

**East Diving Leadership Group**  
**(the “EDLG” or “Group”)**  
**Minutes of the Diving Leadership Group held via video conference**  
**13<sup>th</sup> August 2026 at 7pm**

|                 |                      |                                                                                              |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Present:</b> | Lottie Thompson (LT) | Diving Manager                                                                               |
|                 | Ian Mackenzie (IM)   | Board Representative                                                                         |
|                 | Sharyn Bord (SB)     | Operations Officer                                                                           |
|                 | Sarah Gateshill (SG) | Dacorum Representative                                                                       |
|                 | Beth Lee (BL)        | Luton Representative                                                                         |
|                 | Emma Winter (EW)     | Regional Administrator                                                                       |
|                 | Sarah Barrow (SBw)   | Swim England Club and Community Development Lead, London & East Region (for item 26/48 only) |

**26/43**

**Welcome and apologies**

- 26/43.1 LT opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, noting that Sarah Barrow (SBw), Club and Community Development Lead for the London and East Region, had joined to give an update under item 26/48.
- 26/43.2 Apologies were received from Allan Jaunzens (AJ), Cambridge Representative, Ian Rollinson (IR), Competitions Officer and Steph Lewis (SL), Southend Representative, who was delayed and confirmed during the meeting that she remained unable to attend.

**26/44**

**Declarations of conflict of interest**

- 26/44.1 None declared

**26/45**

**Previous minutes**

- 26/45.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2026 were reviewed.
- 26/45.2 LT raised that Sarah Barrow had been abbreviated as “SB” in the previous minutes, which risks confusion with SB (Sharyn Bord), and asked that this be corrected to SBw going forward.
- 26/45.3 Subject to this amendment, the minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**Action:** EW to amend Sarah Barrow's abbreviation to SBw throughout the minutes template

**26/46**

**Matters arising**

- 26/46.1 National Skills Finals budget variation (action from June): LT confirmed that the budget variation had been submitted and approved by the Board. Closed
- 26/46.2 Dive London entry fee (action from June): SB reported that the fee had originally been submitted against the wrong code/form, causing the delay, but confirmed that the fee has now been received. Closed

- 26/46.3 Cambridge Gymnastics Academy twisting session (action from June): LT reported that dates are being finalised with Matt Jackson. It is likely to be the weekend of 26th–27th September, with AC firming up timing given the venue's high level of weekend activity.

**Action:** AC to confirm the session date and arrange advertising in good time for clubs to book on

- 26/46.4 Talent skills session and wet-rigging course (action from June): LT reported that these are being planned for the same weekend — provisionally Saturday 12th September for wet-rigging, with the talent games session under consideration for the same weekend, subject to Southend's availability. Guidance on which divers should attend will follow once dates are confirmed.

- 26/46.5 Dry-rigging course (action from June): LT reported that a dry-rigging session is now included within the Swim England Coaches' Conference (21st–22nd September), so a separate dry-rigging course is no longer required. Charles will instead be invited to attend the wet-rigging course, with a view to developing this into a formal Swim England course.

- 26/46.6 East Region J2 course (action from June): LT confirmed that she remains in contact with Swim England regarding candidate demand and is working towards confirming an additional East Region date, alongside the national course running in Sheffield in October.

## **26/47 Correspondence**

- 26/47.1 LT reported on correspondence received from Keith Belton, Regional Finance Manager, regarding a schedule of regional event entry fees and spectator ticket prices, to be shared ahead of the Regional Operations Committee meeting in September and to inform next year's budget and pricing.

## **26/48 Sarah Barrow (SBw) Swim England Club and Community Development Lead, London & East Region update**

- 26/48.1 SBw introduced her role as Club and Community Development Lead, covering all aquatic disciplines (swimming, water polo, diving and artistic swimming) across the London and East Regions, following Swim England's reorganisation implemented in January 2026. The role has two strands. These are club development (the primary relevance for EDLG) and community development, targeting a defined set of areas with low activity or swimming attainment, none of which currently involve diving clubs.

- 26/48.2 SBw explained that, developed from feedback from the roadshows and the Listening Report, the role's aim is to bring club development closer to clubs, and build trust through face-to-face contact, increasing visibility and local support, without dedicated central funding attached (unlike the former Development Centre model).

