



President's report

After coming out of yet another lockdown in early 2021 the Club has weathered the large Covid storm. We started strong as soon the pools reopened; after five months out of the water our swimming and waterpolo training/competition resumed and we were all keen to get back involved.

The Penguin journey over the last year has been a positive one full of tough goals, high motivation and team spirit. Thank you to all the coaches and volunteers who have been poolside week in and week out, motivating us and making us work hard for our goals. The outcome of all of this training and enthusiasm will hopefully come to full fruition in time for the start of the Penguin100 celebrations next month.

It is not possible to talk about last year without mentioning the sad passing of John Lake, who died in April 2021. John was the Women's Water Polo team coach and had been part of furniture at Penguin for so long it was hard to imagine a Club without his presence. His passing was a great loss to the Club and to me personally. He has continued to be in our thoughts, only now we are sharing fond memories.

Penguin100 celebrations

Reaching 100 is really a big deal. The celebrations for our actual anniversary year in 2021 were all postponed until this year due to the uncertainty of Covid, however the planning has been going on since 2019. It has been a huge undertaking. My special thanks go to Mark Bullerwell, who I must be really honest and say without whom, the Centenary Dinner and the other Penguin100 events would probably not have gone ahead. Mark has gone above and beyond for the Club and has driven things tirelessly. The Centenary Dinner has 280 attendees and will be a highlight of the Club calendar this year and a great chance to toast the Club's achievements.

Other Penguin100 events include a Club entry at the Herne Bay Pier to Pier event in July, with the Masters Swimming and Water Polo sections getting together for a swim and food afterwards. We hope we can do a Club tournament/fun day later in the year which will bring the whole Club together, but as always we need a bit of help to put this together. If you would like to get involved please get in touch.

Club award winners

Congratulations to Charles Kingsmill who was awarded the Ron Turner Memorial Trophy with Hadi Khairul as Highly Commended. We are keeping the Rob Derbyshire Memorial Trophy winner a secret for now, until presentation at the Centenary Dinner.

Penguin Juniors

The return to competition saw Penguin junior teams in the London League and National Age Group Championships. Read more in the Hillingdon and Laytmer section reports

We had five players in the U17 Boys GB team for the European Championship qualifiers. There have been GB, National and Regional Academy call ups for many junior Penguins with special mention to Charles Kingsmill, Antonio Bardella and Madeline Roberts. Thank you to the junior coaches for their continued dedication.

Masters swimming

Our masters swimming section continues to thrive. Zoom became their conduit for fitness and social activities during lockdown and when the lakes and later the pools reopened they were back to training with renewed enthusiasm. We've been inundated by requests to join the Club and our membership numbers in this section is at a record high. Thank you to Jesse Kelly who has continued to coach the squad.

Senior water polo

It has been a successful season for the senior water polo teams. The Women's team have worked hard to secure promotion back into the Second division in British Water Polo League. I have been enjoying playing with the team, with captain Rachel Bull. Fresh from their promotion success the squad is motivated and looking forward to next season.

The men have continued to build on their promotion to BWPL Division 2 back in 2020. Albie Duffy has captained the team which, at the time of writing, will be playing for promotion into the 1st Division in their last weekend at Haberdashers school on 19/20th March.

Thank you to Rumen, Claudio and Grimbo who have been supporting both teams this season.

Penguin Committee

Swimming and waterpolo clubs have faced some significant challenges in the last couple of years, and our Committee members have, as always, continued to work behind the scenes to keep the Club running.

They are not paid for their contribution and I would personally like to thank them all for their support and commitment. They have had a lot to do with navigating ongoing Covid regulatory changes, chasing pool availability and addressing rising costs. Some other clubs have not made it through. I am so proud and relieved that Penguin has not only survived but is thriving and ready to celebrate our 100th anniversary.

This year we see three long standing committee members standing down.

- Sarah Wren is stepping away from her roles as Club Secretary, Membership Secretary and Marketing Manager. Sarah has also been a past Club Captain and has done an amazing job coordinating the smooth behind-the-scenes running of the Club, especially in the last 10 years.
- We are losing Dave Bryan as our Treasurer. Dave has also been Club President in the past. Dave's input has been crucial in making sure the Club has survived financially and he's played a key role in negotiating pool costs and securing our time at London Aquatics Centre (LAC). This hasn't been easy at a time when the Club has been operating at a deficit and senior members have been asked to increase monthly contributions to secure our financial position. (Thank you for your understanding of these changes, and your continued support.)
- Gill Turner is also resigning. Gill is a Past President and has continued to give her time and experience to support the Club in recent years.

