

hampton pool trust

# Poolside Chat

News from the charity securing the future of Hampton Pool

## Join the Trust!

Hampton Pool Trust is a small, independent, not for profit company and educational charity. It is run by **volunteers from the local community** with a vision to maintain Hampton Pool as a safe, welcoming, enjoyable, sustainable and inspirational heated, public open air swimming environment, all year round.

The Trust owns the building and the pool and exists to secure the long term future of the pool for community use. Hampton Pool is managed on behalf of Hampton Pool Trust by YMCA London South West. Both are registered charities.

## You, too, can become a member or Trustee of Hampton Pool Trust

Our members are passionate about the facility and how it is run. If you care about the future of the pool then why not become a member of the Trust, or even a Trustee?

### Being a member

There are over 100 members of Hampton Pool Trust and they elect the Board of Trustees who are responsible for the general oversight of the running of the pool. As a member, you will be notified of Trust matters and are invited to attend meetings. There are also working teams that you can get involved in that manage aspects of the Trust's work to ensure a sustainable future for the Pool. These include:

- Finance
- Fundraising Summer Picnic Concerts team
- Building development
- Operations review in relation to the management agreement with YMCA LSW
- Hampton Pool Consultative Group
- Marketing, including:
  - road-shows and raising awareness
  - fundraising

### The role of a Trustee

HPT Trustees attend Board meetings four times a year to oversee our appointed managing agent's day-to-day operations of the pool and to progress the HPT strategic plan. There are currently 12 serving Trustees, each with their own experience that provides a broad skill-set to the Board.

## Interested?

If you care about Hampton Pool and would like to join the team aiming to make it an inspiration for the popularity of sustainable, open air swimming, and the good management of a local community facility, then please contact the Trust by email at [info@hamptonpooltrust.org.uk](mailto:info@hamptonpooltrust.org.uk)

**Hampton Pool Trust**  
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# Positive changes

**Since it was built in 1922** Hampton Pool has evolved and changed to provide the local community with a friendly, accessible place to relax and exercise. Hampton Pool Trust wants to progress our wonderful community gem so it can continue benefit all who use it.

Back in 1922 if you were using the pool you would have been swimming just 25 yards with wooden changing cubicles all around the pool. By 1939 it was a 40 yard pool with pump filtration. By the beginning of 1960 the pool was widened and the current building constructed. The learner pool was built in 1990 but since then there have been no significant changes to the pool footprint.

There have, of course, been other changes to Hampton Pool which have encouraged a wider range and number of people to use the pool. For example the pool was first heated in 1985, the changing rooms have each been halved to create a gym (1990) and a studio (2006). Also there have been major refurbishments of the main pool

tank, the roof and changing rooms which ensure users can safely enjoy Hampton Pool all year round.

With the centenary of Hampton Pool coming up in 2022, the Hampton Pool Trust Board, have been considering how the Pool needs to change so that it can continue to thrive as the community around it evolves. Over the past few years, with extensive consultation with all the different users of the pool, the Trust has been looking at various options. One of the key considerations is how to make more beneficial use of the unused area at the deep end of the pool site to create better dryside facilities. This would release additional space to improve the current changing facilities and cater better for families. [cont. on page 3](#)



# Time to appreciate the finer qualities

Two years have flown by and my time as Interim Chair of the Board has come to an end. So this will be my final Poolside Chat article.

Mark Doyle, who has been heavily involved with the Summer Picnic Concerts for many years, has taken over as Chair and I wish him all the best and hope the new Board have a successful tenure that will lead to a secure future for the pool, and furthering of the Trusts' objectives.

Since my last letter, a shoulder injury incurred in a tragic accident on holiday in Greece put paid to hopes of a pole-dancing career. This was much to my daughters' relief – it was too much of a new twist on "Sad Old Dad" dancing, but the injury has also curtailed my swimming for the last seven months.

