

Silver Pins 2020

Simon Gee

Simon has worked with the region as a volunteer since 2013. Initially he was a Swimming Committee member and then took on the role as the region's Licensing Officer. With his small team, he reviews all the licence applications from swimming clubs in the region and grants the licence for the meet to take place. Once the meet has taken place and Simon reviews all the documentation that has to be submitted after a meet to ensure that meet conditions have been met.

Simon is always more than happy to provide advice either theoretically or on a particular licence application to ensure it meets the national licensing criteria and to ensure that there is a fair play for all swimmers.

Amy Bryant

Amy has dedicated a great deal to the region over the years, beginning her services on the Synchronised Swimming Committee, and then fulfilling the role of Synchro Manager for 4 years. She drove synchro development in the region from the outset, making sure development days, CPD's and competitions ran smoothly and effectively.

She then took up full time employment with the region, but she continued to regularly coach the regional squad on a voluntary basis. She now continues to provide support to the region as an artistic swimming judge and as a member of the regional Synchronised Swimming Committee.

Ben Negus

Ben Negus has been a driving force in the region for many years now. He spends a huge amount of time informally mentoring coaches and sharing guidance with coaches across the region. He has led numerous regional CPD events for coaches and is a big believer in sharing information within the coaching circles so everyone benefits from it. Ben has been encouraging other clubs to use the Covid-19 pandemic as an opportunity to get the 'house in order' and to deliver some goal setting classes, increased strength and conditioning exposure, as well as checking in on members on a more personal level. He has been providing coaches with support on how to engage with members during lockdown, but has also been an ambassador of cross-club working long before.

His positive thinking drive has even made the Swim England national news and has been essential for the mental wellbeing for our coaches during challenging times. He is a credit to the sport and many athletes and coaches alike owe a great deal to the passion and knowledge that Ben passes on.

Dave Champion

Dave Champion has continually provided his services to the region and our members by providing an exceptional level of support during the Covid-19 pandemic. He has helped deliver the regular coach drop in's leading on a variety of themes to share and provide an opportunity for coach engagement whilst our pools have been closed. Dave has been promoting our positive messaging on our social media channels, providing some forward-thinking angles, whilst still providing some well received humour and technical sharing with our members. This was happening long before Covid-19,

however it has made a huge contribution to keeping up morale at such an uncertain time. Dave has also assisted in the production of the return to training guidance, and has been a sounding board for our coaches all over the region. In addition, his transparent attitude and his open door policy has encouraged many coaches to approach for support and advice over the years. He is always happy to pick up the phone and help a coach in need.

We are extremely proud to have Dave in our region and we are awarding him the Silver Pin in recognition of all that he has done for the sport in the region.

Jeff Cook Salver – Joan Wheeler

Joan was a competitive swimmer as a child, and knew the value of volunteering from when her father had volunteered as an official and club volunteer, she renewed her involvement in swimming when her own children joined Modernian SC (Bedfordshire) in the 1990s. She joined the committee, qualified as a judge and, after a few years, became Club Chairman, serving in this role for nine years. After a period representing her club on the Bedfordshire County Executive, she became the County Team Manager and then the County Secretary, carrying out these roles for ten years. She was Bedfordshire County President on two occasions. She qualified as a swimming referee in 2010, and continues to volunteer at a range of club, county, regional and national competitions.

In 2011 she was elected to the then ASA East Region Management Board, and in 2013 became Regional Chairman. Over the past seven years, she has led the region through a range of challenges, and, working within that team, has found solutions to the many issues, making the best use of the resources available to support our members and clubs. She is very committed to ensuring that all the disciplines of our sport continue to develop and move forward, and that all of our members have the opportunity of reaching their full potential whilst having fun.

I think behind the scenes members wouldn't realise, that up until recently, she has been Chairman of the Regional Chairs Group. During that time, and partly as a consequence of the Swim England Board restructure, the Group has increasingly become a valued resource, both acting as a sounding board for policy development and as a collective voice lobbying for change. She is passionate about the value of swimming at all levels and in the back ground she has been very influential, she is determined and committed, remains calm under pressure, and has a natural sense of fairness.

At the end of 2019 she was elected to the Swim England board, where she endeavours to ensure that Swim England puts its members and clubs at the heart of its decisions.

During the current challenges she has been extremely busy, overseeing the Region and ensuring that the development of our athletes and coaches continues, making best use of the available resources.

Joan has made a significant contribution to the sport within the region, and I would like to nominate her for the Jeff Cook