Heinke Trophy Application 2019

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History

The Kingston & Elmbridge Junior Snorkellers Club (KEJSC) was formed in approx. 1974, as a sub group to the Kingston & Elmbridge Sub Aqua Club, in order to help occupy the children of their adult members when they were diving.

The club was affiliated to the National Snorkellers Club (NSC) a governing body set up Lionel Blandford for children to learn the sport of Snorkelling, under the overall guidance of BSAC. The sub aqua and snorkelling clubs separated from each other in the early 1980s, and KEJSC became a standalone dedicated snorkelling club for youth membership only.

In 1991 the NSC was replaced by the British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC) as the main governing body of Snorkelling Clubs in the UK and the club continued to progress under its control. Since then BSAC have managed us with the same enthusiasm, building bigger and better practices and training opportunities. We are fully regulated by BSAC who set the standards that we adhere to, with the aim of increasing the knowledge of the sport to others.

We are a very inclusive club and recognise that snorkelling is very suitable and attractive to children that are not 'sporty' or competitive. We have, and regularly accept members, with diversity and/or equality needs; including conditions such as, ADHD, Autism*, Dyslexia,* Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, as well as medical issues such as Diabetes, Crohn's and physical disability. We have a specially trained and experienced member of staff who guides other staff members to help accommodate students with these conditions; ensuring accessibility at all levels of training. We have also made reasonable adjustments to the training programs to suit individual student requirements where ability may be outside of normal accreditation. For example, in lifesaving where a student cannot lift a casualty, they would direct and control a "Bystander" to do the work for them.

Our club is also ethnically diverse, relative to the population in our catchment area, and we have an equally balanced male/female contingent within our membership.

At the very heart of our club, we have a very strong pastoral culture and a strict anti-bullying ethos. Many of our members and parents comment on how much their children love snorkelling simply because they feel welcome and supported by the other members and are very happy in their peer group.

We have had a number of success stories, one of note included a student with a Behavioural Disorder, who was about to be excluded from school. Their mother brought the student to us as they had a strong affiliation with water. We took them on, and gave them a structured training program. We were later told that the effect of the work we had done had increased the student's concentration at school, reduced conflict and given them a purpose to aim for. This had resulted in the students increased grades and their continued inclusion within the school. Both Teacher and Parents could only account for the change due to his membership to our club.

Snorkelling develops many life skills in and above most other children's' activities. Snorkelling not only increases physical fitness and water confidence, it promotes teamwork, teaches lifesaving and First Aid, the causes and effects of weather, physics, marine biology, ecology and environmental awareness; as well as building strong interpersonal skills invaluable to a growing young person.

As a club and as staff we are passionate about youth development, teaching young people these interpersonal and life skills. Our former members have benefitted throughout their lives and have gone on to contribute to society, have professional careers and maintain better relationships. Some of our former members have gone on to enjoy successful careers in the Royal Navy, Police, Fire and Rescue Services, become Marine Nature Reserve Managers and even volunteered for the RNLI. We also have doctors, actors, business managers and sports persons within our former membership.

In making this application, our students were surveyed as to what they believed made the club successful, and a number of staff members contributed to its content in both verbal and written form to ensure a balanced view of the club and its services provided.

Membership

Our club is only open to Junior members, with the exception of some adult staff. All members are Snorkelling Members, except two staff members who are full diving members.

Significantly, the membership profile of a Junior Snorkel Club is fundamentally different to an adult diving club. Typically, our members join at approx. 10-12 years old. The only financial input available to students is via their parents, which can be for many, restrictive. Their time & availability is also controlled by their parents and recently student attention spans and retention of interest has been seen to be dramatically reducing in children in our modern society. As a result, the club cannot be managed directly by its members like in adult diving clubs.

Our club membership fluctuates with our new member intakes, which are scheduled for April and October each year. We work hard to ensure we have an optimum number of 50 members and we never drop below our minimum of 30.

There are currently fifty-three (53) active members.

Our latest intake in April 2019 had thirteen (13) new members, twelve (12) of whom we have retained as ongoing full-time members.

We encourage our young adult members (16-18 years) to become instructors as it embeds their knowledge and develops them further with new responsibilities and challenges. When our instructors finally move on in life, many enjoy returning to instruct again (for example when they return from university). We also have cases of members returning to instruct when their own children subsequently join, or even as grandparents of new members.

We currently have 3 instructors who are the parents of young members. Whilst many have had previous snorkelling and diving experience, we have had others just keen to support us and learn from scratch. They add a maturity and stability to the club culture and provide additional skills such as mini-bus driving and fundraising capabilities. Parent instructors tend to move on when their children leave the club, but in the past we have had many who have stayed on after their children have left, to continue supporting us.

Although they don't attend the pool side, behind the scenes we have some crucial supporters such as the Treasurer/Secretary, vehicle drivers, non-diving shore support for open water training, plus staff who maintain and store club equipment. We occasionally have guests attend the club such as scuba divers, free divers, RNLI volunteers, local councillors or grant awarding bodies, to give talks and support our aims.

The significance of this to our young members should not be underestimated. The overall instructor, associate instructor, support staff and guests create layers of positive role models to our members and allude to progressions that are available through adult life. We continue to support our broader family and they continue to support us. Our new junior members become aware of people who reinforce their leaning, promote life-long skills and instil positive values.

