

Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Disability Leadership Group Meeting
Tuesday 12th November 2024 at 8pm

Present	Peter Winter (PW)	Disability Swimming Manager
	Helen Stephens (HS)	East Region Board Director
	Ann Byrne (AB)	Suffolk Representative
	Carl Cooper (CC)	National Talent Officer
	Sandra Grant (SG)	Specialist
	Louise Hughes (LH)	Hertfordshire Representative
	Anthony Moore (TM)	Norfolk Representative

Also present: James Salmon, Regional Manager (JS)

24/25 Apologies

- 24/25.1 Apologies received from Chris Pagan. Carl Cooper joined the meeting at 8.23pm, with apologies for lateness.
- 24/25.2 Martin Lees might join future meetings from 2025.

24/26 Declarations of conflict of interest

- 24/26.1 None declared.

24/27 Previous minutes

- 24/27.1 Minutes from the meeting held on 18th July 2024 were circulated prior to the meeting. These were agreed.

24/28 Matters arising

- 24/28.1 The matter arising is the budget for 2025. PW shared the Disability Leadership Group plan for 2025 on the screen.

The operational group will hold four meetings throughout the year - one each quarter. Three have already been drafted and another will be added for November. Athlete progression and support will be discussed at these meetings.

The East Region Para Championships will take place, along with classification, in September 2025 at Newmarket – date to be confirmed. The event allows athletes to be classified and then have a chance to achieve qualifying times for the East Region Championships.

As per Swim England guidance, three development training days are to be delivered in the year. The first one in 2025 will be held on 2nd March in Colchester with Tracy Cole assisting. Other pools which could be considered are Ipswich, Chelmsford and The Garrison.

Equipment is to be put on the budget. A retractable screen is needed, to be used to split rooms when holding classifications and events. These can be purchased at relatively low cost from Amazon. The screen is about 5ft high. The Region already has a bench for bench-testing.

- 24/28.2 PW shared the budget for 2025 on the screen. Inflation was taken into consideration when calculating the costs, so they are higher this year, with £190 for coaches and £300 for pool hire. March, June and November are roughly when the three training sessions will be held. The August figure covers anything above what is needed for the Para Championships. The September figure is the costing for the Para Championships. Pool hire has not been added for September yet, as the cost for Newmarket is not yet known.

PW confirmed that the cost for coaches is for two coaches. The other coaches attend as volunteers, as a learning experience.

The low cost of the pool and room hire was queried. PW confirmed trying to keep it low. Abbey pool in Cambridge was £225 last year. £75 was added to this cost for 2025.

The income of £2260 is based on what was charged in 2024. The training costs are based on 20 swimmers attending. The £15 fee charged to the swimmers for attending the camp was queried. PW responded he would like to keep the cost reasonable for the swimmers to encourage attendance.

PW confirmed that there should be a small amount of profit made in 2025. Once PW has received all the figures, the budget submission will be made to the Board.

24/29

Athlete recognition

- 24/29.1 **LH** - Hertfordshire – Both Grace Harvey and Louise Fiddes were Paralympic champions in the 100m breaststroke in Paris.
- 24/29.2 **TM** – Norfolk – William Ellard now swims with Norwich Swan. His records and success at the Paralympics were mentioned - a World Record in the 200m freestyle, a silver medal in the 100m butterfly and a gold medal in the mixed relay. Jessica-Jane Applegate has been successful at the Open Water swimming event in Sardinia.
- 24/29.3 **AB** – Suffolk – Angelo Hearn, Corey Hare, James Clayton, Seb Konrath and PW swam at the regional meet. Jude Gunner, who now also swims in Norfolk with Norwich Swan, was also mentioned for setting records.
- 24/29.4 **PW** – Overall athlete recognition: Sam Bradley (Team Luton), Corey Hare (Team Ipswich), PW (Team Anglia and Newmarket), and Jessica-Jane Applegate (City of Norwich) attended the Para Masters event in Sheffield. Ellie Challis from East Region won gold.

- 24/29.5 **Sent by CP (Essex) to JS** – Brock Whiston (Barking and Dagenham) won medals in the Paralympics in Paris.