- 26/48.3 SBw outlined two current engagement channels. These are a multidiscipline club forum held every third Wednesday, and county-based drop-in sessions offering support on governance, recruitment, retention, finances, workforce development and pool access. The first session was held in Norfolk. The next is scheduled for 17th September in Essex (2–4pm), with further sessions to follow, including sessions in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

- 26/48.4 SB asked where the booking forms for drop-in sessions could be found. SBw explained that forms are circulated by James Salmon (JSa) via a club newsletter,

and that the Essex mailing may not have reached all diving clubs. She offered to send the Essex booking form directly. SBw confirmed that the Cambridgeshire session booking form will follow later in the year.

- 26/48.5 SBw reported that she is also working with JSa on a regional multi-discipline engagement event planned for next year, and invited members to suggest topics or common club themes (for example, a parent engagement/safeguarding session) for Swim England to help deliver. She stated that the Club Health Tracker remains in use to identify clubs needing support and feeds into the drop-in sessions.
- 26/48.6 SBw reported attending National Age-Groups and identified two recurring themes in East Region clubs. These were parent engagement/communication, and coach development — particularly on access to support on specific dive technique guidance. Clubs had welcomed London Region's Talent Development Day and asked whether a similar session could run in the East Region.
- 26/48.7 SBw updated the Group on Swim England's new coach education pathway, replacing the previous Level 1/2/3 structure with a framework built around one-to-one coach educator support and independent, critical thinking. Existing qualifications remain valid. The first tier, "Session Coach", will allow coaches (age threshold currently 18yrs, with 17yrs under consideration) to coach independently after a course run over approximately three months rather than a single weekend, to allow time to complete poolside tasks. Total contact time is expected to be similar to the previous courses.  
A pilot is underway, with the first practical day on 17th August (10am–5.30pm). East Region candidates are Ceri Ewing, Dan Murphy and Connor Lano. AC is now also a qualified coach educator alongside SBw for the Region.
- 26/48.8 SBw acknowledged some providers, newly involved in the process, are anxious about the extended three-month course length, but this is designed to build coaches' confidence and support retention. Coaches can lead sessions independently once assessed as competent, rather than serving a longer assistant-coach period as previously required.
- 26/48.9 SB asked whether the Swim England Coach Education webpage covered everything SBw had described, or held further information. SBw confirmed that the page holds further detail and shared the link, noting that the listed drop-in sessions currently only show dates up to July. She would check whether more had been added. She also flagged new short courses which are now available — coaching for mental skill development, coaching for skill development, and ethics in coaching. They are open to coaches across all aquatic disciplines and focus on coaching practice generally rather than skill-specific content.
- 26/48.10 LT thanked SBw for the update and noted that the coaching pathway changes were welcomed, along with the Region's involvement in the pilot. SBw's contact details are available from LT for any member of the Group wishing to follow up directly.

## 26/49

### Club reports

- 26/49.1 **Dacorum (SG):** The club is running smoothly with no issues. SG reported having spoken to Becky White, who confirmed that a few new divers have joined the club, including Masters, and that the club achieved good results at National Age-Groups.

26/49.2 **Luton (BL):** Six divers attended National Skills, winning four medals. Several attended for the first time and had a positive experience. A talent games workshop was run on the first day of the summer holidays (1.5 hours dry, 1.5 hours pool), in direct response to feedback from last year that selected divers had felt unprepared. Divers from Amersham also took part.

A fundraising training day had been planned, with external coaches delivering a handstand workshop and a ballet session, with pool time and professional photographs. This has had to be reconsidered as the pool floor has broken, forcing a dry-land-only training at short notice. The rescheduled date is likely to clash with the photographer's availability. BL is exploring whether divers could train at Cambridge's pool in the meantime.

A strong social media response followed Max Hill and Alfie Whytock's results at the Masters event in Croatia, with some new attendees drawn to Masters training as a result. The club is working towards a more unified committee approach in supporting coaches and communicating with parents.

BL asked how the club, without formally employing coaches, can better financially support coaches who are employed on zero-hours contracts by the pool operator and are not paid by the operator to attend competitions.

