



# **BUSINESS PLAN**

**2025 – 2030**

## **WHO WE ARE**

Settle Area Swimming Pool is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission. Our registered Charity number is 1171790. We are governed by a board of trustees who have a legal responsibility for the management of the charity and its resources. The trustees are elected at the annual meeting, serving for a period of three years that is renewable. (The list of current trustees at March 2025 is set out in appendix one).

The pool is situated in Kendal Road, Giggleswick, Settle BD24 0BU and consists of a 20 metre three lane pool, together with a gymnasium, dryspace area titled fitSpace, changing village and reception area with viewing and catering facilities.

In March 2025 the staff consisted of a manager, operations manager, an IT administrator, book keeper, three café staff and more than 20 lifeguards, swim teachers, and fitness instructors. In addition, we are grateful for the support of a team of more than 40 volunteers, most of whom are involved in organising fund-raising, through our charity shops.

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### **OUR VISION**

**More People, More Active, More Often.**

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### **OUR MISSION**

**To help our community lead active, fun and sociable lives by working with partners to provide a local health and wellbeing hub that people love.**

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### **OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVE**

**To promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Settle and the surrounding area the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the said inhabitants.**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The summer of 2025 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Settle Area Swimming Pool. The pool was built and has continued to serve the people of this area over the past five decades. It has done so thanks to the commitment of the local community. This was initially demonstrated by the organisation and fund-raising that led to the building of the pool in extremely challenging times. It continued despite a variety of difficulties that would have overwhelmed a less resilient and determined community. And it is as strong today as it ever was.

Around ten years ago, faced with funding difficulties and a building showing increasing signs of wear and tear, the trustees, with the support of North Yorkshire County Council initially and then Sport England, examined in-depth possible options for the future of the pool. Demolition and reconstruction were ruled out on grounds of cost; patching up the existing building was rejected as a recipe for decline and eventual closure. That left the programme of redevelopment that was eventually undertaken. We added to the existing pool basin and basic building additional facilities – a modernised changing village, a new dryspace and an enhanced reception area that included catering facilities. The programme of work was completed in the autumn of 2022.

As we look to the next period, through this report, we seek to build on the community support and engagement that has served us well over the past half century. We recommit to our vision, our mission and our objective and we seek to redefine our values and our priorities in a practical way that keeps us true to our history but builds on that, working for today's community, consolidating our achievements and providing a basis for further effective development .

*Chris Hirst   Mike Smith*

Joint Chairs,

Settle Area Swimming Pool

On behalf of the Pool Trustees

**March 2025**

## REVIEW OF 2020-2025 BUSINESS PLAN

In early 2020 the trustees of Settle Area Swimming Pool adopted a business plan for the period April 2020 to March 2025. These five years were to see the biggest transformation of the building since its construction in the 1970s.

The 2020 plan runs to nearly 80 pages. It was produced with support from professional advisers who were recommended and funded by Sport England.

The plan sought to address four key questions:

- What do we intend to do and why?
- How and when we will do it?
- How much it will cost?
- How will we fund it and keep it going?

Looking at our achievements over the past five years, we can say with confidence that, despite many obstacles, we have done what we set out to do.

We now have a functioning centre that is 'more than just a pool'. We have modernised the changing facilities; have a functioning and adaptable dry space providing a range of classes and community facilities; we have a café; and have recently added a well-equipped gym.

Our financial position remains difficult but we are moving in the right direction. The facilities are well used and we have strong community support. Our reach is, as we said it would be 'more people, more active, more often.'

There are areas in which we have over-achieved. For instance, the 2020 business plan did not envisage the addition of solar panels on the roof. We now have, not just one bank, but two banks of solar panels. These are helping reduce our energy bills and can generate income through the export of surplus electricity to the grid.

There are, however, other areas in which we have not yet met our goals. The management of a larger centre has proved more challenging than was envisaged and staff changes have meant that to date we have not yet been able to employ someone largely focussed on outreach work.