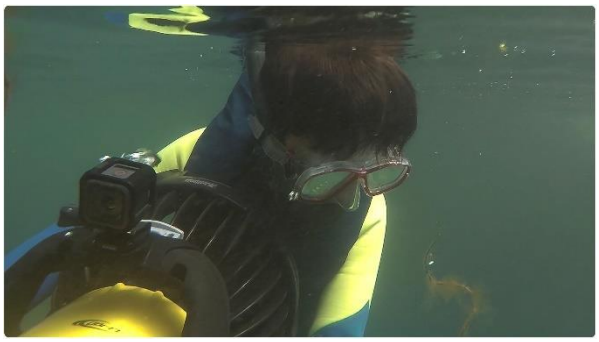
Retention

Many children's clubs can often suffer from dropout as other activities, such as school life and family pressures take over. It is therefore a tribute to our training system that our members stay with us well beyond that recognised as a common age for moving on to scuba or other activities, frequently until they well past 16 - 18 years old, when work, university or adult peer groups (including scuba clubs) can become more appealing. Our expectation is that members generally stay with us for around 4 years in which time we hope they learn and develop into capable young adults.

We have however, previously struggled to retain senior members who had completed all available core snorkel training available from BSAC. Due to available facilities and equipment we were limited on what we could provide beyond the normal scope. Our main option in these situations was to guide students towards teaching and becoming an instructor, but many were either too young, or not interested in that area. We had little to offer for further development opportunities and as a result, students would slowly leave dissatisfied.

In November 2018, we hosted a meeting with the new Snorkel Chief Examiner, Adrian Cadman, in partnership with Woking and Dorking Snorkel Clubs to discuss the development of new snorkel training programs to try to address this issue. However, it became clear that this would be a long-term issue to address, and would require significant further development. So, in addition to working on the recommendations from Adrian, we decided to take an alternative route for a relatively fast positive return.

Following the meeting, we applied for a number of grants to assist in developing our range of available equipment, so we could offer more opportunities and training to our students.



Due to one successful grant application, we bought 4 Diver Propulsion Vehicles. These have provided an opportunity to introduce theory training on neutral buoyancy trimming, how propellers work (speed and pitch and cavitation) and hydrodynamics.

They have also proven to be very useful to two members with impaired mobility. Helping them to relieve fatigue on open water dives. We also use them in the pool for fun events as all the children love them.

We also received £7,500 from the Aviva Community Fund to buy our first ever boat and ancillary equipment. We match funded this with a £1000 parent donation and £2500 of club funds.
With this we purchased a Zodiac Futura Mk2 inflatable boat. We asserted that assembly and use of a boat would embed teamwork and teach new skills, ideal for the senior students, adding not only personal development opportunities, but instilling responsibility with key equipment and a chance to act in a safety role.

Administration

We are a designated junior club specifically run for children.

To join members must be a minimum of eight (8) years old, in line with BSAC membership requirements, and be competent swimmers. For new membership “Junior” is defined as ages 8-16 years old.
Older youth members are encouraged to give back and either assist administratively or become instructors. All of our Youth & Young Adult Staff are former students, and range in age from 17 to 24 years old.

We do not accept adult members except suitably qualified and vetted instructors, but these are generally only drawn from former members or parents of members.

Branch Organisation

Our group is made up solely of youth members, with a very small team of dedicated adult staff and is predominantly run by young adult/youth instructors. It functions slightly differently to a normal BSAC club, as the committee is made up of the staff, rather than standing members/students due to their age.

The majority of the daily running of the club falls to the long-standing Dive Officer, Nick Stevens, the Club Treasurer Vicki Stevens and the Membership Secretary Jon Smart. However, where possible, youth members are encouraged to take a role in the development of their club, with consultations of key changes and improvements, when feasible, being requested through poolside discussion and feedback. The latter is so that it is perceived to be less formal and daunting for the younger members, than at a specific meeting.

We host an informal AGM each year, and hold regular instructor meetings and training sessions, minimum two a year. Parents of member's are encouraged to be involved in the management of the club, and are invited to AGMs and to be part of the committee, but we have found most only wish to engage through social media and email, or for some of the bolder ones, volunteer to become instructors.

Rules

In addition to the rules and regulations set by the British Sub Aqua Club's articles of association, KEJSC maintains a minimal set of rules addressed at the students to ensure a reminder of the minimum standards expected of each student.

These can be found at APPENDIX A

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are maintained using the Direct Debit system supplied through BSAC Membership Services. This is managed by a qualified accountant who holds the role of Treasurer and Secretary.

Current fees are as follows:

Individual Snorkel Member - £300 per annum plus BSAC Snorkel Membership fee
Family Member - £250 per annum per student plus BSAC Snorkel Membership fee

The direct debit is taken over ten months per year, at an effective individual cost of £30 pcm, or for two siblings at £50 pcm, with any additional sibling/family member adding an additional £25 pcm to the total. Special Arrangements are available for families above three siblings when/if required, on application to the Treasurer.

All new members receive up to 4 free 'Try Snorkelling' sessions before deciding they want to enrol as a full member. However, most know they want to stay after their first session. We have found this makes it affordable for low income families who may be daunted by the potential cost and encourages attendance and inclusion.

The £30 a month fee over 10 months is excellent value and equates to as little at £6.50 a session (and includes a free swim for parents and family). As a result we are one of the cheapest and cost effective sports clubs in the local area.

Financial Regeneration

Up until 2014 KEJSC had financial problems. Income did not meet expenditure and the club used seasonal income for diving trips to pay monthly bills. With no reserves the club regularly went overdrawn following the open water season. The Diving Officer had to pay monthly pool hire from his own pocket and there were no funds to train instructors or buy kit etc. The club was in very real risk of closing.

