Robes?) It's annoying and tricky getting changed without anywhere to hang up a towel or an item of clothing. Without pegs/hooks, things fall on the floor and get soggy. The hooks are very cheap items to replace and it's only this year that they've all been broken. (Do we need to ban people from hanging Dry Robes on the pegs?)

This point was noted and is on the list of actions with Paul and the Lifeguard team.

5. Finances – Emma (Jen absent)

PHLUG finances are looking healthy, with a total income for year at just over £28k, with expenses running at £24k, so a profit of £4k for the year.

Income is mainly from merch sales and ticket sales, but of course there is a huge cost in purchasing the merch and organising the parties, hence the high costs. After charitable donations (this year £1.5k) any reasonable profits are ploughed back into items requested by Lido team (see above).

6. Website - Martin

A meeting was held with the Hampstead Heath Swimming Team at which HH applauded the good work of the PHLUG web team and the PHLUG website (better than their own!).

HH asked that their own site should be the single point of truth for all swimming activities on the Heath (and for Lido information). PHLUG and HH agreed to maintain information on opening times and seasonal changes on PHLUG but to remove pricing and link to HH website.

Re PHLUG website, over the last year there have been :

137,000 visits to the site from 99,000 unique visitors. A high bounce rate (which relates to onward journeys) suggest that most visits are for the useful information contained on the homepage of the site.

The website has also grown followers with 610 sign ups to the newsletter through the onsite popover.

Plans for the coming year include a refresh of images and layout, and a news page to incorporate elements from the Newsletter with party and merch sale information.

7. Merchandise – Emma (Sasha absent)

It's been a really successful year/since the last AGM for Merchandise Sales.

We have a really lovely group of merch helpers who do so much amazing work each month, their energy, support and spirit are what make the sales so successful. We host the sale once a month on a Saturday morning. It's great engagement with the lido users and it is a great way for people to find out more about PHLUG, join the mailing list, and get to know the community.

Some successes to celebrate :

- We reorganised the stock room to make finding product easier for swimmers and at our most popular sale we had a transaction every minute for an hour!
- We have introduced new lido products such as bears, vests, baby grows, baseball caps, towels etc
- We have consolidated the sizes and quantities we order in one go to keep our stock flow efficient. (Especially across the seasonal fleeces/shorts/vests)
- We have been testing lots of new colours every month with great success, currently lots of adult & kid matching T-shirts
- At our peak we sold 150 beanies in one month!

It's always amazing to see how popular our stock is and we have had people come from far and wide to buy specific items! Including from Australia.

- We moved from Zettle to SumUp which is an easier payment system and charges lower commission on payments.
- We had a few issues with rats/mice and now moved a lot of our stock into boxes and hanging
- We are aware that not all of our swimmers can attend merch sales on a Saturday and so over the last 12/18months we've tried to be flexible. In the last 12 months we have done a Bank holiday Monday, a summer Sunday, a Christmas Sunday

and double December sale, to allow everyone the opportunity to visit us. Our next sale will be on a Sunday, 5th May.

On the horizon

- We are looking to keep our range inclusive and keep broadening including figuring out how to do lido soul caps
- We continue to use the merchandise sale as a way to promote PHLUG, and educate swimmers on where the money from the sales go (posters/information)
- We are getting ready for (hopefully) a busy summer season

We are always open to more people joining the volunteer team to help run the mornings and be part of the crew!

8. Coffee mornings. Terry

Three coffee mornings have been held in the last year. All have been very successful bringing in both new and established swimmers. We have encouraged sign up to the newsletter.

The location was changed to close to the paddling pool to facilitate easy access to water and power by positioning close to lifeguard room.

People visiting from many places all over the country.

Lots of people come to the Lido on the overground. Most people ask about the steel lining and about the management. All impressed by the management.

Suggest regular schedule for coffee mornings and for the coffee mornings to line up with the Merch Sales. 12th May is the next one.

9. Events. Anna

22 July – Summer party

A sell-out 200 tickets, with Wacky races and BBQ. £220 given to school for their kind loan of their BBQ, and £500 donated to refugee kitchen. 20 volunteers made the event possible and thanks to everyone of them.

2nd December – Winter party

Sauna masters came provided sauna insights and fun and everyone loved the winter BBQ. £1000 raised and shared between Food Bank Aid and Castlehaven Food Bank. A whopping 43 volunteers helped make it even more fun.

PHLUG also supported the last PHISH, Jan 24. Anna and Karen ran the raffle and £800 was raised for Castlehaven and Food Bank Aid.

PHLUG contributed £200 to the lifeguards Xmas Dinner. Something we hope to repeat every year.

Forthcoming Summer Party . 22nd June 2024.

We are already looking for volunteers.....

Profit from parties is always given away as charitable donations.

10. Committee. Emma

James and Patricia are stepping down. Thank you to them for their contribution over the past three years.

Della Dwyer and Jo Stephens both volunteered to step forward to join the Committee. Della already helps with merch sales, and has worked very hard at the events. Jo has been a regular helper at events and is keen to become more involved.

Both voted onto the committee.

Welcome Jo and Della and thanks to James and Patricia.

AOB

Michael Kahn.

The fast lane is on the far side (sunny side) and the slow lane is in the shade early mornings. Could management consider moving slow lane to far right hand side and have fast line just inside of that (slow swimmers often prefer to be near the pool edge for ease of access) In addition, the current slow lane is too wide and is used by large groups of people to stand around chatting etc., getting in the way of swimmers trying to swim up and down the slow lane. Would it be possible to improve things for slow swimmers and distinguish them from 'casual' swimmers who are not swimming up and down. Other option is to ask the lifeguards to manage behaviour like this in the slow lane.