



# Saxon Crown (Lewisham) Swimming Club

2014-2017 Strategic Development Plan

December 2014  
Saxon Crown (Lewisham) Swimming Club



## Introduction

This is the strategic development plan for Saxon Crown (Lewisham) Swimming Club. It sets out our aims and objectives for what we want to achieve over the next three years.<sup>1</sup> We have developed the plan in consultation with our members (through a survey), the coaching team, and our stakeholders.

### **Who we are**

Saxon Crown is Lewisham's only competitive swimming club. We were established in December 1975, as a result of four clubs in Lewisham coming together, and in 2015, we will be celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are a non-profit Community Amateur Sports Club, primarily run by volunteers.

We are an inclusive club, with about 350 members, and with squads that range from Learn to Swim, social swimming, competitive swimming, disability (Tiger Sharks) and Masters' swimming. The club is also passionate about developing volunteers.

We are based at Glassmill Leisure Centre, Lewisham's flagship competitive pool, and we also swim at the four other Lewisham pools: Wavelengths Leisure Centre, Downham Health & Leisure Centre, Forest Hill Pools and The Bridge Leisure Centre. We also swim at our most local long course pool Crystal Palace (which we aspire to swim more regularly at) and have bi-annual swimming camps.

We have a stable and experienced coaching team, an active Executive Committee, and many volunteers who help run the club and support galas. We employ two members of staff (one coaching and one administrative).

### **Our achievements in 2013/14**

We are a growing and increasingly successful club:

- Our membership of main section squads increased by about 10% in 2013/14
- We had many achievements in the pool. 22 swimmers qualified for the Kent championships in 2014, compared with 6 the year before, 10 swimmers gained regional times, and we won a number of medals including 3 golds at the Welsh Summer Nationals. Our junior team won promotion to Division 1 of the Kent Junior League and we maintained our position in the competitive Division 1 of the National Arena League. Our Masters team retained the Medway Open Championships trophy and continue to participate in open water competitions with success.
- We are successfully hosting more galas, including the Arena League, Kent Junior League, our December two-day meet and our own Future Champs. We like to think we have a growing reputation as a serious competitive host club.

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<sup>1</sup> References to years should be read as seasons. 2014 is the 2014/15 season, 2015 is the 2015/16 season and 2016 is the 2016/17 season.



- Our members are positive about the Club. They enjoy its friendly nature and being part of a like-minded swimming community. The coaching sessions are on the whole considered effective, and we score highly for our approach to welfare and our administrative processes (see our survey results in Appendix A).
- We are a self-reliant and financially solvent Club, funded by our members and not dependent upon funding from external sources or LB Lewisham.

However, there are also areas that we know we need to improve:

- We remain constrained by access to pool time and are under pressure to give up some of the time that we do have. Our relationships with some of the leisure centre operators could be improved.
- We do not have strong enough pathways for swimmers or a wide-enough swimming base, and we know that we can do more to engage with communities in Lewisham, where swimming participation and attainment is below the national average.
- We would like a stronger relationship with the London Borough of Lewisham, and the level of awareness of the Club across Lewisham borough is relatively low and could be improved.
- While we are financially solvent, we have no reserves and pressures on our budget. We are almost entirely reliant on fees for our income and have very limited sources of alternative funding, such as sponsorship or revenue from events.
- We are too reliant on a small number of volunteers to help the Club run effectively.
- Our members say they want more communication and especially more individual feedback from coaches on their progression and how to improve. They feel there is scope to improve the consistency of the quality of coaching.
- Our processes have not kept pace with the growth of the Club and we do not offer enough on-line services.
- Our Masters and disability swimming could be better integrated into the Club.
- We do not have a large or cohesive enough coaching team.

The purpose of this development plan is to help us build on our achievements and tackle our areas for improvement. It will enable us to be a well-run and financially secure club that is both competitively successful and also supports the wider aims of encouraging community and lifelong sports participation in Lewisham. It is an ambitious plan. We may not achieve all of it, but we want to aim high and achieve new “personal bests” for the Club as we enter our fifth decade.