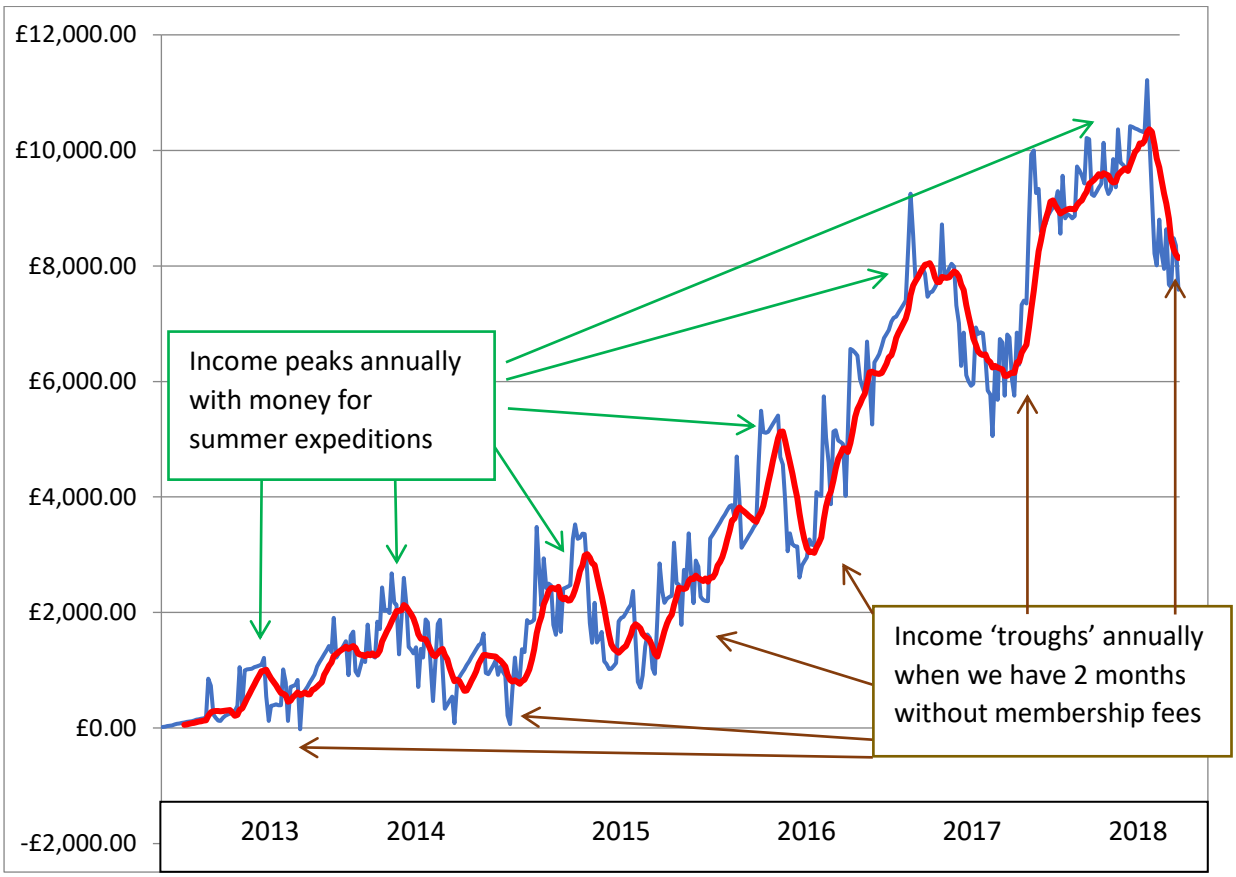
In 2014 the club recognised the situation and implemented a financial plan:

- Investment in any kit and non-essential spending was cancelled
- A reserve target of £3000 was set
- Summer expedition income was recorded as restricted funds
- Club development plans could not be financed from subscriptions

Increasing subscriptions to meet monthly costs is not always helpful. For example, if a low-income family has 2 children both wanting to join the club, they would need to find £60 p.m. plus buy basic kit @ c£70 + per child. £200 is prohibitively expensive and could exclude many families.

We are aware that the monthly subscription, cost of kit and poor-quality club kit had made the club unattractive to low income and multiple sibling families. We simply had to grow membership by promoting the club, and make do with what equipment we had. It took a lot of hard work and a few years to start to climb out of the financial situation.

The graph below clearly indicates how the club finances were in a desperate situation. 2018 marks a new phase in the club's history. Thankfully we are now in a position to recruit and retain enough members and supply the equipment to be an affordable and inclusive club.



Communication

As many a parent will tell you, with children, communication from a training body can be unreliable, especially if returned with the student in paper form, in hand and from a wet environment…

So, with a view to a more environmentally friendly position, in addition to ensuring successful delivery of information; communication with our members and parents is generally made via email. This makes certain that the correct information is being returned to the parents, and that it arrives in a suitably useable format.

We have a strict policy of inclusion in our information sharing however, so we will always send any newsletters, updates or general notifications to both the member and their parent/guardian, where an email for the student has been supplied. We believe this encourages inclusion in the working processes of the club, allows the student to feel they are able to make comment when needed, and this is encouraged; as well allowing the student to be well informed about their sport.

