

CoB para swimming vision - To make competitive swimming accessible to all and to train swimmers to succeed regardless of their disability...

The vision for CoB para squad has always been to make disability swimming possible for as many young people as possible whilst focusing on the ASA para pathway into classification and competitive swimming. The long term goal to have regional, national and international swimmers. CoB recognises the ASA para swimming framework and the importance to work within this guidance. CoB identified the the term disability swimming was too generic and needed to be divided into two simple criterias, one for physical disabilities and one for learning disabilities. The swimmer requirements within these two subdivisions are very different, however it needs to be noted that some swimmers may fall into both categories.

The aims and objectives for CoB para squad are outlined below.

- For CoB to achieve new swimmer member targets, with a view to having 16 members by summer 2017
- To focus on achieving targets outlined by the swim 21 framework
- To aim for all CoB swimmers to have a classification and start competing in 2017
- For CoB to investigate taking on the running of an annual gala
- For more trained teachers and coaches to be involved with the squad.
- For CoB to have strong links with learn to swim managers, swimming teachers and local leisure providers in order for swimmers to be signposted to the club

In Spring 2016 in order to achieve these goals CoB recognised the need to introduce a pathway from learn to swim to COB para squad and offer teaching support and advice to all swim staff across leisure centres in the Bristol area. CoB committee set up a sub committee with the key focus of understanding and identifying what work would need to be done to look at how to find the swimmers and encourage them to participate. The sub committee of CoB soon recognised there was no clear pathways locally from learn to swim programmes into club swimming. On further investigation it became evident that local providers of swimming lessons were not delivering many lessons to children with disabilities either as 1:1 lessons or integrating these children into mainstream classes. It has to be noted that some local providers were offering a better provision than others. CoB began to look at why the local learn to swim programmes were not encouraging more people into their programmes and it was identified that this could possibly be due to a lack of professional knowledge and suitably qualified teachers. Louise Johnson the CoB para swimming coach felt that by pursuing a professional career with the ASA to become a tutor of swimming teachers would be a positive starting point. CoB also identified the need for a local development officer to work with the local learn to swim providers, swimming teachers, schools, disability groups, local businesses, access sport and the ASA to start building vital links and sharing of knowledge and information.

In November 2016 CoB aquatics board will task Louise Johnson the para swimming coach, CoB aquatics board member and ASA tutor to be responsible for the following..

- To contact each of the Bristol Active and Parkwood centre managers and swim managers with a view to arranging training dates.
- Identify how many swimmers are currently involved in learn to swim lessons throughout Bristol.
- Identify current provisions provided across the sites for delivering learn to swim lessons for children with either a physical or learning disability.
- To work alongside the ASA and feedback any relevant information.
- To work with the COB committee, feedback all work undertaken.

The CoB aquatics board also support the need for localised training to swimming teachers and coaches. Louise will run training workshops for swim teachers, offering help and advise as to how to confidently teach people with disabilities to swim. These workshops will be run at Hengrove Leisure centre on Sundays between 2pm - 4pm. Following the workshops the teachers will have the opportunity to observe and assist in the CoB para swimming session 4pm - 5pm.

These workshops will include

- Identify and understand what 'inclusive swimming means'
- Identify any parental or guardian concerns and barriers to overcome when introducing their child to swimming.
- Identify physical disabilities and how to overcome any perceived or actual barriers to learning to swim.
- Identify learning disabilities and how to overcome any perceived or actual barriers to learning to swim
- Increase your confidence in teaching people with either physical or learning disabilities.
- Investigate the swimming development pathway available to people with either physical or learning disabilities
- Identify and understand a basic knowledge of the competitive swimming classification process.

In return to this development work CoB will reimburse Louise in the way of expenses for representing the club. The workshops will be paid at £75 per workshop, the administrative time will be reimbursed at £15 per hour. With a maximum payable of ??????? per week.

CoB will pay these fee's from the money paid by the ASA of £1000 in 2016 from work undertaken to support new swimmers to take part in the regional gala held at Horfield Leisure centre. Once these funds have been spent a review will be undertaken by the Aquatics board as to whether any other grants and funds would be available if it is seen the work undertaken has been successful in achieving the CoB goals.

Whilst it is important for CoB to focus on their own priorities it needs to be acknowledged there are a number of other initiatives being run in conjunction with, which support the need for more work to be done in the local area to promote disability swimming. CoB are fully supportive of these additional projects and working in conjunction with them.

On 18th March 2016 a proposal was submitted by Karen Lloyd. The proposal is for Swift Inclusive Sport (SIS), in partnership with City of Bristol SC and its network clubs, and the ASA, to lead on an application to secure funds to help develop and sustain an inclusive Swimming pathway across the sub region. It will also seek the support of key stakeholder organisations including English Federation of Disability Sport, Wesport, West of England Inclusive Sports Partnership (WISP), Everyone Active (SLM), Parkwood Leisure along with other sporting and non-sporting partners.

The Aims and objectives of the project are to: Establish a sub-regional project steering group to develop a framework to drive the review and improvement of inclusive swimming across the area. Support and embed a lead organisation to take control of the project and drive it forward beyond any funding period. Membership to include key stake holder partners and encompass all levels of disability Swimming provision. The lead bid organisation (SIS) to help sustain the project through further fundraising, sponsorship and networking opportunities. Raise the profile of disability swimming e.g. through advocacy, conferences, seminars, galas, annual celebration events, use of local media and social networking mediums. Create satellite club sites across the region. Break down barriers to participation - by challenging stereotypes, promoting local disabled role models Increase participation - by enhancing existing provision; creating new and varied opportunities with a focus on Learn to Swim opportunities; providing pathways to elite level performance and excellence opportunities. Expand the workforce through volunteer recruitment and training, coach education, training and mentoring, to sustain activity.

Alongside the work outlined above a programme named 'lets go swimming' was initiated by the ASA to work with local providers and the ASA to investigate the current provision from a facilities perspective. The work carried out by Karen Lloyd and the 'Lets go Swimming'

committee offers an insightful and important overview of being able to identify areas for potential development within this framework. The current work undertaken by this committee does not currently offer any short term solutions for finding more swimmers and encouraging them into the pool and swimming lessons. However it is noted that over a longer period of time this work will be the foundation of ensuring high standards of teaching and a much better provision of opportunity to people within the Bristol area.

It also needs to be noted that a dedicated professional team of ASA tutors are also currently working on proposals to put together a more robust framework for teaching swimming professionals with an end goal of offering accredited qualifications for swimming teachers to have the knowledge and skills to enable a better level of teaching people with disabilities. This current work is still in the embryonic stages and will take a significant amount of time to achieve. Louise is working in partnership with this team.

A new proposal from Swift Inclusive sport with CoB has been presented in November 2016. This is to work in partnership with clear goals and objectives for each organisation. (separate attachment)

In conclusion (November 2016) CoB aquatics board will remain in contact with these projects, attend meetings. It is a very positive time to be involved with para swimming in Bristol and with such dedicated focus then the end goal of finding, training and creating a robust para squad gets a easier and becomes more achievable,