Agreed by: The Executive Committee and the Head Coach – December 2014



### Our Vision

Our vision is growth. We want to grow as a club in all areas, and help to inspire and enable more Lewisham residents of all ages to participate in swimming and lead a healthy lifestyle.

Our core value is inclusiveness. We will remain a friendly and accessible Club. We want to succeed in competitive swimming while still providing all members, coaches and volunteers with the opportunities to reach their potential, and to develop and maintain a life-long love of swimming. We also want to support interest and engagement in swimming throughout Lewisham.

### **What we want to achieve in the next three years**

- We will achieve more competitive success in the pool: We aim for 10% a year-on-year growth qualifying for Kents and regionals. We aim to have a swimmer selected for international competition. We want to increase member participation in open meets and our Club Championships by 10% a year. We want our disability team to integrate into the mainstream club and compete in galas and open competitions.
- We want happy and fulfilled swimmers – we want to increase the range of opportunities for non-competitive swimmers and have a 5% year-on-year improvement in our satisfaction rating across all squads.
- We will be a bigger club, so we can build full squads and a wider base, with swimmers joining through improved pathways from Learn to Swim programmes and school swimming across the borough. We want to offer more opportunities to retain members as they leave competitive swimming. We aim for a 20% increase in membership, as pool time will allow.
- We will be financially resilient. We will build reserves representing at least 30% of one year's income over three years. We want to reduce reliance on fees from over 90% to 75% through new forms of income
- We will improve links with schools and colleges to increase awareness of us, and increase the range of activities we can offer the communities of Lewisham. We want to introduce at least two new school or community-related programmes over the next three years, with the potential of developing a link with St Dunstons college and encouraging schools to use their PU Pupil Premium Funding. The club will also continue to support the Council by running the Lewisham Primary Schools Gala and managing the borough's Mini and London Youth Games Teams.
- We will be a well-run club that continues to be Swim 21 accredited and with a more active membership – we aim for a 25% year-on-year increase in volunteering from our members so we can achieve our goals without significantly changing our voluntary ethos.



To achieve these aims, we have agreed seven development priorities:

1. Meeting our swimming goals: Athletes and Life-Long Participation
2. Developing our Coaches, staff and volunteers
3. Engaging with our community
4. Ensuring financial sustainability
5. Engaging our members to keep them informed and get them involved
6. Working effectively with our stakeholders
7. Running an effective and well-governed Club

In the rest of the plan, we set out our objectives and planned activities for each of these priorities. In 2014, we will lay the foundations for growth and improve how we run the club. In 2015, we will focus on introducing new programmes and improve the quality of what we provide while celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In 2016, we will continue to grow and consolidate the changes we have made.

The following abbreviations are used:

Ch – Club Chair (as of December 2014, Neil Amos)

DC – Deputy Chair (Marion Levine)

Sec – Secretary (Kathryn Kerr)

Tr – Treasurer (Carrie Markey)

GS – Gala Secretary (Miriam Stratton)

WS – Welfare Secretary (Olivier Busin)

HC – Head Coach (Matt Eady)

DHC – Deputy Head Coach (Lorcan Loughlin)

TS – Tiger Sharks Head Coach (Nick Ibrahim)

MS – Membership Secretary (Laurie Hanlon)

SCM – Swim Club Manager Project Lead (Craig Morrison)

The Committee will monitor progress against our plan each quarter and, where necessary, adjust priorities. We will review the plan formally each year to ensure it remains current.



### DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY 1: Meeting our swimming goals: Athletes and Life-Long Participation:

#### Our long-term aims:

- We aim for 10% a year-on-year growth qualifying for Kents and regionals. We aim to have a swimmer selected for international competition. We want to increase member participation in open meets and our Club Championships by 10% a year.
- We want to improve our swimming pathways so that we have more swimmers joining us from Learn to Swim (ours and leisure operators) with improved skills
- We want to provide a more diverse offering for our non-competitive club squads, with more choice by age and potentially new opportunities, such as Water Polo or Lifeguarding
- We want to be the most inclusive London Masters Group, offering the widest swimming participation opportunities with increased membership to 100 swimmers by 2017 and national Open Water and sprint medallists.
- We want to increase the number of disability swimmers across all ranges of ability. To do this, we need to increase the number of volunteers able to support training sessions

This priority will be owned by the Head Coach.