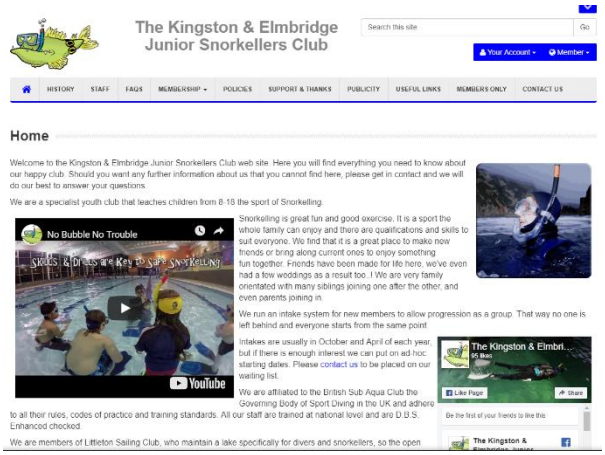
In line with GDPR regulations, and child safeguarding policy, the individual's emails are only available to the Dive Officer (who disseminates the information), the Treasurer, and Membership Secretary. This prevents any unnecessary use of the information held by the club.

For specific events relating to individual training groups, printed letters are made available, especially where medical documentation or permission slips are required to be signed and returned.

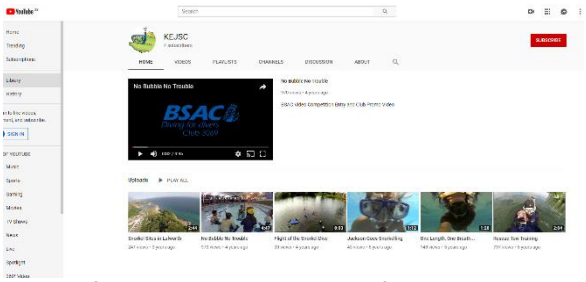
Face to face communication on club nights is also a common option used to relay information, where staff members engage with parents on poolside and in the public areas of the premises, to discuss any issues, developments or needs in a more informal situation.
We also utilise Facebook and have a club noticeboard on our private members only website area.

Senior members and instructors maintain a WhatsApp group for fast and efficient weekly communication. Our associate instructors remain in this group and teach when returning home to their families locally.

Our website - https://www.snorkelling.org.uk/ details all relevant information required for a prospective new member, as well as showing people what we do and how we do it. The website has in addition to the publicly viewable area, a private login only section, where items relevant to members are held. This includes, downloadable club documentation for updating change of details, to photos from expeditions and events. It also includes a Notice Board, Diary of Events, and copies of the latest newsletters.



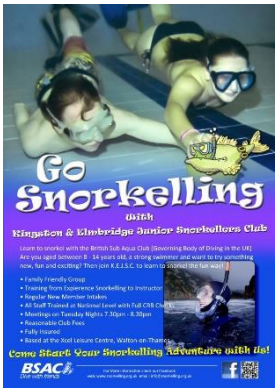
Our Facebook Page - https://www.facebook.com/KEJSC is an extension to our website, where we keep members updated on last minute changes and information, in addition to sharing soundbites, topical news relevant to our sport as well as fun or entertaining pictures or videos. It has been invaluable in helping us promote the club, and has also played a strong part in assisting us with grant applications and gaining support outside of the club environment. It is surprisingly popular with the parents as well as the students.



We also have a burgeoning YouTube Channel - https://www.youtube.com/user/KEJSC where we are in the process of uploading videos we have made of events at the pool and from trips away.

Promotion

We are lucky that the majority of our promotion is done via word of mouth from happy students, parents and family members. However, we do run two promotional events each year at our pool, during key times (usually gala/competition days) a month before our next intake night. We hold a stall with pictures, posters and equipment on display and play our popular promotional video through a laptop. This always draws a large crowd. We speak with pool visitors who have children in our age range, and show them the benefits of our sport with a view to signing them up to our next intake.



We provide our own leaflets and posters designed in house, with images from our own events. In addition, we also use BSAC promotional material, including the ever-popular whistles, wristbands and pens, with our Club Banner on display. All of which help make us look more professional and be more informative.

Due to facilities, available space, and available staff, we are unable to offer “Try a Snorkels” outside of our new intake season, but this has not prevented us in drawing a large list of enquiries and a waiting list of prospective members.

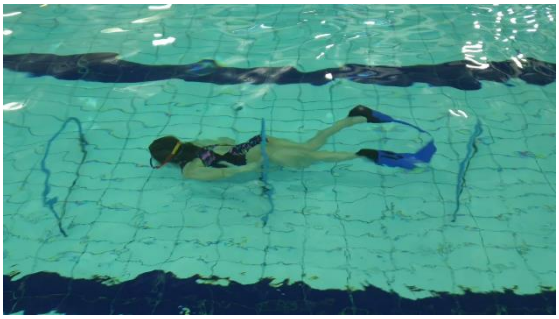
Our most recent promotion event held at the pool in March 2019, secured enquiries and membership applications from six (6) new people.

Diver Training

We meet every Tuesday between 7.30pm and 8.30pm at the Xcel Leisure Centre, Walton on Thames.

We follow the full BSAC Snorkel Training Program. We do not have the facilities to run fixed duration/fixed fee courses however, preferring to retain the simple club progression structure. Fixed courses would be a distraction from our core mission of youth development and we consider 'develop and 'learn at you own pace' more inclusive to our members.

Assessments are made on an as required basis, when students have completed the relevant tasks for each level of an award. Some members with exceptional ability progress quickly and are guided to move on to the next level as required. In contrast younger or less able members can still be competent in the water but progress at a pace appropriate for their age.