## Sandford Parks Lido

As a result, I don't have any experiences from another swimming pool or lido to report. However, I did have a conversation with Julie Sargent of Sandford Parks Lido. This lovely 1930s lido is a jewel lying in the heart of a Cheltenham park that has received Heritage Lottery funding to restore its pool and original machinery. Just as an aside, I know one person who has climbed over the walls there for a midnight skinny dip\* and another who has fond memories of their first romantic kiss at the lido. Anyway, part of the original

infrastructure at Sandford Parks is a large aerator – that's a fountain to you and me. Apparently, the aerator is an integral part of the machinery and was thought, in the '30s, to improve the quality of the water.

These days the aerator is a bit of a health and safety liability for the lido, however Julie did say that many pool users love the sound of the fountain. That got me thinking that many elements go into creating a unique pool ambience... infrastructure, setting, the people who swim there, the staff, the Pool supporters who care passionately about its future and work hard to fulfil the Pool's purpose – and in the case of Hampton Pool, the sound of birdsong, which you can hear at least in the early morning. And I'm going to be there at 6am as often as I can. I hope you will also take the time to appreciate these finer qualities too.

Thank you all for the opportunity to be the Chair of Hampton Pool Trust – Good health. 🍷

*\*Swimming without proper safety supervision is dangerous and strongly discouraged by Hampton Pool Trust. Heavy petting and kissing are also discouraged whilst on the Pool's premises, but may be performed off the site without a lifeguard being present – unless of course, you are kissing a lifeguard – obviously.*

Sandford Parks Lido, Cheltenham



## Concert news

# Hampton Pool Summer Picnic Concerts – Please raise a glass to all the volunteers!

*This year's Summer Picnic Concerts start on Friday 7 July. Four concerts are already sold out, reports **Tim Lawes**, Concerts Producer and Director of HPT, and the remaining concerts are well on the way too.*

*There are still a few tickets left for the following great artists, including superstar Jason Donovan:*

🍷 **Jason Donovan** plus the **City Funk Orchestra**

🍷 **The Kast Off Kinks**, **Cregan & Co** play Rod Stewart and **Mike d'Abo** from Manfred Mann

*My thoughts turn to the stellar team of volunteers, all of whose efforts contribute to making the Concerts such joyous evenings of artistic delight that also raise significant funds for the development of the Pool.*

*All the stewards and bar team that you'll see at each concert are the public face of the volunteers. They are largely drawn from the Poolside Swim & BBQ Club. They put in a tremendous effort that helps create the unique, laid back atmosphere which is a large part of what makes the concerts so enjoyable.*

## Introducing the team

*Behind this public face are a core team of volunteers who do the work and manage the processes that make the concerts happen, starting work in September or earlier for the following year.*

*Daphne Wharton, Project Manager; Grahame Hadden, Quartermaster and Tony Wharton, Infrastructure Manager have all been working on the concerts since the beginning in 2002/2003. Daphne and Grahame were also long term Directors of the Trust, contributing to the Pool on a far wider basis. Sadly, they were not re-elected at this year's AGM, which creates a significant long-term gap for the Concerts and everything else that they do. Nobody has yet stepped forward to contribute in this way. Barbara Perry, Chair of the Poolside Swim & BBQ Club has been organising, cajoling and scheduling the volunteers for the bar and stewarding since 2012, as well as contributing to the management of the bar on concert nights. Phil Torode took over management*





Jason Donovan plays an exclusive concert at Hampton Pool – the only appearance in the London area this summer

of the bar from Kevin Rice in 2015, having worked on the bar since 2012. Phil Beer joined the bar's management team in 2016. The bar management team is completed by Jenny Bevan, long time cashier. Band hospitality has been run by Jane Yelland since 2012.

Very much behind the scenes, for as long as I remember, are Dot and Dave Anderson on ticket fulfilment and Julie Sewell on ticket queries.

I've been Series Producer of the concerts since 2012 and was joined by Mark Doyle as Producer in 2014. Both Mark and I have already started work on the 2018 concerts. We are both also Directors of the Trust. The marketing team is completed by copywriter Jeanette James, and William Redfern, whose consultancy designs and executes the concert campaigns as well as campaigns and websites for the Pool and Trust.

### Fully catered for

We, the volunteers, owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the Pool's management and staff, many of whom work double shifts on concert days at what is already one of the busiest times of the year. Key amongst these is Dabbie Hollis, the Pool's Catering Manager, who prepares the food for the bands, the crew and the volunteers virtually single handed and also runs the BBQ on top of running the Sun Deck Café's catering for our customers.