Six swimmers from Essex have qualified for the Aquatics GB Para-Swimming Winter Meet:

Kai Bradford- Romford

Roan Brennan and Rio Rogers- Basildon and Phoenix

Jacob Desso- Runnymede

Elizabeth Grey- Chelmsford

Jason Van Der Merwe- Borough of Newham

24/30

County reports

- 24/30.1 **AB Suffolk** – A small team from Ipswich entered the Norfolk Swimability Meet in July. The provisional date for the Swimability Meet next year is the 5th April.
- 24/30.2 **AM Norfolk** – The Annual General Meeting is later in November. AM is likely to take on the role of Disability Liaison Officer again. The Swimability Meet is likely to be in the first week of July 2025.
- 24/30.3 **LH** - 14 para records were broken at the recent Short-Course Championships. There were approximately 38 records broken for the Masters.
- 24/30.4 **CC – Athlete recognition for the para bespoke training programmes** - These are national talent programmes; it does not include performance or British.

The information he provided is shown in the table below:

Name	Para Bespoke Programme	National Youth Development Programme	Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DiSE)	Home Club
Abigail Wickens	Y		Y	Flitwick Dolphins
Harry Arnold-Pepper	Y	Y		City Of Cambridge
Jude Gunner	Y	Y		Norwich Swan
Elizabeth Grey	Y			Chelmsford City
Ida Corcoran	Y			Flitwick Dolphins
Claire Cannon	Y			City of Cambridge
Lily Herring	Y			City of Norwich

24/31

2025 Budget and Plan

- 24/31.1 The budget was covered in the matters arising.

24/32 Regional training sessions 2025

- 24/32.1 The first regional training session will be held in Colchester in March 2025 with Tracy Cole assisting. More training dates are to be added. The November session will probably be around the same time as this year, and there is likely to be one in June before Coventry.

24/33 Para-Swimming Championships 2024

- 24/33.1 It had been fed back to Swim England via Carl Cooper about the disappointment in there only being five swimmers at this event for classification, due to another Classification event being held on the same day
- 24/33.2 AB mentioned the swimmers appreciated the attendance of Grace Harvey. PW said it had a positive effect on those attending.
- 24/33.3 CC praised the work of the Region in putting the event on, giving opportunities to a good number of swimmers for classifications and for times. No swimmers from the Region went through classification at this event though – a matter to bear in mind.
- 24/33.4 PW reiterated the plan is to hold the Championships in Newmarket again in 2025. The date is to be confirmed.
- 24/33.5 PW may request that there are no licensed meets when there is a regional swimming event on to make sure that there are enough officials available.
- 24/33.6 SG asked whether those attending the classification day and competition in September need to be invited and selected. PW responded that, if they are on the classification waiting list and have been sent an invite by Swim England Para-Talent, they can take part, or they can put their name on the list to say they are waiting to be classified.

PW explained that the qualifying times are kept quite relaxed to encourage swimmers to enter different events such as the 400m freestyle or 200m butterfly.

The process for receiving classification was explained by PW. The criteria for applying to be a classified swimmer is set out on a British Swimming website. The application form is sent to Para-Talent who then ask for more details. Carl Cooper sometimes attends a development training day to assess whether an athlete can be classified and this is then fed back to Para-Talent.

PW confirmed that it is down to the parents and coaches to work together to identify the appropriate pathway for the swimmer. Attending development days and knowing who to go to with questions, helps with this.

The onus is on clubs and counties to organise meets for disability and para swimmers. Swimability meets are put on every year by Norfolk and Suffolk.

AB mentioned that it is the 20th year of the Swimability in Suffolk, started by Jill Walker with Jessica-Jane Applegate attending at the age of eight. The event is sponsored by Lions International who provide the medals and certificates, and Swim England Suffolk pay for the pool hire. It is advertised beyond the county and on the regional website. Not many attend from the county, but Colchester Phoenix (Essex) have a high number attending, with 40 sent last year.

The availability on the calendar to hold more of these events will be explored.

24/34

Any other business

- 24/34.1 SG hopes to be appointed as the Disability Secretary once again when the Bedfordshire Annual General Meeting is held on 21st November 2024.
- 24/34.2 AB is likely to be the Suffolk Disability Officer again from the end of the month.
- 24/34.3 PW was awarded the Masters Cherriman Award for 2023 for his hard work getting Para-Masters swimming in the National and British Masters Championships. PW was congratulated by the Group.

24/35

Confidential items

- 24/35.1 None

24/36

Next meeting

- 24/36.1 The next meeting is on 21st January 2025 at 8pm.