We do not deliver a training course that is strictly delivered in a pre-determined number of weeks; it is the individuals that determine their own pace with our guidance and support.

Theory lessons are held on our club nights. For the very newest and youngest members we deliver these on pool side, pitched at a level commensurate with their age, for a duration they can easily maintain. By the time a member has moved up to the more advanced groups they are mature enough to accept theory lessons through formal lecture, in addition to practical experiments and activities. These are held either at formal locations sourced for the event outside of the pool environment, or in our pool foyer area where private space can be set up for presentations

We meet during school holidays, such as half term, but as turnout is inevitably lower, we usually arrange games nights. During these sessions our members play octopush, "snorkel" water polo, complete underwater obstacle courses and gain experience using our Diver Propulsion Vehicles.

We also have themed Christmas games nights and our infamous 'Halloween Monster Splash', where we arrange for the lights in the main pool to be turned off so students can experience night snorkelling. This evening is very popular, and we play Halloween games such as trick or treat by retrieving sweets from the bottom of the pool and 'underwater upside-down egg and spoon races', using ping-pong balls for eggs (They fall disorientedly upwards…!). Night snorkelling events are strictly controlled and risk assessed, with additional pool lifeguards employed, working in partnership with the pool management to ensure a safe and enjoyable event. It is easily our most popular night of the year.

The club provides all pool and open water safety & training equipment. However, when committed we suggest members buy their own basic equipment including mask, fins and snorkel after an appropriate time. We don't enforce this of course as we know some families struggle with the cost and club equipment is always available. To assist we have built a strong partnership with a local dive shop, Aquanaunt Snorkelling & Diving in Kingston, who know our standards and requirements, and give each of our members a discount when making a purchase.

Open Water Training

We conduct open water training at a dedicated diving lake managed by the local Civil Service Sailing Club in Littleton. Before our members progress to open water sessions we introduce them to the open water equipment in the pool. Safety in open water is a key element of our training program, and we utilise extra equipment such as towable floating support platforms, additional Surface Marker Buoys and now our new boat to provide cover and rest for those challenged by the new environment.

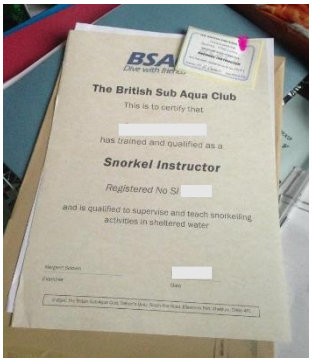
To ensure further safety, we hold yearly open water staff development days, where rescue skills, first aid and additional new policy/training is imparted, refreshed and practiced, to ensure our safety record (only one recorded incident since 1974), continues to stay at its very low level.

We regularly hold annual trips to Dorset for the senior groups to experience snorkelling in the sea, staying at Youth Hostels at Lulworth, Swanage or Portland. They experience various dive sites in some of the best diving areas in the world. Up until 2018 we have been confined to beach and pier dives but we now have the ability to complete boat dives (see below), which has opened a new world of snorkelling to us. During our expeditions our members will also be taken rock pooling, visit fossil museums and litter pick the beaches where we dive to ensure students learn about and care for the environment they are enjoying.

With our new boat, we have been able to extend the snorkelling capability of the club as we are able to move further afield from the usual piers or accessible beaches we have previously been restricted to. In addition, as stated earlier, safety is always of paramount importance, so it is a real advantage to have a safety boat in the water providing additional cover to our activities. For the older members we are also now able to develop boat handling, seamanship and marine maintenance training.

Qualifications

Or club includes One (1) Open Water Snorkel Instructor Trainer & Advanced Snorkel Instructor, One (1) Open Water Snorkel Instructor, Eight (8) Snorkel Instructors and Three (3) Assistant Snorkel Instructors.

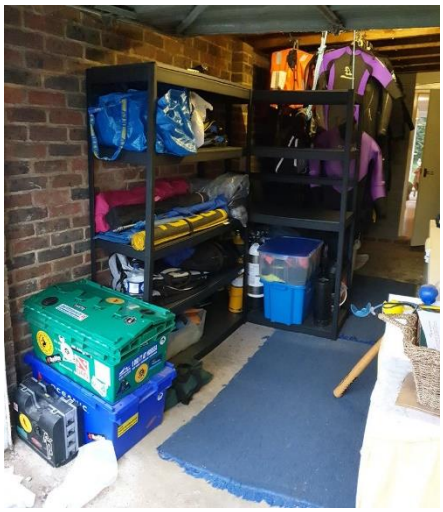


Four (4) of our members were newly qualified as Snorkel Instructors in 2018, and are a welcome addition to the training team.

Of the Thirty-nine (39) current students there are Seven (7) Advanced Snorkel Divers, Four (4) Open Water Snorkel Divers, Nine (9) Snorkel Divers, Fourteen (14) Dolphin Snorkel Divers. The remainder are working towards Dolphin Snorkeller Award.

Of this, Six (6) Advanced Snorkellers, Four (4) Open Water Snorkellers, Nine (9) Snorkel Divers, and eight Dolphin Snorkel Divers were qualified within this year. All students are working on their next award in the process.

Equipment



We have a garage full of equipment which has either been handed down over the years, or purchased through various initiatives.

