



## Northumberland & Durham Swimming Association

Management Board Chair: Mrs Dawn Peart [ndsachair@asaner.org.uk](mailto:ndsachair@asaner.org.uk)

Treasurer: Mr Graham Robinson: [ndswimtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:ndswimtreasurer@gmail.com)

Secretary: Mrs Tracy Donnelly: [ndsasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:ndsasecretary@gmail.com)

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### Minutes of NDSA Management Board meeting (B26\_01) 12 January 2026 - online

The meeting opened at 6.35pm

Attendees: Mrs D Peart (Chair) Mrs T Donnelly (Sec), Mr D Maxwell,) Mr D Low, Mrs S Small  
(SENER)

Apologies Mr G Robinson, Mr R Gordon

Attending by invitation:

Ms B Maguire – Swimming

Mrs L McLelland – Artistic Swimming

Mr E Henderson - Waterpolo

Not attending: Mrs A Graham-King – Diving, Ms J Barber - Paraswimming

1. Apologies: as above
2. Declarations of interest will be noted against relevant items as they arise.
3. Minutes of the meeting B25\_06 held on 10 November 2025 (circulated prior to this meeting) were agreed (prop DM, seconded DL). These have now been added to the N&D page of the SENER website.
4. Matters Arising
  - a. The MoU between N&D and SENER re provision of service by SENER staff to the county & the financial contribution by N&D has been finalized and signed
  - b. Athlete of the Year for 2025 nominations will be noted against the respective disciplines and the award will be presented at the Festival of Aquatics on 6 June.
5. Treasurer's Update
  - a. An update had been circulated prior to the meeting.
  - b. It was agreed to seek further clarification from the Treasurer of the reasons for the deficit and that these have been taken into account against future expenditure, especially if the reasons are likely to remain
  - c. The Board will support the Treasurer to prepare a business plan for 2026/27

## 6. Discipline Updates

### a. Artistic Swimming

- i. The club are working with their new HC to create a development plan for 2026 onwards and have been successful in securing funding to extend her hours to 20 per week
- ii. This will allow the club to move from offering one novice level session to four sessions; 3 are now running and the fourth will be added in February
- iii. The club had only 1 Development Coach covering 4 grade levels but can now split these athletes into 2 groups to promote further development
- iv. There will be a greater focus on developing younger swimmers and dev funding from N&D will help the club to encourage take-up of training and build up their junior competitive squad for 2026/27
- v. LM announced she planned for this to be her final year as Chair of GSSC and she will spend the year supporting the new HC and working on the planned development
- vi. The Regional Artistic Swimming Championships are being held in Gateshead on 7 Feb 2026.
- vii. LM wanted to pass on her thanks to coaches from Derwentside & Gateshead SC (Jay & Paul) who have spent time coaching the GSSC swimmers in speed swimming and tumble turns. The GSSC coach will work with D&G swimmers to provide coaching in sculling
- viii. A coach (Leanne) from GSSC attended the N&D camp in December and provided a very well-received session on sculling to the athletes attending the camp.

### b. Diving

**Tynemouth:** No update to report.

**Darlington:** Following on from the issue with the 1m and 3m springboards this has now been sorted and they are back to the pool as usual.

Evan Copper was selected to Team Z (slightly inaccurate from the November report) and recently attended the Development Camp in Sheffield supported by Coach Steve Jackson.

Evan and Alexa Cooper will compete in their first Junior Elite event in Harrogate (NER Leg 1) and Leeds (NER Leg 2) over the next two weekends in January.

Jennifer Jenkins will complete her Level 1 Assistant Coaching course

**Sunderland:** Having returned to the pool after Christmas and taking into consideration member drop outs from 2025 the Club is now at a membership of n=10. They still haven't managed to grow over the year. Learn to Dive is looking slightly healthier but it isn't feeding in to the Club.

Sunderland have two new L1 Coaches however Everyone Active have not engaged them even though I've contacted them multiple times. Their current stance (having been told second hand) is that they don't need L1 Coaches – they need L2's. However one doesn't come without the other and as things stand I'm going to have to look at sending them to either Tynemouth or Darlington which is more than slightly disappointing.

I've asked for support from Sarah and this has now been passed to Becky Walker and there is meeting arranged for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> with Swim England and myself. I'm also going to reach out to Nikki Smith in Sheffield to get her thoughts.