Thank you so much for your hard work and combined decades of commitment to the Club.

A strong sustainable future needs your help

On this point the Committee needs some new members and so far no one has stepped up to join the team. To build on our recent success we need more Committee members, it can't be put more plainly than that.

So, if you're wondering how you can help, contact me. I really hope that we can recruit a few people from each section to help drive the Club forward.

As an example, marketing and social media are important to support our future growth. If Penguins are able to share how awesome we are, we will attract other awesome Penguins to join our family, and our momentum will continue to build.

If enough of us put our hands up, the various jobs will be much more manageable.

I look forward to celebrating a successful Penguin year with many of you at the Centenary Dinner in a few weeks and at the other Penguin100 events this year.

Go Penguin!

Fiona Greer
Penguin Club President and Womens Water Polo team player.

Treasurer's report on the accounts for year ending December 2021

Senior Club Accounts (Masters Swimming, Men's and Women's Water polo)

See Appendix 1 (page 12)

This has been a challenging year for our centenary as we have come out of the restrictions of the Covid pandemic. We returned to training in the middle of May and asked members to recommence paying monthly subscriptions from June as we started back with pool time across all locations.

As highlighted last year, we faced a very significant 50% hike in the cost of using the LAC and this has had a material impact on our budget. We initially maintained monthly subscriptions at the pre-Covid level whilst membership levels were re-established, but there was a need for us to increase subscriptions across the senior Men's and Women's Water Polo sections to compensate for the increased costs and losses that were being seen. This increase was implemented in the last couple of months of 2021.

Despite pool hire cost increases at Fulham Pools the strong growth in numbers in the Masters Swimming section enabled us to keep the monthly subscription flat across this section for now.

There remains a key requirement across the senior Water Polo sections to increase membership numbers to be able to balance the books and avoid further subscription increases.

Having held our annual membership fee flat at £35 since 2015 (at which time it increased from £30), we will unfortunately have to increase this for 2023. The Club has historically looked to use the membership fee to cover Swim England registration fees which have continued to increase annually. Club Compete registration (formerly called Club Compete) cost £36.15 this year and will increase again next, so your Committee are reviewing an increase in the annual membership fee to £40 for January 2023.

Overall the main Club accounts (Appendix 1) reflect a loss of £5,564 for 2021. This is slightly distorted by a net cost of £1,620 in advance payments for the Centenary Dinner ahead of receiving income from ticket sales. These monies will be refunded after the Dinner when we will receive ticket sales collected through Eventbrite (an external events ticketing provider).

Overall the Club financial position remains robust with net assets of just over £23,000, but we do have some challenging times ahead.

In the past year we switched to direct debit for collecting monthly subscriptions and the annual membership fee across the senior club members. Whilst there is a cost to using direct debits this change has significantly helped our administration processes.

At current membership levels and the current amount of water time across the senior water polo and masters swimming sections the budget for 2022 is forecasting a loss of c£4,500. Whilst we hope that the Centenary celebration events will generate additional income to mitigate some deficit, the underlying fundamentals remain challenging particularly if we see further increases in pool hire costs.

The answer largely remains in recruitment; if we can increase membership across the Men's and Women's Water Polo sections to an average of 25 people in each section then we would achieve a breakeven position.

Currently we have an average paying members of 21 in the Mens Water Polo section, 17 in the Womens water polo and 37 across the masters swimming.

Junior Water Polo

The Junior Water Polo sections at Latymer and Hillindon run on an independent basis given their different set ups.

Latymer is a joint venture in conjunction with Claudio our Head Water Polo Coach and Nautilus which manages the pool at Latymer Sports Centre; as a separate venture no accounts are provided for the Latymer set up although the Club retains full control of the finances of this section and all Juniors there are registered members of the main Club.

97 members were renewed for the Latymer section as part of the Swim England registrations at the start of the year and a further 20+ new members have registered since then.

Hillingdon is a direct ring-fenced part of the Club and accounts. This section continues to run successfully under the capable management of Sue Seagroatt. In line with the main Club the results reflect a part year for both 2020 and 2021 so can't really be compared, but the financial position overall remains robust. See Appendix 2 on page 13.

A copy of the Hillingdon section accounts is provided in Appendix 2. They reflect a small profit for the period although I should flag that some coaching costs of c£1,500 relating to 2021 weren't paid until early in 2022. The net resources of the section stand at £13,420.

Swim England renewals saw 75 members in the Hillingdon section with several new members joining since then.

