

# Stratford Divers

The Newsletter for Stratford Upon Avon Sub Aqua Club



Issue 11 | December 2020

## Committee Bits

Thank you to all members who braved the online AGM. It was a bit of an experiment, but in the end we had about 30 people online. In fact I believe we had more at the virtual AGM than we did for the face to face AGM the year before.

The minutes have been sent out, so if you do not have them please let us know. It is worth remembering that we welcome feedback and questions all year round, not just at the AGM so please feel free to call or email any of the committee if you would like to share an opinion.

## Thursday Night Pool Sessions

I think we are all a little surprised that we have landed in tier 3. It is very frustrating as I think we were all looking forward to getting back in the pool, but regrettably we must stay away for a little longer.

The leisure centre is open, but the guidance on organised group sport and swimming is clear. We cannot hold our normal club nights for now. If this changes, we will let all members know at the earliest opportunity.

Similarly, with the football club, under tier 3 restrictions we cannot arrange a gathering indoors.

## Club News

### Scapa

The trip to Scapa was booked in a different era, when life seemed simple, you could hop on a plane, fly to Scotland and dive with ease. Shortly after that booking was made and the deposit was handed over, the world changed! It was a trip that seemed to hang in the balance all year. It seemed impossible that we would be able to go, the airlines went bankrupt, the pubs shut, region after region went into lockdown.



Somehow though, 12 members made it to Orkney and dived the German high seas fleet. We ate too much, braved high winds and cold seas, survived the lack of open pubs and came back feeling as though we had managed to squeeze in one last adventure before lockdown hit us again.

It strikes me that something that sets this club apart is a determination to make things happen despite adversity, and to turn a challenging situation into a fun filled week away with friends. That seems to have been a feature on all the trips run this year and I thank you all for it. Long may it continue.

### New Member Focus

I mentioned last month that we have a new member, Ben Summerfield. I don't have a photo yet, but I will make sure I embarrass him at the pool by introducing him personally to everyone I can. I know Ben is an avid fan of all things to do with the water, he is a keen boaty person so it's good to note that he is one of three new coxes we have in the club. I look forward to seeing him get some experience on our boats once he gets his ocean diver. Ben, welcome and I hope you enjoy a long and exciting diving career with us.

## Christmas Party

Celebrating Christmas together is going to be impossible this year, so instead we have a cunning plan. In her new role as Events Officer Kirsty is organising a virtual Christmas get together. There will be a quiz, prizes, drinks (at least I will be drinking!) and virtual chat.

You should have an invitation already. We will use the same platform as the AGM so many of you will be familiar with it already. More details of what you will need for the quiz will be sent out a little nearer the time. Join if you can, I hope to see you there.

<http://www.stratforddivers.co.uk/events/>

Pool sessions run each Thursday between 8pm &amp; 9pm at Stratford upon Avon Leisure Centre

Cost is £3.00 payable on the night

After the pool we meet at Stratford Football Club for drinks

## December 2020

Date	Event	Organiser	Cost	Spaces Available?	Minimum Diver Grade
18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Mince Pie Dive	Sally Richards	Approx. £20	Yes	Ocean

Note – There are already a number of trips planned for next year and I will update this list for January. If you have a trip planned that I don't know about (Alastair) please send me a note so I can include it.

The Mince Pie Dive is going to depend on COVID restrictions at the time. Please keep an eye on the news and the website. I am sure that Sally will send out an update to all those that have shown an interest in going when we have some clarity.

## September 2020 Update

### General Instructions

We will not be permitted into the pool until the sharks have left and we will need to exit the pool to ensure that we are totally out of the building by 9:10 at the absolute latest.

We should not be waiting in the reception area, so please wait outside. For instructors, please hold briefings outside, or better still before you even get to the pool so you can minimise the face to face chat before we go in.

Please do not come to the pool unless you are swimming or training (or working in the equipment cupboard). We are not allowed spectators, the viewing gallery has limited seating.

Where possible:-

- Arrive in your swimwear. Clearly you can wear normal clothes over them, nobody is expecting budgie smugglers or banana hammocks to be paraded across the car park, but you should be able to get ready for your swim poolside and not use the changing rooms at the start of our session.
- Arrive with your kit assembled as far as possible. If you do have to set up kit, please use the whole pool edge rather than just the area by the shallow end to ensure we can maintain distance between members.
- Please pay by contactless card if you can, we want to minimise cash handling.
- Wash your hands or use a sanitiser on arrival and on exit of the leisure centre.
- Changing rooms can be used at the end of each session if needed, but please try to ensure we are out in good time to allow cleaning of the cubicles.