### Would you like to help?

All these volunteers put in a tremendous amount of work and we can only expect them to do it for so long. If you like to support the Pool and enjoy live music, why not consider enhancing our team? We meet once a month for a couple of hours and take on responsibilities that help our evenings run as smoothly as possible. Ideally we would hope that volunteers are able to commit over a year or more so that we can manage the team effectively in the long term. Please get in touch if you are interested. I'd love hear from you – [spc@hamptonpool.co.uk](mailto:spc@hamptonpool.co.uk)

## Building development

# Positive changes continued from front page

### What we are planning

You may have seen plans around the pool, responded to requests from the Trust as to what you want or indeed heard people talking about but below in a nutshell is what is being planned!

- The construction of additional changing rooms, with family sized cubicles and more individual cubicles.
- A lift to the roof where there will be a redesigned bigger café with new kitchen and serving area.
- Covered areas on the roof for colder and rainy days but with half of the area still open to sit and enjoy the view, your coffee and meal all year round.
- At the deep end of the pool a new gym and studios will provide more space for equipment and classes. These better dryside facilities ensure the site is well used all year and is not so dependent on the weather.
- Better staff facilities, with new office space, changing area and drying room for their equipment and wetsuits.
- Behind the scenes we are taking care of some green and sustainability issues. New pool equipment, filters, pumps and heaters along with solar panels and a combined heat and power unit which will reduce our energy costs and our carbon footprint.
- There will be additional secure bike racks, a re-laid and set out car park with new pedestrian access pathways to improve safety. New green areas with plants and bushes will enhance the entrance to the pool.

*"Hampton Pool Trust is working hard to evolve the Pool in order to continue to provide you with a great customer experience and improved facilities for the benefit of the whole community."*

### We are NOT building a leisure centre!


Just in case you are reading this worried that Hampton Pool will no longer be special place we all love we would like to reassure you that it will remain primarily an open air pool with 75% of the site devoted to swimming.

It won't be a huge gym but our current gym is over crowded with equipment and people, the new larger gym allows the equipment to be better spaced for easier access especially for those with disabilities.

The studios are sized to give more space per person with a few additional spaces to make the classes viable and to avoid disappointment in our popular classes.

We have looked at creating another pool for learning and training however the costs of creating and maintaining another pool are hard to recover in comparison to the expanded gym and studio.

We don't plan any long closures and we are working to remain open for business as usual with minimal inconvenience to you, our customers.

Hampton Pool Trust is working hard to evolve the Pool in order to continue to provide you with a great customer experience and improved facilities for the benefit of the whole community as everyone in the pool has been doing since 1922. 



Write to **Kate Thomson**, HPT Trustee and editor of *Poolside Chat* by email: [kate.thomson@hamptonpooltrust.org.uk](mailto:kate.thomson@hamptonpooltrust.org.uk) or by letter to Hampton Pool Trust, Hampton Pool, High Street, Hampton, Middlesex, TW12 2ST. Design by William Redfern Graphic Design [www.williamredfern.co.uk](http://www.williamredfern.co.uk)

# The therapeutic power of outdoor swimming

*"By finding an exercise that I could enjoy while I was fragile, I was able to break the cycle of stress and poor sleep"*



I have had a few episodes of depression-anxiety over my life, I guess its in my genes! They are normally precipitated by a period of stress followed by a burnout or breakdown of some sort. Everyone is different, but with me that means a mix of fatigue, worry, tearfulness, mild agoraphobia and lots of coughs and colds. I can just about function in terms of doing the school run and a bit of socialising, but randomly cry and can't deal with the office or the commute.

These symptoms are pretty mild on the mental health spectrum, doctors call it "mild to moderate depression-anxiety" and you are offered basic counselling and antidepressants. BUT it doesn't feel mild or moderate to the incumbent, it feels lousy, and worse still, permanent!

This is the state I found myself in two years ago. Although normally sporty, I was so run down with constant bugs that I had lost confidence in my body as well as my mind. I was in a rut of fear and health anxiety. I had considered a gentle exercise program but was consumed with fear. Do I have ME? What if I faint mid swim? What if I have a panic attack at the pool?