Objectives 2014-2017	How to Deliver Objectives	Lead	Timescale
<b>1. Improved competitive Swimmer Pathway and Squad Structure</b>	Review and, where needed, change squad structures. Priorities will include	HC	2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to club squad structure</li> <li>• Two new Level 8-10 sessions a week at Forest Hill, with taster sessions to begin with</li> </ul>		
	Review and better allocate training times and duration of sessions to maximise use of pool time and ensure attendance justifies pool time.	HC/Sec	2014
	Introduce annual coaching plans and objectives for each squad.		2015
	Create 2D model of swimmer pathway with staged levels of development, plus improved transition process.		2015
Work with Fusion and 1Life to increase numbers and skills of swimmers joining us from their LTS programmes.			2015



<b>2. Improved Swimmer Development and Progression</b>	<p>Update and make more specific swimming standards for each squad, including criteria for stages of development</p> <p>Video analysis Introduced at certain stages of development.</p> <p>Extend time trial measurements to more squads (including Masters).</p> <p>Procure additional long course pool time, and explore merits of joining Crystal Palace network.</p> <p>Review of land-training to improve programme.</p> <p>Develop FUNdamental swimming skills from offset.</p> <p>Wet and Dry-Land Swimming Presentations.</p>	DHC	2014  2015  2015  2015  2015  2016  2016
<b>3. Introduction and Maintenance of Swimmer Assessments</b>	<p>Ensure competitive swimmers agree annual objectives and maintain swimmer log books.</p> <p>Develop and implement plan for improving regular and real-time feedback for swimmers and parents (including performance against key metrics).</p> <p>Introduce quarterly review for all swimmers by HC and DHC against standards.</p> <p>Develop personal coaching plans for 50% of Masters membership.</p> <p>Use online systems for publishing swimmer assessments.</p>	DHC  DHC	2014  2014  2015  2015  2016
<b>4. Improve Swimmers Commitment and Interest</b>	<p>Questionnaires developed for Swimmers, to set their own goals, and Parents.</p> <p>Run workshops for parents on how to support their swimmers.</p> <p>Host 3 training camps locally each year and one abroad every two years (aim to run annually by 2017).</p> <p>Gain funding for 2 regular "guest coaches" a season for swim clinics and motivational sessions.</p> <p>Introduce time trial sessions on Club nights for all swimmers.</p> <p>Introduce badge reward system for all swimmers in LTS section.</p> <p>Re-introduce achievement awards all competitive squads e.g. bronze/silver/gold/platinum speed badge scheme or reward pack for moving to the next squad</p> <p>Introduce Swimmer of the month certificate for each squad.</p>	DHC	2014  2015  2015  2015  2015  2015  2016  2016



<b>5. Increase Longevity and participation</b>	Review of club squad programme, including development of new programmes to recognise the wide range of capability and interest (e.g. one for training, one for more sociable activities).	HC	2014
	Review of Masters programme with Masters swimmers and action plan for increasing membership and success in competition.	HC	2014
	Review of Disability programme and action plan for increasing participation and success in competition.	TS	2014
	Meetings with Parents to discuss and explain opportunities for the family.		2015
	Introduce specific links at certain stages of development to providers of other Aquatic Based Activities.		2015
	Introduce Lifeguarding course for 16+ swimmers		2016
	Introduce use of technology and apps (ASA SwimFit, Zoggs Swimfit) logbooks.		2016
Establish routes to Young Aquatic Volunteering and Officials.		2016	
<b>6. Increase gala hosting to improve reputation and raise funding</b>	Run a licensed long distance meet incorporating club champs.	GS	2014
	Run a licensed 3 weekend meet before Xmas.	GS	2014
	Run annual Future Champs events.		2015
	Host league events.		2014-15
	Regularly invite key stakeholders and press to major events.		2015
	Develop a 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary gala programme and gain publicity.		2015
	Use Gala Cards to gain feedback from spectators.		2015
Agree with Masters and Tiger Sharks whether the Club should host events for these squads.		2015	