Summary

Overall the financial position of all sections of the Club is robust but we do need to develop a plan to bring the Junior members through to the senior teams and address the budget challenge of the senior water polo sections where the greater proportion of the costs lie in very expensive pool time at LAC (£180 per hour) and BWPL entry fees (£5,400 last year).

The accounts are presented on an unaudited basis as it has not been possible this year to have them reviewed ahead of the AGM. Paul Bryan has agreed to review these again this year ahead of Dave stepping down from the Committee at which time he will become the Club Auditor.

Emma Christie
Club Treasurer

Dave Bryan
Assistant Treasurer

Masters Swimming for the period 1 January to 31 December 2021

It was a very disrupted year for the Masters Swimming section due to the Coronavirus pandemic lockdowns with sessions only restarting in mid-May 2021.

A “normal” year would see us at about 130 training sessions but lockdowns meant we only had 78 sessions.

From January to mid-May we re-introduced twice weekly Zoom fitness sessions and the occasional Friday Night virtual pub catch-ups. Thank you and ‘Namaste’ to Jess Needham for the midweek yoga stretch workouts and Sarah Wren for the fitness workouts.

Despite everything, Katie Messenger and Clemence Grocholska managed to attend swim sessions on over 60 occasions – respect to Katie and Clemence!

At the end of the year we had managed to increase our membership in this section to 39; close to an all-time high. This was helped by a massive increase in enquiries following the end of lockdowns.

Jesse Kelly generously continued to coach at our Latymer sessions and we’d like to say a big thank you to him for all the time and effort he puts in.

Thanks also to all those swimmers who continued to pay their monthly subs during the pool closures and for restarting subs under the new direct debit scheme.

Thanks to Ashley Henley, Katie and Stu Moore for organising a hugely enjoyable Christmas meal at The Captain Cook in Fulham.

Alonside our pool-based training, a number of Penguins made the most of open water venues with some people taking to the lakes, reservoirs and rivers for the first time.

On Sunday 11 July 2021, Claire Berry and her daughter Beatrice (Bea) swam in the Outdoor Swimmer Henley Swim Festival half mile.

On Sunday 25 July 2021, six of our squad took part in the Herne Bay Pier to Pier sea swim (750m, 1.5 km and 3 km).

On Sunday 15 August 2021, Jennifer Gambrell took on the 5.5k distance in the Thames Half Marathon event.

On Sunday 19 September 2021 in the pool Karen Brown competed in three events at the Barnet Copthall Masters Sprint+ meet, winning a gold medal, a silver and a bronze medal.

Johnny Wren
Masters Swimming Team Manager

Men's Water Polo

This club year saw an enthusiastic welcome return to training at Latymer and LAC in the spring after the various Covid cancellation periods. Training at St Pauls School returned alongside the Masters Swimming session in the autumn.

There has been a thankful return to the Leagues with London League providing a North and South Hybrid competition as a replacement for the cancelled Summer League. This was played in September and October and Penguin won the Northern Division.

London League Winter Championships re-commenced in November and currently our First Team are well placed at the top in the First Division and our Second Team are lying 5th in Division Two.

BWPL resumed in October where Penguin were unbeaten in winning Division 2 in the first half of the season and since Christmas are currently unbeaten. At the time of writing we are well positioned for promotion back to Division 1, lying joint top of Championship 1 with two matches left to play.

Coach Claudio Palumbo with help from team leaders Filippo Varetta and Albi Duffy is to be congratulated in steering the squad forward out of Covid, incorporating youth into the team and producing great results which we hope will culminate into some successes come the end of the season.

There is a good spirit returning to the section and it is good to see us back and enjoying our water polo once again.

Ian Grimwood

Women's Water Polo

It was a very disrupted year for the senior Women's Water Polo section due to the unfortunate loss of Shakey, and the Coronavirus pandemic lockdowns. On our return to the pool, all sessions were swimming-only to begin with due to social distancing, but the best part was just being reunited after so long.

Over the pandemic when we couldn't be in the pool, our new coach, Rumen Kurtev, held fitness sessions over Zoom which were a really good way to train "together" and we are very grateful for his dedication to the team from the word go!

As lockdowns eased, we quickly got back into the swing of water polo and had a lot of new players join the Club which made spots for the national league team more competitive and raised the standard compared to previous years. This, combined with Rumen's commitment to the team's mission and his experience as a player, has really helped us be so successful in our BWPL season.

In phase 1, we went undefeated, and had one draw against our London rivals, Otter. Two of our players made it into the Top Goal Scorers for Division 3 – Rachel Bull (20 goals) and Cate Du Toit (15 goals).