SB suggested a self-employed contract arrangement covering expenses, though queried its legal standing. IM recommended a self-employed invoicing route, under which coaches submit invoices to the club and are not the club's responsibility for tax or insurance, and suggested that SBw may be able to connect BL with Swim England's finance team for their help. LT suggested building an agreed day-rate framework that coaches could invoice against. SB confirmed that claiming mileage to events is legitimate but cautioned that paying coaches simply for being present risks constituting employment.

**Action:** BL to email SBw for guidance on a self-employed/invoicing arrangement for zero-hours coaches, and to explore, with the Active Luton manager, part-time contracted hours (c.20–25 hours/week) for key coaches

26/49.3 **Hatfield (written update from WM, read by LT):** Will Machin (WM) has confirmed Hatfield's affiliation is complete, with the certificate valid until 31st July 2027.

IM asked whether the Hertfordshire's Secretary had been notified of the affiliation, and separately queried whether a differently-named club had ceased to exist. LT will check.

**Action:** LT to ask Jo Stalley (JSt) to confirm whether Hertfordshire's Secretary has been notified of Hatfield's affiliation.

Hatfield's coaching capacity: LT reported that the club currently has one Level 2 coach who is only available until the end of the year, and one Level 1 coach working towards Level 2. The club is recruiting further coaches, including from lifeguard, gymnastics and cheerleading backgrounds, supported by Alice Clarke (AC) and SBw, with interest expected from September.

IM suggested that BL could help ensure that any spare Hatfield pool time is retained within diving rather than lost to other sports.

**Action:** LT to follow up with WM regarding potential coaching support for Hatfield from Luton

- 26/49.4 **Cambridge (reported by SB in AJ's absence):** The club is pleased with its results at National Skills Finals (medals and good placings) and views this as evidence of developing talent. Summer camps are underway and the club is continuing to recruit Learn-to-Dive divers into the programme. Testing in schools is planned for the start of the new school year.

A contract for a third full-time coach is being drawn up, with the current apprentice finishing her apprenticeship and starting in the new role on 1st November. The club also hopes to appoint a second apprentice in November, with discussions underway. There is still no decision on the club's pool operator.

Numbers continue to grow, particularly in the Masters section, but pool time remains a constraint. The club is looking to expand trampolining (Rhiannon Monie is a fully qualified trampoline coach) and to introduce water-confidence and "tumble tots" classes for younger children, aligned with the Swim England pathway. The qualification route for delivering water-confidence sessions is still being established — a Level 2 diving coach can teach water activities, but requirements remain unclear.

SB stated that gymnastics-related qualification requirements are more strictly defined and particular care will be needed.

**Action:** SB to ask SBw for clarification on the qualification route for delivering water-confidence sessions

SB also reported that the apprenticeship scheme in use is a considerable improvement on the club's previous scheme, with better outcomes for apprentices.

- 26/49.5 **Southend:** No representative was present this meeting (SL delayed). No report was given.

## 26/50 **Operations update**

- 26/50.1 SB raised the question of confirming the 2027 event dates and asked about the date for the Beaumont Team Challenge.

- 26/50.2 LT explained that having set out the full regional and national calendar, preparation for Senior divers appears better addressed by the London Legacy Open in November, and that the current Beaumont Team Challenge date should be retained. It suits all levels and is deliberately placed early in the season as a low-pressure, friendly event for divers to embed new skills before competing at other club events later in the season. AC's suggestion (relayed by LT) was that Southend could instead run its own senior-focused competition, which the Region could support with judges. This was noted.

- 26/50.3 LT and SB discussed the proximity of the Regional Skills/Next Gen competition weekend to the Aquatics GB Next Gen event. SB stated that Regional Skills Finals should not move much earlier, as this would disadvantage divers still qualifying for National Skills, and that IR's preference is not to split the competition across two weekends. It was noted that the date of the Aquatics GB Next Gen event was not known.

Age-Groups and Beaumont Team Challenge dates for 2027 were agreed. The Skills/Next Gen date remains to be confirmed and checked for clashes.

**Action:** LT to obtain the confirmed date for the Aquatics GB Next Gen competition

26/50.4 SB confirmed that the regional finance figures received from JSt now reconcile.

## **26/51 Regional diving competitions**

26/51.1 LT reported that IR is finalising the Beaumont Team Challenge entry pack this weekend. It is expected to be circulated within the following week. LT will review the draft of the timetable.