It is essential that:-

- You stay away from the pool if you or any member of your household has had symptoms of COVID or if you or anyone in your household has been contacted by NHS track and trace.
- Please download the NHS track and trace app if you have not already.
- You follow current guidelines for mask use in the leisure centre – masks are not required at the time of writing.
- You bring a solution for demisting your mask, no spitting is permitted.

When you arrive make sure you are registered with whoever is on the club welcome desk. If any of us falls ill, we need to know who to contact.

We will have a theoretical limit of members in the pool, but we don't think we will get close to it based on historical numbers. If you have never used the pool in the past, but suddenly feel the urge to jump in please let Alastair know so we can manage numbers if needed.

### **Pool Layout**

The swim lane is temporarily removed to ensure we can comply with COVID regulations.

In the stamina lane, please note:-

- Members should not crowd at the ends for a rest or a chat.
- The board was removed because everyone knows what they are doing. If you are new to the stamina lane and need some ideas as to what to do let the pool marshal know and they can put it back...alternatively you can follow and copy someone else...from a safe distance.
- Members in the stamina lane should keep moving where possible without pausing between lengths. If you need a break, step out of the pool for a few minutes.
- As always, movement is clockwise and try to leave adequate gaps between each user.

### **Training**

Priority will be given to members currently in training. All instructors MUST make sure that they have read and understood BSAC's post COVID training guidance, particularly re AS.

For instructors, please consider the following:-

- Try to hold your briefing for the session virtually prior to arriving at the pool.
- Arrive with clean, dry kit fully assembled as far as possible.
- All dry runs should be performed in full kit, in shallow water with masks on and regs in.
- As far as possible, use signals instead of talking.

- Do not share regs, for example the instructor should not take an octo that the student will later use.
- No rescue breaths to be performed except for couples (we do not expect that all trainees must inter marry in order to progress, but if you happen to already be a couple then you are good to go).

### **Casual SCUBA**

We are a SCUBA club, so we don't want to limit Scuba in the pool, but at least for the initial few weeks we would ask that casual SCUBA is kept to a minimum to allow us to focus on the trainees. If you have an urgent need to test some kit for an upcoming trip then please do go ahead, but if you just want to check that your reel is still 40m long, please consider doing this in your garden.

### **Equipment**

Any equipment that you are using in the pool should not need any special cleaning after use. The chlorine is sufficient to destroy the virus if it is present. If in doubt, submerging any equipment for a minimum of 30 seconds in the pool will make it safe.

In general: -

- Absolutely no sharing kit.
- Where possible please bring your own kit and minimise the need to use equipment from the cupboard.
- Instructors, please take your kit home with you and where possible please do not store it in the cupboard.
- The equipment officer will make sure that all borrowed kit is either submerged in pool water for a minimum of 30 seconds prior to use at the start of the session and before storage.
- The equipment officer will wipe all surfaces, pillar valves and handles with a disinfectant wipe prior to storage.

### **Summary**

As expected, the first few weeks have gone well and any little uncertainties were overcome and we worked through it.

## Useful Information

Huge thanks must be given to Chris Hastie for pulling out the pertinent bits from what is probably thousands of pages of fluff on the subject of COVID and swimming. There is lots of reading material out there for anyone interested in this, see below for some suggestions. In the highly likely event that you will not want to read all this, I would suggest speaking to Chris if you have questions.

1. Government guidance for providers of grassroots sport and gym/leisure facilities:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>

2. Swim England guidance on returning to the pool:

<https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/pool-return-guidance-documents/>

3. Jim Watson (BSAC Safety and Development Manager) on getting back to the pool

<https://www.bsac.com/news-and-blog/getting-back-to-pool-diving-and-training/>

4. BSAC Pool guidance: <https://www.bsac.com/document/swimming-pool-guidance/>

5. BSAC Equipment guidance: <https://www.bsac.com/document/equipment-guidance/>

6. BSAC training guidance: <https://www.bsac.com/document/diver-train>