In phase 2, we played in Championship 2 which meant taking on the weaker teams from Division 2, and the stronger teams of Division 3. We started well, winning all three games the first weekend after Christmas, and then it gradually got tougher as we played the stronger teams. Sadly our captain Rachel Bull broke her finger during a London League match which meant she was unable to play in the last four games of the season.

We won enough points over Championship 2 that, despite our draws on the last weekend, we had secured our promotion into Division 2 for the 2022-23 season, and we can't wait to start playing again.

Congratulations to Maddie Roberts who has been selected for the Girls' U19 National Academy team, and she will be training towards the possibility of representing England in the EU Nations Tournament for her age group. She's also in the Regional Girls' London Team.

We came 3rd in the London League Winter Championships which provided a great opportunity for everyone to play, especially those who don't play in the national league.

Thank you to Rumen, Claudio and Grimbo for coaching us on our national league weekends, and for sacrificing their time to help us succeed, and well done to all the girls who have played games this year and all the girls who make it to training as we wouldn't have managed without you.

Rachel Bull
Captain, Penguin Emperors

Hillingdon Junior Water Polo for the period 1 January to 31 December 2021

The junior section of the Club based in Uxbridge, Hillingdon has had another good year. Overall membership rose to 70.

The year started with a Covid lockdown from 6 January until 12 April when public pools were shut. We kept our members fit and engaged, with strength and conditioning sessions over Zoom. Our pool at Hillingdon SLC re-opened on 18 April when we returned to training on Sunday afternoons.

In June our session moved back to Saturdays when the pool extended its opening for longer hours, and parents could spectate again. We continued to train until the end of July, as few left for holidays abroad, but were unable to hold a summer party due to social distancing and nervousness about outside gatherings.

Training sessions resumed after the August holidays. The coaches rotated responsibilities. Our amazing Hillingdon coaching team are: Adam Maidment Under 12s/development, Michelangelo Tritto under 14s/intermediate and Shaun Hill under 16s/under 18s/advanced, supported by Will Hames. The coaches worked hard getting the players back to fitness and teaching them skills and strategies, to compensate for the lack of development inevitably caused by the long break in competition.

Although sad to see older players leave to go to university in September, we were delighted to see them continuing to play water polo on university teams: Anderson Jolly (Nottingham Uni), Ukendar Vadivel (Imperial College), Molly Payne (Leeds Uni), Sarah Watts (Birmingham Uni), Michael Seagroatt (Uni of Gloucester) and Alex Mouratidi (Alexandropoulos Greece).

We were very excited when London Water Polo League announced it would restart and Hillingdon went overboard entering five teams in the Winter 2021-22 Championship: under-12s, under-14s, under-16s mixed, under-16 girls and under-18s. The last two categories were firsts for us.

We were honoured to host the first tournament in the Junior LWPL on 30 October 2021. With such a busy schedule of tournaments and all the extra admin burden placed on us as hosts, we recognise just how much work rests on the shoulders of Chris Martin and Paul Bryan in organising the whole LWPL and how grateful we are to them for making the Junior LWPL possible.

We also managed to fit in entering an under-14 team in a Swim England Development tournament in November, which helped prepare our squad after such a long break from competing.

Covid had interrupted the introduction of new players so we mounted a recruitment drive to take on players especially targeting the younger age groups; many thanks to Kerry Chandler for all her work on this. Somehow we just scraped together enough under-12s to enter a team in the first LWPL tournament in mid-December, although it was actually postponed at the last minute due to Covid fears close to Christmas.

If you remember, in spring 2020 this branch had fulfilled a long term ambition to set up a new girls training session, at Highgrove Pool Ruislip, only to have it shut for Covid lockdown 1. After waiting patiently and following repeated requests, we were delighted to get extra pool time at Hillingdon SLC to enable this to restart in November 2021.

Well done to the winners of the 2021 Jack Petchey Awards – Dan Usher (March), Ukendar Vadivel (June), Sophie Wilkinson (November). Three outstanding young people.

In late Autumn a number of Hillingdon under-16s were fortunate to get playing opportunities beyond the Club, because of all the hard work put in by Shaun Hill.

In summary

- Four Hillingdon girls represented Middlesex in Girls Inter County Under 16s: Lize Crone, Sophie Wilkinson, Robyn Kell and Orlaith Graham;
- Six Hillingdon players represented Middlesex in Mixed Inter County Under-16s; Sam Wood, Sophie Wilkinson, Ibrahim Khan, Hadi Khairul, Bailey Sapsed and Riaz Garnie;
- Three Hillingdon girls represented London in the U16 Girls Inter Regionals: Lize, Orlaith and Sophie;
- Two Hillingdon boys represented London in the U16 Boys Inter Regionals: Bailey and Hadi.
- Three Hillingdon boys played in the Under-15 NAGs representing North London: Riaz, Sam and Avi Juneja.