26/51.2 Following a query previously raised by SB regarding the wording on late entries, LT confirmed that the pack will make clear that the standard entry closing date and fee remain fixed, with a late-entry fee applying to entries received after that date.

26/51.3 LT will circulate a date reminder to officials.

**Action:** LT to contact EW to prepare the Beaumont Team Challenge judges' sign-up sheet

## **26/52 Regional development**

26/52.1 LT reported that regional development activity is centred on the weekend of 12th–13th September (wet-rigging course, talent games session and potentially an additional session with Georgia Davenport), the Cambridge Gymnastics twisting session with Matt Jackson at the end of September, and early planning for a further development camp in December, once national camp dates are known, so that the clash experienced last year is avoided.

26/52.2 LT confirmed that planning for the Skills /Next Gen weekend will also include an expanded offer for senior-level diving.

## **26/53 Officials update**

26/53.1 LT reported that the regional judges list had been updated following the June J1 course. Max Hill (Luton), George Kundi (Dacorum) and Hannah Nettleton (Dacorum) all passed and have been added.

26/53.2 Following a query from BL regarding Jem Turner, LT confirmed that a membership check had found that she is no longer registered with a club. She will be moved to the inactive judges list.

26/53.3 LT noted a healthy and growing number of J1 judges, with strong engagement seen at recent regional competitions.

26/53.4 The judges attending the National Skills Finals were Jack Tempest, Stephen Billton and Rhiannon Monie. LT will follow up with them on their experience and interest in progressing further, noting that Jack and Stephen have already expressed interest in the East Region J2 course under consideration (see 26/46.6).

## **26/54 Coaches Forum update**

26/54.1 LT reported that the main topic raised by coaches was the suitability of competition dates within the calendar (see operations update above). AC

continues to promote available coach education courses, including the new coach qualification pilot in which East Region coaches are participating (see 26/48.7). LT noted that the participants' feedback will help promote the new course once fully launched.

## 26/55

### Any other business

26/55.1 **J-Pads:** LT reported that, further to correspondence with the National Diving Leadership Group, the Region is being asked to help to establish a national picture of J-Pad numbers, condition and servicing/replacement needs. The individual who builds and maintains J-Pads has separated from the original manufacturer but continues to provide the service. This was flagged as a point for consideration, alongside the cost of servicing and replacement. LT noted that some regions are trialling iPad/tablet-based alternatives, though Wi-Fi connectivity has been identified as a potential issue requiring further investigation.

26/55.1.1 SB confirmed that Cambridge holds a full set of five J-Pads and will check when these were last serviced, liaising with Dave Aldridge.

26/55.1.2 LT believed that Southend holds a further set, including some held on behalf of the wider East Region. This is to be confirmed with IR.

26/55.1.3 BL believed that Luton holds its own set, though she was unable to confirm who currently stores them.

26/55.1.4 SG will check whether Dacorum holds any J-Pads.

**Action:** LT to email SB, BL and SG to establish the full regional J-Pad inventory, condition and last service dates, given the potential budget implications of a coordinated regional approach

26/55.2 **Coach educator tutor assessment** IM asked whether AC's assessment/appointment as a coach educator tutor had been confirmed. IM stated that the Region had put her forward and budgeted for this. He queried whether the Region had been charged.

IM separately raised that he had learned that a water polo candidate had failed a similar assessment without being informed, despite having organised the funding and set-up himself.

LT was also uncertain of the outcome for AC. IM confirmed that he would write to Swim England Qualifications (SEQ) regarding the lack of communication on assessment outcomes, and would copy in AC.

LT confirmed that budget had been allocated for AC's tutor assessment and noted that, if not needed, the funds could potentially be reallocated.

**Action:** IM to write to SEQ Head, copying in AC, regarding the lack of communication on tutor assessment outcomes

26/55.3 **Synchronised diving judging training video (SB):** SB asked whether the video recording of synchronised diving judging training, which the Region put on, was available.

LT confirmed that the recording is available on Box.

**Action:** LT to circulate the synchronised diving judging training video link, alongside the Beaumont Team Challenge sign-up sheet, to allow officials to refresh their skills

**26/56**

**Confidential items**

26/56.1 No confidential items were raised.

**26/57**

**Next meeting**

26/57.1 The next meeting is scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> October 2026 at 7pm.

26/57.2 Proposed meeting dates for 2026:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2026