We currently hold a approx. twenty (20) sets of basic equipment for the pool, which is held at our pool stores for use by any member in need. The majority of this kit is made up of old hand me down kit, donated to the club, and made available for those who have damaged their kit and need an urgent replacement. Or for those who are financially unable to replace kit when they have grown out of it. This box of kit is a club “swap shop” and has provided many years of reliable cover for those either starting out in the sport or in urgent need of supplies.

We have over Forty (40) ‘specially adapted for snorkelling’ lifejackets made for us by Baltic Lifejackets.

We hold approx. One Hundred (100) wetsuits of various makes, models and body types for loan to our open water students. With children growing so fast, it is more financially viable for parents to borrow these items than to spend hundreds of pounds purchasing them, only for their child to grow out of them within the season. The suits we have chosen, are a minimum 5mm full body steamers, titanium lined. They provide excellent thermal protection and are light and comfortable enough to remain manoeuvrable in the water. We also hold a number of semi-dry suits donated to us from a local dive shop, for those who feel the cold more.

Open water equipment includes two (2) floating towable platforms with A Flags, SMBs of various styles, throw ropes, weight belts, hoods, gloves, booties, knives and other diving sundries. We have the capability to provide all emergency equipment and supplementary equipment for any student who requires it, so that the sport continues to be accessible to all concerned.

In the early part of 2018, we successfully applied to four small grant providers and received a total of £3250. With club match funding we invested in a further 20 sets of new basic kit, with individual dive bags, a storage locker, left-handed octopush bats, new throw ropes, computer & projector for theory lessons and the 4 Diver Propulsion Vehicles. This equipment boosted our recruitment by making the club more affordable and we gained 23 new members (compared to just 9 in 2017). This boost to our monthly income through subscription is illustrated in the graph above, but importantly we are proud of the community benefits.

We have:

- Made snorkelling affordable and accessible
- Increased physical and social activity in young people locally
- Increased physical activity in people that do not enjoy conventional, competitive sports

Our latest purchased came thanks to our Aviva Grant has provided us with further excellent equipment and opportunity.

We chose an inflatable over a RIB for the following reasons.

Transporting the boat in a large car or van means that we do not need a driver with trailer license, nor do we need a trailer or towing vehicle. We are able to launch it anywhere accessible by foot, as we would not necessarily require a slipway. The 30HP 2 stroke fuel injected outboard is significantly lighter than a 4 stroke equivalent making it easy to transport. Yet its performance, emissions and noise pollution are very low.

As a result, two people can assemble and launch the boat within 30 mins.

The size and manoeuvrability is perfect for ‘close to shore’ snorkelling. It is perfect for teaching our members boat handling skills and has revolutionised our open water activities, by extending our dives from shore and pier dives, to more adventurous yet safer diving. The advanced hull and engine combination provide amazing load bearing and planning capability relative to the boats size. The ancillary equipment has also provided further training opportunities and challenges for the older members on poolside exercises.

We have also made the boat available to our neighbouring snorkel clubs in a partnership of shared use, so that when we are not using it, other junior snorkellers can benefit from it. It is insured for use by Woking Junior Snorkel Clubs who don’t have a boat and Dorking who have a boat but it’s getting old. The three members who are qualified to coxswain the boat are currently taking a VHF radio course and we are seeking funding for our other instructors to attend boat handling courses.

We have named our boat '*Milly*' after, the murdered school girl, Milly Dowler who was an active member of our club at the time she went missing in 2002. Her sister Gemma and mother Sally were also active members (the latter was a club instructor). The tragedy of Milly's disappearance obviously impacted on our members who were close friends. Naming the boat in her memory is for us a symbol of safeguarding and 'watching over' young people whilst they develop a sense of adventure and we will celebrate Milly's life with her family at this summer's BBQ and 'official launch'.

Diving Activities

Due to the age, capability and availability of students, all open water diving activities are restricted to summer months for safety and comfort. These are carried out every weekend throughout June and July. With the club closed over August. These dives are held at a dedicated fresh water diving lake locally which has been maintained solely for snorkel diving, with various wrecks and items sunk on site to explore.

We hold one annual trip. This is to Dorset on the Jurassic coast. Dive locations include, Lulworth Cove, Stair Hole, Kimmeridge, Portland, Weymouth and Swanage and are chosen dependent on weather, tide and sea state as to the specific location used each year. The variance of locations is used to ensure a breadth of experience is given to each student, and we are lucky that this area provides such opportunity within a small distance of each other. Drift, Wreck, boat and pier dives are carried out, with the addition at Stair Hole of basic cavern snorkelling which proves to be very popular with our more adventurous youths.

Expeditions and scientific explorations are not currently available within the club, but it is hoped with the acquisition of the new equipment and boat, we will be better positioned to propose these types of dives in the future.

General Activities

We do not have a club house but use the facilities provided by our local leisure centre. We have use of a large foyer that overlooks the pool with café tables and chairs. Our Fundraising/development Officer and Diving Officer regularly meet with parents and student in person before and after training sessions to address any needs or sign log books.

We provide organised trips to DIVE at the NEC and trips to the London Aquarium, for back stage tours and marine biology exposure.

We hold a summer BBQ party at a local skiff club on the river nearby to our leisure centre for all past and present members, and hold an evening Christmas meal for instructors to celebrate the years success. These are great opportunities to discuss development of the club, make new and see existing friends and to socialise in a safe encouraging environment.