The year was rounded off by a Christmas Party and Awards. The party was organised by Ruth and the Baldwin family, and all the parents brought an amazing spread of food to share. The key awards went to

- U12 Coach's Player: Zain Garnie;
- U14 Coach's Player: Sam Scarlett;
- Advanced Group Coach's Player: Charlie Richardson;
- U15s Shield, Sporting Performance of the Year: Bailey Sapsed.
- Girl's Award: Lize Crone.

There are many people to thank, apart from Ruth and Chris Baldwin; Adrian Wood, Kerry Chandler and Katrina Garnie have made a huge contribution in helping poolside, at tournaments and in the background; Mel Seagroatt for scoring, Michael Seagroatt for refereeing and Maxi Seagroatt who helped with the kit order.

Last but not least, a big thank you to Emma, Dave and Sarah for all their help and support with our admin and accounts.

For more detail see here :

<https://londonpenguin.com/2022/01/14/hillingdon-penguin-seize-every-opportunity-to-compete/>

<https://londonpenguin.com/2021/12/11/penguin-girls-enjoy-success-playing-for-middlesex-in-the-south-east-region-inter-county-u16-girls-championship/>

<https://londonpenguin.com/2022/02/27/hillingdon-christmas-party-awards-and-fun-tournament-december-2021/>

Reporting period Jan-Dec 2021

Sue Seagroatt

Manager, Hillingdon Penguin Water Polo

Latymer Junior Water Polo

Finally back at the competitions, the matches restarted in September 2021 and Penguin will be represented by 11 teams in London League and seven teams in the NAGs (National Age Group Championships).

From April to August we did a training session plan for all our groups, working hard to create teams for U12/U14/U16+18 boys and girls.

The London League Winter Championships re-started in October and we were ready to come back with six teams: U18 Boys, U18 Girls, U16 Mixed, U16 Girls, U14 Mixed, and U12 Mixed. All these championships will finish at the end of March. At the moment we write, we are London League U18 Boys winner (undefeated), U16 Mixed finalist, U14 Mixed finalist (undefeated) and U12 Mixed finalist; other competitions are still on.

The London League Summer Championships which start in April) will see three entries: U15 Mixed and two U13 Mixed teams.

On the national stage we are very proud to tell that, for the first time, the U15 Girls team attended the NAGS with a fantastic 6th place. Alongside them we entered two U15 Boys teams with a great 5th and 10th place.

April and May 2022 will see also the U17 NAGs competitions for which we have entered two boys teams boys and a girls team, and the U19 NAGs where a Penguin boys and a Penguin girls team will be competing.

We continue to offer our players to the national team: Charles Kingsmill as part of the GB team will play the U19 European qualifiers in April 2022 in Malta, Antonio Bardella Boys' U17b and Madeline Roberts Girls' U17 are in the National Academy looking for the call for the EU Nations Tournament to represent England.

Five Penguin U17 players were in the GBR team for the European Championships Qualification played in June 2021: Charles Kingsmill, Josh Luff, Theo Pliner, Andre Savic and Max Hubrich.

A special and unlucky mention goes to Elliott McHugh and Toby Roberts, really they are not Juniors anymore as they are U20, who were selected into the GB team for the University Games which were cancelled because of pandemic (the championship was due to be held in China)

About Regional Academy, special mention to Ejike Ochei Okpara, Abelardo Cardenas, Emanuele Borrelli, Panos Verroitis, Shai Saltman in the London Boys' team; Antonio Bardella, Alex Stuartson and Jacob Bryant in the South East Boys' team. Madeline Roberts in the London Girls' Team.

Finally, we take this opportunity to inform all of you that we have confirmed our participation in the next HaBaWaBa Festival (www.habawaba.com), the world competition for clubs in July 2022 for U12 and U14 Penguin teams. The competition will be played in Italy.

Claudio Palumbo

London WP Camp Director, West London Penguin and Latymer Water Polo Team Head Coach

WL PENGUIN STAFF – LATYMER SECTION

IAN "GRIMBO" GRIMWOOD – TEAM MANAGER & GOALKEEPER COACH

RUMAN KURTEV – U16 / U14 COACH

LORENZO BARDELLA – ASSISTANT COACH

CLAUDIO PALUMBO – HEAD COACH

ERIN APPLEWHITE – U14 / U12 COACH