A massive turning point for me then, was my first post-breakdown visit to Hampton Pool in January 2015. I battled my agoraphobia and got into the car, with a simple goal: to swim six lengths slowly, with rests in between. My plan was to train twice a week and build up slowly.

That first swim seemed utterly surreal. I was really anxious at first, but the slow rhythmic movement, the deep breathing and sensory overload of water, bubbles,

sunlight and green space seemed to totally reset my nervous system. I did 10 lengths and had tea and cake on the terrace to celebrate!

Exercise is well known to be as effective for depression/anxiety as antidepressants. Endorphins are known to improve mood. Sunlight and green space are also known to be beneficial. When you combine this with rhythmic deep breathing, sometimes a focus on technique and the pleasant feeling of weightlessness, is it any wonder that outdoor swimming in particular is so powerful?

I increased my lengths slowly, went twice a week and by Easter was doing 30 lengths and realised that the only limits were probably those I set myself. My "low" moments were few and far between and my anxiety was manageable. Swimming had been the cornerstone of my recovery. Exercise is essential to support mood, good sleep and a healthy appetite. By finding an exercise that I could enjoy while I was fragile, I was able to break the cycle of stress, poor sleep etc.

I went on to find a group swimming class, *Swimfit* at Teddington Pool, but still returned to Hampton for my weekly feel good pilgrimage! Even though not a natural swimmer – I am built to run and jump – now I'm better, I always prioritise my weekly Hampton swim!

*The author is not medically qualified. If you have a mental health problem you should speak to your GP.*

You may find the following links useful: [swimfit.com](http://swimfit.com), [www.rbmind.org](http://www.rbmind.org) and [www.mindinkingston.org.uk](http://www.mindinkingston.org.uk)

***I am delighted to announce some well deserved promotions and new faces, who, like all the staff, will work hard to keep you safe and enjoying all the facilities that Hampton Pool has to offer.***

Mickey Lewis, who joined us in 2015, has taken over as Deputy Manager. He read law at university and then worked in Belfast for a couple of years. After his role in Ireland, he took time to travel, mostly in Australia and New Zealand, and for the past seven years he has been to the West Bank in Palestine to teach English during the summer months. Before his promotion, Mickey began working in the Sun Deck Café, became a lifeguard and then a swim teacher. He thoroughly enjoys the day-to-day challenge of working at the Pool.

If you have been at the Pool at all over the last nine years you will have met Sarah Critch, either front-of-house or teaching poolside. Her competence, efficiency and positive attitude have led to her recent promotion to Duty Manager. Sarah is a seasoned traveller and always returns from her travels with great stories for our customers, her last adventure was spent driving around the deep south of the US for three weeks, eventually ending up in Vegas. I'm sure Sarah will have a lot more exciting travels to come, but for the time being, congratulations on the promotion Sarah.

We have also appointed a number of new lifeguards – Daniel, Olivia, Cameron, Joanna, Ian, Sam, Matthew and Francesca. We also have another Daniel who has joined our maintenance team. Jamilah, Sarah and Kalika will all be working on reception and lastly Tom and Emily will be keeping us all fed and watered in the Sun Deck Café.

Please stop by and say hello to all our new members of staff. 📍

## Poolside Swim and BBQ Club

Barbara Perry, Chair

Our club season started at the beginning of April to unseasonably warm weather, so we had a wonderful first weekend and then, two weeks later, a great Easter weekend. The weather deteriorated after that and late April and early May has been, so far, rather chilly although dry. Given that the pool is heated all year round though, the weather does not stop us swimming or enjoying the social aspect of being part of our popular club. We are pleased to welcome both new members and old friends to club.

Some "friends" we have not seen again this year are the pair of ducks who have been coming to the pool for a number of years in spring. Although they were a mixed blessing to some, ducks are a feature of open air swimming in pools and lakes so I, for one, miss them!

Club members volunteer to help with a number of activities at the pool, in particular gardening, promotion of the Pool at local events and helping with the concerts – specifically running the bar and providing volunteer stewards. So we are looking forward to helping with the 2017 concert season.

Looking forward to a good season of swimming and barbecuing! 📍