

Every year I find it extremely hard to summarise what the club has achieved in the last year as things change so quickly at MASC. This year has been no exception!

There have been many fantastic achievements in local, County, Regional and National competitions that I will leave the Head Coach to sum up but all of this hard work and success in the pool has been made possible by a large group of volunteers that put in hundreds of hours both poolside and of course away from the pool altogether.

This year we had the opportunity to offer more hours to swimmers and to our Head Coach which enabled her to focus solely on MASC rather than split her time between two clubs. As well as being more hours and more cost I think we may look back and see this was a critical point in the clubs history – could MASC really start to offer local swimmers the real chance to progress to Regional and National level rather than being a 'feeder club' and forcing swimmers to move to a larger club if they wanted to compete at the very highest level.

It was a very important decision and one the committee and I did not take lightly. For the first time in many years the club fees had to be increased substantially and there was much good, strong debate on if and how best to implement this. All members of the committee had input into this and although it took many meetings to agree the way forward everyone was given an opportunity to discuss their point of view. A plan was agreed and implemented once all the viewpoints had been heard and although we are only part way through the first season of this new set-up, already I think the benefits are clear. Membership numbers are still strong and Team MASC has already become a force to be reckoned with at many events!

As well as looking forward at these external competitions and I am also proud to say that the events that are part and parcel of MASC history still remain very well supported events – the MASC annual gala and presentation evening have more and more numbers each year and we may have to look for a larger venue in future as we sold out all the tickets this year. As swimmers look towards some bigger events I am pleased to say the trip to Portabello is still as popular and competitive as ever and I am sure this will continue in the years to come.

As well as changes in and around the pool this year we also have some changes to the committee. This will be my last year as Chair – a role that I have enjoyed very much, sometimes fun, sometimes very rewarding, sometimes a little frustrating but certainly never dull! One of the most important jobs this year was to find a successor and I am very happy to hand over the reigns to Lesley Kennedy, as an established member of the committee and a familiar face on poolside and at galas I am sure she can carry on the great work of the committee and all of the 'behind the scenes' volunteers that will continue to make MASC a success.

We are also saying a 'Thank you and good bye' to three long standing members of the committee this year:

- Helen Seymour who as well as being a committee member has also been responsible for gaining and maintaining our SWIM 21/Swim Mark accreditation.
- Kay Howe is also stepping down from the committee this year but will still be round helping poolside and of course co-ordinating the big '50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary' celebrations.
- Lynda Garland also ends her long run on the committee this year. As well as being an ex-Chair she has also most recently been responsible for administering entrants to external galas which is one of those vital jobs behind the scenes which we often take for granted.

Thanks very much to all of those three for many years of combined service.

Finally I would like to thank one more person who has retired this year – Michael Glossop decided this year would be his last with MASC. Michael has been in and around the club for many, many years – both on poolside and on the committee.

Looking forward it is great to see some new faces as well as the more experienced members and I am sure Lesley can get the best out of the new committee and support the coaching team to another successful year in 2019.

Simon Watson – MASC Chair