Every year, in partnership with the British Heart Foundation, who donated to the club a number of Resuss Annies, we train and refresh the entire clubs membership in CPR and Basic First Aid. This is part of the BHF's "Start a Heart Program" to train more young people in how to save a life. It is something we are proud to be a part of. Our last event in October 2018, had over 40 students trained and refreshed in CPR skills, and formed part of over 100,000 young people in the UK being trained in the same day thanks to the event.

CLUB FOCUS

Kingston and Elmbridge Junior Snorkellers Club

Kingston and Elmbridge Junior Snorkellers is one of the longest standing BSAC snorkelling branches and one of the few to go it alone without any scuba diving members. **Kristina Pedder** finds out how they do it

In 2018 we were featured in the local press and twice in SCUBA magazine. We had arranged to feature in a piece on ITV news promoting the sport but unfortunately this was cancelled due to presenter/location availability. However, we continue to be in contact with the venue and the television production team, and we plan to work with them in the near future.

In May 2019 our Diving Officer and Fundraising/Development Officer attended a Reception at the Place of Westminster. We met several MP's and Lords and showcased Snorkelling, Our Club and its role in youth development. Our constituency MP Dominic Raab specifically rearranged a very busy diary to come and congratulate us on our 'Skills for Life Saving Project' and after being photographed with us he publicly congratulated the club on his Twitter feed. He commented to our Dive Officer during their meeting, that he was keen for his children, when old enough, to experience snorkelling for themselves as he believed it was an excellent sport.

We have long held a very close working relationship with both Dorking Snorkelling Club and Woking Junior Snorkel and Scuba Club, and we regularly dive with each other at local and national locations, sharing resources and staff.

Our Diving Officer is one of the three instructor trainers who deliver the snorkel instructor courses with the dive officers from both Woking and Dorking for the South Region. We share our DPV's and newly acquired safety boat with these clubs and we will visit each other's training sessions when alternating equipment. This sharing of resources and experience is great for everybody concerned, helping to reduce costs to all our clubs, whilst sharing responsibility for useful equipment that may not get used on a weekly basis, and allowing a greater opportunity for other members in our BSAC family to gain experiences outside of the normality of basic snorkelling skills.

Special Achievements

We hold many firsts, being one of the oldest dedicated snorkelling clubs in the UK.

We were part of the organisational team to develop and action the world record attempt to have the most snorkellers in the sea at any one time, Project Wave Makers in aid of Millys Fund.

Our current Dive Officer and Senior Instructor, Nick Stevens, has been a member of the club since 1987. He became the youngest Snorkel Club Dive Officer and Instructor at the age of 17 years; when the previous leaders retired due to work and relocation. The club was at risk of closing, so he gained special permission at the time from BSAC, to complete Instructor Training under the age of 18 years of age to take on the role. He then went on to become the youngest Snorkel Instructor Trainer in the world a few years later. He also acts as the BSAC Area Snorkelling Advisor for Surrey working with the other snorkelling clubs in the area.

As a result of an incident we had at the pool, BSAC honoured young student member Jakob Byrne-Jones and our Dive Officer with The Alan Broadhurst Award for Bravery and Good use of Lifesaving Skills. They were presented their certificates by the Chairman of BSAC at the Dive Show in Birmingham. We are very proud of this recognition, especially as they were the first snorkellers and snorkelling club in the history of BSAC to receive such an accolade.

We have had a number of special achievements in the preceding year. Many of which have been firsts for snorkelling clubs, and which have brought the world of snorkel diving to the public eye. Some have been mentioned before, but they are as follows:

- Winning the Judges Choice Award from the Aviva Community Fund for our “Skills for Lifesaving Project”, allowing us to purchase our safety Boat. This was in recognition of a positive application and project outside of the official award criteria.
- Two members winning Alan Broadhurst Awards for Courage and Good Use of Lifesaving Skills after a near drowning incident at the pool. A first for any Snorkeller to receive such recognition.
- Successful Grant Award from Thames Water for the updating and purchase of new pool equipment for new students, making snorkelling accessible to all.
- Successful Grant Award from Surrey Playing fields to develop theoretical training with the purchase of projection and computing equipment.
- Successful Grant Award from Cash4Clubs to purchase better club storage for both pool and dry stores of club equipment.
- Successful Grant Award from the British Heart Foundation, who supplied ten full sets of resuscitation Annie kits as part of their Start a Heart Program to assist in the continued training of children in CPR.
- The club was featured in SCUBA magazine, a first for any snorkel club to be featured in the “About Our Club” section.
- Second place in the BSAC Video Competition for BSAC club promotion. With a Highly commended comment from judges.

Summary

We recognise that we are not a sub-aqua club resourced by a strong adult membership, providing adult skills, time or personal finances to deliver an extensive programme of opportunities to its own adult members.

We are a Junior Snorkel Club for children, and our key resource is just one mature, long term Dive Officer who has recently been supported by three new committed adults. All of us have the pressures of young families and demanding occupations. Nonetheless we contend that in relative terms, we deliver a significant service to our child members aided by our young and (still developing) youth instructors.

2018/2019 has seen the club grow into the strongest and most capable it has ever been in the 45 years of the club's history. This is something we only dreamed of a few years ago when we were struggling to tread water.

Through an active and fun sport we deliver a valuable service to our child members, who in turn contribute to society as mature and capable adults. We are very proud of what the Kingston & Elmbridge Junior Snorkellers Club has achieved for its children and future generations to come.

We consider our club to be worthy of consideration of the Heinke Trophy for the following reasons.