The greatest challenges have been those that were not envisaged in the 2020 plan. No sooner had the plan been adopted than the whole country went into prolonged lockdown as the government, like other governments around the world, sought to counter the devastating effects of the Covid 19 pandemic. The pool had to close for months, as did our fundraising charity shop. The collection of wastepaper ceased and was never resumed. Whilst the pool closure clearly meant we could not provide the facilities at the core of our mission, the financial impact was ameliorated through the government furlough scheme. Once restrictions were partially lifted, but before pools were allowed to re-open, we were able to use the building as a collection point for our charity shop donations. That paved the way for the system whereby the space once used for wastepaper collection became home to two shipping containers used for the collection and sorting of donations. This has helped the expansion of what are now two shops supported by online sales. These generate far more income than we envisaged in 2020 and are integral to our operation.

The 2020 plan's 'draft delivery roadmap' set out a schedule under which work on the redevelopment of the building would start in June 2021 and be completed by September that year. It also estimated the cost of the work would be £600,000. The process of finding a suitable

contractor proved more difficult than expected. Nevertheless, we eventually agreed terms with the West Yorkshire based company Adamco and work started in October 2021. It was completed a year later at a final cost of around £800,000.

The roadmap included provision for the pool to be closed throughout the redevelopment work, however for a period during the autumn of 2021, thanks to the construction of temporary changing facilities, the pool was kept open whilst work took place elsewhere on site. This came to an end in December, when a further major unexpected event caused the closure of the pool and created substantial additional building work. That was when Storm Arwen, which did major damage across the region, removed a substantial part of the pool roof. The replacement work added to the building schedule, but did make possible the addition of solar panels on the new roof. A major part of the cost of repairs was claimable through our insurance cover. However, the loss of our no-claims status, together with the additional value of the redeveloped building, meant that insurance costs rose beyond what had been anticipated.

A final unforeseen external factor was the drastic rise in energy prices and in particular gas prices following Russia's full scale invasion of Ukraine in early 2022. For, what appeared good reasons at the time, we were tied to a long term contract for the supply of gas through a contractor used by North Yorkshire County Council. This meant that, in the winter of 2023-24, our bills rose from £1,000 a month to £7,000. By the start of 2024 we were facing a serious financial crisis, with the real possibility that reserves could fall to the point where we would have to close. Fortunately, following a public meeting attended by well over a hundred pool users and supporters, things started to take a turn for the better.

News of our financial difficulties prompted a range of fund-raising events organised by many different organisations and individuals. These generated more than £27,000 over a period of just a few months. We were also able to negotiate a greatly reduced insurance premium, and despite, disappointingly, losing out on the first round of grants from the Swim England Swimming Pool Support Fund, we were awarded £21,000 in the second round. This financed the second bank of solar panels. An important requirement of that grant was that we undertook an Environment Audit, facilitated by the consultants Right Directions. As will be seen later, this has helped greatly in developing more environmentally friendly policies across the whole of our operation.

By late 2024 we were in a position to buy a number of pieces of gym equipment and to convert the smaller part of the fitSpace area into a dedicated gymnasium – something in line with the 2020 business plan, though not stated explicitly in the plan.

Staff changes over the period of the 2020-25 plan have resulted in some of our volunteer trustees having to play a far greater role in the day-to-day management of the centre than was ever envisaged at the start of the redevelopment process. The creation of the new post of Operations Manager to work alongside the Centre Manager, which took place in the autumn of 2024, will hopefully provide a more stable environment and help us focus on the objectives set out in the 2020 plan and developed in this document.

## **THE CURRENT SITUATION: AN OVERVIEW**

In the spring of 2025, as we look forward to the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the pool , we are, probably, in a far better place than we have been for many years. The redevelopment of the building was completed two and a half years ago. Since then we have made further additional improvements to the facilities including the creation of a gymnasium. We now offer a range of sessions and classes that enable more people to be more active more often.

Our financial situation is more secure and we now have a staffing structure more fitted for an organisation that is more than just a pool. Our links with the community are strong, as is demonstrated by the work that our volunteers put in, especially through the running of our charity shops and associated on-line sales. This is essential to our continued success. We are now looking to a period of consolidation but with an eye to the challenges that lie ahead.

This summer a number of trustees are stepping down, including the secretary and treasurer. Replacing them will be one of those major challenges.