### c. Paraswimming – no update provided

#### d. Swimming

New N&D Records (Junior) for:  
Ben Beale (50/200 FLY, 200/400 IM)  
Leyton Leavelle (50/100 BR)

Strong results across both English and Scottish National Meets. In future coaches will be looking more to English Nationals for the elite swimmers

An N&D Coach Forum will be held straight after the county champs to capture immediate feedback

The Beacon management Team met on 10 Jan – the coaches will review attendance and reasons for swimmers not taking up invites/leaving and selection criteria for new athletes

The Board agreed the recommendation from the Beacon Team to formally invite Martin Hall (NST) to join the permanent coaching team

It would be helpful for SE to provide more information about SE events /camps being held in N&D to help avoid impact on Beacon sessions

Coaches will try to provide more opportunities for club coaches to observe sessions

Following the SE reorganisation there is currently no SE Talent lead for NER.

N&D Masters are holding a Development Day at Sunderland Aquatics Centre on 31 Jan. 38 athletes have taken up the invite and Martin Hall (NST) will be lead coach. There are still opportunities for club coaches to go along to support.

#### Coach Selections:

Becki McGuire (Morpeth) - Head Coach at Swim England National Youth Development

Matty Allison (NST) - Coach on Swim England Euro Meet Squad

Big N&D cohort of coaches and swimmers at NER Camp in November as well as presentations by ex-N&D swimmers Chris Cook & Amii Wilmott

Lindsay Kinlen (South Tyne) - Head Coach N&D 12 year old camps.

#### e. Waterpolo

SWPC Senior men did not qualify for the 'Super 5s' championship play offs. Instead we will play off over three weekends in Q1 2026 to determine if we will remain in division 1 of BWPL or be relegated down to division 2.

A couple of players have retired from the team with immediate effect and will play no further part in the remainder of the season. More are expected to follow at the conclusion of the season towards the end of March. Commitment to the 2026/27 has been sought from the players to establish if it will be viable to remain in the league or if we will have to resign our position. Responses so far are positive so we are hopeful we can continue as the alternative is to have no senior polo available to our players for 2026/27 season.

Richard Cousins, one of our senior coaches has also elected to step away from polo at the end of the season. His departure will be a significant loss to the club, but we have two newly qualified level two coaches building their experience to help fill the gap.

Our Juniors (2008 born and younger) have the National Age Group Championships over the coming weeks. Sedgefield will be fielding male teams in the 2008 and 2010 open competitions (with a few borrowed plyers from elsewhere). For our female junior have been found places in other club's teams for those who qualified for them.

Our female only sessions have transferred from Bishop Auckland (15:00 Sundays) to Newton Ayeccliffe at 20:00 on Thursdays. With the funding obtained by the previous Chair we are able to continue to offer these sessions free of charge (subject to holding SE Club Train membership) until mid-2026 to women and girls who wish to participate. Please spread the word.

Due to the congested water polo calendar over the coming months we have delayed our AGM until 21<sup>st</sup> March to provide maximum opportunity for members to participate.

Thomas Forest (2010) has been selected to join the Scotland U18 squad.

Aston Walsh (2009) has been selected to join the GB U18 Squad.

Ben Alderson (2005) remains a part of the GB Senior Squad and was awarded the Swim England Water Polo Talent Athlete of the Year 2025 award. The GB Senior Men recently won the bronze medal at the EU Nations Cup held in Brno, Czechia.

#### 7. SENER Updates

- a. The regional update from SS had been circulated.
- b. Clubs are reminded that the Sport Welfare Officers are available to provide support and advice to clubs and members however they are NOT welfare officers and cannot deal with safeguarding or welfare concerns or complaints.

#### 8. Athlete of the Year

- a. nominees for 2025 are being considered with a view to presenting awards for both 2024 and 2025 at the Festival of Aquatics in Sunderland on 6 June 2026

#### 9. Governance & Strategy

- a. Work is nearing completion on the new Articles and Rules with continued legal advice and support from SE.
- b. The final versions were shared with the Board and discipline reps in December and feedback received is being reviewed.

#### 10. Congratulations to Darren Maxwell (D&GSC) who has been pre-selected to work at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow later this year.

The meeting closed at 7.56pm

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The next Board meeting will be on 9 March, venue to be confirmed.  
(now confirmed as Heworth Golf Club)