Our long-term aims:

- Well-trained, motivated coaches and teachers, receiving regular feedback and personal development
- Introducing a full-time head coach responsible for swimming programme and coaching development
- Growth in volunteers to 30 supporting teaching and training

This Priority will be owned by the Head Coach and Deputy Chair.

Objectives 2014-2016	How to Deliver Objectives	Lead	Timescale
1. <b>Increase numbers and resilience of coaching team</b>	Review coaching needs in light of new squad structure and external recruitment where necessary to introduce new capability or capacity into the club.	HC	2014
	Develop and agree a coaching plan to support the development plan.	HC	2014
	Appoint Deputy Head Coach.	Ctte	2014
	Funding and support for 3 current/ex swimmers or volunteers per year to complete ASA NPTS courses Level 1 and Level 2 or other Swimming Coaching or other Aquatics coaching qualification.		2015
	Fund CPD for one of current Level 2 teachers to teach water polo.		2015
	Recruit/appoint full-time head coach.		2015/16 – TBD
2. <b>Ensure coaches trained, qualified and supported to teach or coach at specific stages of development.</b>	Develop and implement a plan for introducing and evaluating non-traditional training/participation methods.		2015
	Head Coach to set up mentoring programme for agreed coaches.		2015
	Promote ASA Teacher/Coach Education Scheme to all coaches.		2015
	Provide swim-specific and sport-general workshops and information sessions for teachers and coaches.		2016
	Subject to budget, introduce CPD budgets for key coaching staff as part of annual development plan.		2016



<b>3. Maintain and Improve effectiveness of coaching and administrative workforce</b>	Ensure all coaches and staff are on updated contracts and job descriptions.	DC	2014
	Review hours and role of Membership Secretary.	DC	2014
	Ensure all coaches and volunteers DBS checks and child protection is up-to-date.	WS	2014
	Establish policies and procedures for recruitment.		2015
	Ensure employed coaches have appropriate tax and pension arrangements in place.		2015
<b>4. Volunteer Members recruited and developed to meet the needs of quality club development as outlined in Swim 21 requirements.</b>	Set annual objectives and development plans, and introduce annual Individual Performance Meetings for all coaches and staff.		2015
	Appoint a volunteer co-ordinator.	Ch	2014
	Develop links with local colleges and universities for students seeking volunteer work.	DHC/TS	2014
	Develop links with local businesses to offer staff opportunities and CSR activities.		2015
	Annual programme of training for volunteers in Time keeping, officials and Team Management, with one J1 qualification a year.		2015
<b>5. Improve teamwork between coaches, committee members and volunteers</b>	Nominate two volunteers a year to the London Swimming Awards and other swimming/local awards.		2016
	Hold coaches meetings 3 times a year (Aug, Dec and March/April) with minutes sent to the Exec Committee.	HC	2014
	Organise small social twice a year for coaches, committee members and volunteers.		2015
	Encourage club members to participate in team swim charity events.		2015
	Create Club members forum or chat group to keep everyone in the loop.		2016



DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY THREE: Engaging with our community and the public:

Our aims

- Significantly improve links with local schools and colleges, attracting 25% of new members and volunteers through these routes.
- Gain funding to improve access for communities across Lewisham to take up swimming
- Improve awareness of swimming club across the borough, using free media and promotion
- Improve contacts and stories with local press and media