- We have significantly grown our club and turned around its finances to make the club a flourishing example of an excellent youth group accessible to all. Promoting the vision and mission of the British Sub Aqua Club and the sport of Snorkelling.
- We have delivered a number of projects with grants to develop a step change in club activities, allowing us to offer more to our members, ensuring value for money, and development of valuable life skills.

2018 was the pivotal year for us but delivery will continue for many years to come. The impact of these projects will benefit many future generations of snorkellers and potential life savers.
We hope that you will consider and look favourably on our application for the Heinke Trophy. As a small group with big ideas, without the usual trappings of a dedicated adult membership. We still strive to provide the best opportunities for our members in line with the ideals of the British Sub Aqua Club, and we hope to continue to do so for many years to come.

Submitted for your consideration…

Appendix A

KEJSC Club Rules

In addition to the rules and byelaws set out in the British Sub Aqua Club articles of Association (supplied on request) and the Xcel Leisure Centre Rules, the following rules will also apply:

1. All Snorkellers will be on poolside by 7.20pm ready to start.

This will mean that we achieve better use of pool time, being able to use the full hour for teaching rather than spending fifteen minutes fiddling about getting kit together, briefing etc.

2. All Snorkellers will bring their Log Book with them each week.

This was introduced at the request of the Instructors. The instructors are unable to sign up the logbooks if they are not brought along each week and presented for signing. **It is your responsibility to get it signed.** This will increase your chance of gaining an award as there is written proof that a particular lesson has been taken**.**

3. All Snorkellers will have their own kit with them each week.

Due to a lack of club equipment all members should have their own Mask, Fins and Snorkel with them every week. This will make training easier so that we are not sharing equipment or looking for things to fit.
(The only exception is new members for the first month)

4. All Snorkellers will attend training each week or notify their Instructor in advance of absence.

This rule has been introduced as it is becoming increasingly difficult for the instructors to develop their lessons due to recaps or re instruction of the previous weeks work due to an absent person returning. Please inform Nick Stevens on 07956 897216 of absence with excuse. Illness and holiday are the obvious reasons.

All Snorkellers will behave in an orderly and safe manner, and follow directions given by the Instructor at all times.

This rule was introduced for safety reasons, as the instructors must have control at all times to prevent any incident. We would expect the same level of respect given to the instructor, as that which the snorkeller would show to his/her schoolteacher. The pool is an educational environment that is far more dangerous than a classroom, and must be treated as such by both the instructor and the student.

6. ***Bullying in ANY form will not be tolerated.***

We have a Zero-tolerance policy for bullying of any kind. Sanctions could include verbal/written warnings, removal from pool, suspension from club, or being asked to leave. We want everyone to enjoy our sport without fear.

Appendix B

Newsletter Christmas 2018

Dear All,

It's that time of year when we have to say goodbye till the next… Our last training session before we have a break for Christmas and New Year will be Tuesday 18th December 2018, and we return on Tuesday 8th January 2019 at the usual place and time. Don't be disheartened however, as we plan to have our usual blow out Christmas Party on the 18th as always, so be ready for fun and games (and cake)…

What an amazing year it has been! We've had one of the best Lulworth trips we've ever done with crystal clear calm blue waters in Portland and similar in Lulworth Cove. We have once again supported the British Heart Foundation with their Start a Heart Program and two of our number have been awarded with BSAC's Alan Broadhurst Awards for bravery and good use of lifesaving skills; a first for any snorkel club in the history of BSAC!

We have had four new members of staff complete their national Snorkel Instructors qualification, held in Guildford in October. Congratulations to them and thank you for your ongoing support. However, the biggest result of all is being awarded almost £3000 in grant funding thanks to new instructor and Parent Adam Curtis' hard work behind the scenes, applying to local support groups such as Thames Water, Surrey Playing fields and Cash for Clubs.

This funding has already paid for 15 sets of new kit for our newbie groups to use before buying their own. Four new diver propulsion vehicles, opening up opportunities for student development, and offering assistance for divers with mobility issues; and we are also in the process of updating our storage at the pool! We also hope to be able to make our pool nights more digital, with future plans for waterproof tablets so instructors can keep records, give presentations and make notes easily accessible. So watch this space! We have even made it into the finalists for consideration for Aviva £10k grant for purchasing a club boat. We are hopeful for a positive result soon, final decisions will be by February. Thank you to everyone who shared the link and voted for us. We had an excellent response considering we are a small club compared to many others applying. I will keep you all posted of any developments.

Can I remind everyone to sign up to the club website. Ive have recently updated the club website and the members only area is now fully functional. Ive even added a publicity page to show off some of our accolades. Can I ask everyone to request membership to the site anew so that I can be sure you are all on there. It has a diary of events to aid planning, as well as useful info about the club. We want every student signed up, as well as parents. This will allow us to keep you up to date more easily and make it easier for you to access information. Check out www.snorkelling.org.uk and click login to register. Also don't forget we are on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KEJSC.

As a reminder, with Christmas coming, those of you considering getting new kit should go try it for fit before you buy… So Im sorry, the surprise is out, but you wont regret it. Im sure the guys at Aquanaut will be pleased to see you.

As always I want to thank my staff, who all give their time voluntarily, working hard in front and behind the scenes to make our little club what it is. Thanks to Vicki, Jeff, Jon, Ed, Callum, Will, Oliver S, Gemma, Oliver C, Ewan, Rhiannon, Lauren, Adam and Sandy for the excellent work and support they have given us all.
Have a very Happy Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Nick Stevens ASI 400
Dive Officer KEJSC