This priority will be temporarily owned by the Chair

Objectives 2014-2016	How to Deliver Objectives	Lead	Timescale
<b>1. Develop and Improve links between local schools, colleges and universities</b>	Continue to host Lewisham primary schools swimming gala with increased participation year on year.	HC	2014
	Develop a marketing pack for secondary schools.		2015
	Offer opportunities to volunteer to college and university students.		2015
	Advertise participant availability for research students at local college and universities.		2015
	Obtain funding from Lewisham to increase participation.		2015
<b>2. Develop clear pathway for access to club swimming via college/university route</b>	Introduce taster sessions, development camps and swimming festivals (normally held in school holidays) – more active talent ID in LTS and schools.		2016
	Improve advertisement of competitive squad and Masters structure and training times in local colleges and universities.		2015
<b>3. Develop and improve teachers responsible for school swimming sessions</b>	Introduce a mentoring programme for school teachers.		2016
	Increase to two the numbers of schools where we provide swimming sessions.		2016
	Encourage teachers and coaches to attend informal and formal workshops for CPD.		2016



<b>4. Establish links with local community centres, after school clubs and other sports teams.</b>	Advertise and promote swimming club within community centres (Leaflets, Posters). Contact and visit local special needs schools to promote swimming and Tiger Sharks (if appropriate).		2015  2015
<b>5. Increase membership through improved promotion</b>	Assess streams of advertisement (leaflets, local papers, community centres, schools, colleges, university). Develop improved range of hard copy and online promotional material (leaflets, posters, business cards, videos, articles). Improve ethos and image of the club through specific club equipment (bottles, bags, hats, team jerseys), with a focus on 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary branded clothing etc. Launch Masters recruitment programme using donated fees.		2015  2015  2015  2015
<b>6 Improve media profile</b>	Attract a volunteer communications and press member of the committee. Develop a marketing/press campaign for our 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary.		2014  2015



Our aims

- To ensure financial stability through better budgeting and cashflow management
- To build reserves representing at least 30% of one year’s income over three years.
- To increase non-fee income so that fees reduce from over 90% to 75% of income

This priority will be owned by our Treasurer.

Objectives 2014-2016	How to Deliver Objectives	Lead	Timescale
<b>1. Improve budgeting and cashflow.</b>	Develop up-to-date budget and I&E .	Tr	2014
	Assess costs and ineffective pool usage.	Tr	2014
	Produce monthly financial reports for committee.	Tr	2014
	Improve budget development so that budget agreed in advance of each season.		2015
	Review book-keeping, accounting and financial controls with help from VAL.		2015
	Review policy of ASA fee payment over the year.		2015
	Review fee policy.		2015
	Create reserve and fund from non-fee income to begin with. Produce annual audited accounts.		2015 2015
<b>2. Generate non-fee revenue</b>	Create fund-raising committee as part of 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary planning, and consider 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary clothing to sell, and 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary sponsor.	TBD	2014
	Fundraising committee to explore grants, awards and bursaries on offer, and create plan and timetable.		2015
	Appoint a volunteer to write our bids for grants/bursaries.	Ch	2014
	Host more swimming Events (e.g. London Pool Crawl Long Course, London Pool Crawl Short Course, Open Water Crawl).		2015
	Apply for Lewisham grant as part of major grants programme		2015
	Improve Club shop offering – online?		2016
	Research distributors of swimming equipment, provide different brand image than normally seen. (Blade V-120s, Pull Buoy-Float Combi, Narubi/Win Hand Paddles).		2016
	Explore running training camps abroad for college and university swimmers.		2016
	Internal Teacher and Coach Workshops.		2016
	Run Parent Workshops on supporting a training swimmer, nutrition and school-swimming-social balance for a fee. Seek long-term strategic sponsorship (may need charity status to achieve this).		2016



DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY FIVE: Engaging our members (keeping them informed, getting them involved)

Our aims:

- Improve club membership satisfaction through increased communication and engagement
- Increase involvement in the club by members to provide scope for us to achieve more and provide greater resilience

This priority will be owned by our Secretary.

Objectives 2014-2016	How to Deliver Objectives	Lead	Timescale
<b>1. Improve communication with members and parents</b>	Recruit a members’ communication lead.	Ch	2014
	Annual club survey to gain feedback.	Ch	2014
	Parents meeting to launch the strategy.	Sec	2014
	Formalise structure of parents’ representatives.		2015
	Organise 3 meetings per year (Aug/Sept, Dec and March/April for all Parents’ reps to attend.		2015
	Ensure regular social events (Club disco and one summer event as a minimum).		2015
<b>2. Increase participation of members through volunteering</b>	Develop specific communications plan for Masters.		2015
	Produce Quarterly newsletter.		2015
	Re-design and re-launch website.		2015
	Follow-up members in survey who offered to volunteer.	Sec	2014
	Advertise for skills and support people can offer and available positions.	Ch	2014
	Appoint a volunteer co-ordinator.		2014
Establish a volunteers register, with skills and interests.		2015	
	Nominate two volunteers a year to the London Swimming Awards and other swimming/local awards.		2016



**DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY SIX: Working with our stakeholders (Fusion, Lewisham, ASA etc)**

**Our aims**

- Maintain good relationships with our key supporters and stakeholders in Lewisham local authority
- Engage with ASA London group to pick up new ideas and contribute to London swimming, including partnerships
- Improve relationships with pool operators

This priority will be owned by our Chair.

Objectives 2014-2016	How to Deliver Objectives	Lead	Timescale
Improve relationship with pool operators	Set-up regular operational meetings for each pool with Wet Ops manager, admin.	Sec	2014
	Set up regular strategic meetings with 1Life and Fusion management.	Ch	2014
	Invite to galas and 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary events.		2015
	Work at relationship with Fusion and 1Life to develop real partnership in the delivery of swimming in LB Lewisham. Agree mutual objectives.		2015
Improve relationships with key stakeholders and governing bodies	Work with LB Lewisham in accessing funding and more pool time in Lewisham.		2015
	Regular meetings with the Mayor and Councillor Best. Invite them to galas and events.	Ch	2014
	Attend ASA London chairs forum and other networks, including regular meetings with ASA London.	Ch	2014
	Develop relationships with Lewisham MPs.		2015
	Explore partnership/network opportunities, including Crystal Palace network.		2015



**DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY SEVEN: Running an effective and well-governed club (decision-making, record-keeping, welfare, HR, IT etc)**

**Our aims**

- Enable more efficient administration of the Club through improved ICT
- Ensure committee are confident and trained in key requirements of the executive role
- Ensure the highest standards of welfare safety and record-keeping
- Maintain Swim 21 accreditation
- Explore case for becoming a Charity and apply if case is strong

This Priority will be jointly owned by the Executive Committee and managed by our Secretary on the Committee's behalf.

Objectives 2014-2016	How to Deliver Objectives	Lead	Timescale
Enable more efficient administration of the Club through improved ICT and processes	Review membership administration of new LTS/Pre squad groups in different pools.	DC/MS	2014
	Update all data.	MS	2014
	Implement new management system and input all relevant swimmer data.	SCM	2014
	Update website for more self-service, links to club management system and better shop window for the Club.		2015
Provide committee members with training and support to run the Club effectively	Review training needs.	Ch	2014
	Secure training or mentoring for new committee members.		2015
Ensure the highest standards of welfare safety and all record-keeping	Update database of all volunteers.	WS	2014
	Ensure DBS checks remain up-to-date and processed quickly.	WS	2014
	Ensure no new staff appointed without committee approval and references/welfare checks.	WS	2014
	Provide regular Child Protection training.	WS	2014
	Recruit new welfare officer.	Ch	2014



Ensure policies are up-to-date	Review all policies over a 3-year period. Prioritise HR policies, including recruitment and induction. Review record-keeping policies and practice and ensure records are up-to-date and retrievable.	DC	2014-16 2015
Maintain Swim 21 accreditation	Apply for re-accreditation.	Sec	2014
Consider charity status	Assess what is required to become a charity and pros and cons. Decide on whether to pursue charity status and develop an action plan if necessary. Apply for charitable status (if recommended).	Ch Ctte	2015 2015 2016