## **THE WIDER CONTEXT – ACTIVE LIVES**

The 2020 business plan quoted Sport England research on the value of physical exercise. It also quoted Swim England on the place of swimming in the wider context and it looked at the population make up of our own catchment area, based on local authority figures. The following paragraphs provide an update on that information.

### **Sport England perspective**

The latest Sport England report, published last year, says: "There are two million more adults getting active on a regular basis through sport and physical activity than there were in 2016. This is despite the impacts of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and increased cost of living pressures. The new figures, in our latest Active Lives Adult Survey report, show that between November 2022 and November 2023, 63.4 percent of the adult population met the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines of doing 150 minutes, or more, of moderate intensity physical activity a week. That's equivalent to 29.5 million adults in England playing sport or taking part in physical activity every week. This figure is largely unchanged from 12 months ago when 63.1 percent were active but means that, compared with when we first ran the survey between November 2015 and November 2016, there are two million more active adults – an increase of 1.3 percent."

The report cautions however that: "The number of people classed as inactive – averaging fewer than 30 minutes a week of moderate intensity physical activity – has remained steady over the last year and 25.7 percent of the population (11.9m) are in this category compared to 25.8 percent 12 months ago." It goes on: "A person's age, sex, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic group, whether they have a disability or long-term health condition, and the place they live in are all significant factors impacting our relationship with sport and physical activity." The report underlines that many longstanding inequalities remain, with women, those from lower socio-economic groups and Black and Asian people still less likely to be active than others. The report also shows that where you live impacts on how likely you are to be active, with those living in more deprived places less likely to be active than those in places that are less deprived.

### **Swim England view**

Specifically on the value of swimming, a recent report from Swim England says: "Swimming generated more than £2.4 billion of social value in 2022. Swimming benefits society through improving people's physical and mental health, improving their life satisfaction as well as aiding both individual and social and community development." Swim England also report that pool usage has now returned to the levels seen before the Covid pandemic. An earlier report had however warned that pressures on council budgets threatened further widespread closure of council run pools. School children are identified by Swim England as being of particular importance, stressing the need to teach swimming as a life skill at an early age. It also emphasises the importance of reaching older people for whom water based exercise can be of particular value.

## **THE LOCAL CONTEXT**

The pool's 2020 business plan looked in detail at the demographics of what could be regarded as our catchment area. Its findings are worth repeating.

Craven District has an ageing population that is expected to live longer and increase in number in the future. There is a below average number of people in the working population



(58 percent compared with 63 percent nationally) as well as a higher number of people aged 65+ years (26 percent compared to 18 percent).

Unemployment is below average with one percent claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)/Universal Credit (UC) compared with three percent nationally. Deprivation is low across the district with four percent of the population within the 20 percent most deprived neighbourhoods, compared to 20 percent nationally. The district has a higher than average number of people who own their homes, (74 percent -64 percent nationally), with many houses with no mortgages (42 percent compared to 31 percent), leaving a lower number of people renting. This may suggest disposable income for sport and leisure activities is available to residents.

The population of the district has social grades higher than the England averages for the AB group which have access to the highest amount of disposable income. There are also a higher number of people in the C2 group. Life expectancy is above national averages for both males and females.

Above average number of people have access to a car or van, suggesting residents often need to travel in the district in a way not possible by public transport. Health is generally better than the national average, although it is often below regional figures. Some key issues include diabetes and alcohol related issues. The ONS Subnational Population Projections has highlighted that between 2019 and 2029, whilst there is expected to be only about a 1,300 increase in population in total (two percent compared to five percent nationally), the 70+ years age group is expected to increase by 2,600 people with younger age groups decreasing. In short, this shows the area has, overall, an ageing population .

## WHAT PEOPLE SAY

### North Yorkshire survey

North Yorkshire Council, which took over from Craven District Council in 2023, has recently conducted a 'Let's Talk Active' survey of leisure activities across the county.

It concluded: Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) of people say they do 30 minutes or more of physical activity at least three or four days a week, and most people from all age groups say they do this level of activity. The activity levels of those taking part in the survey are broadly in line with the activity levels of the wider population as shown by other surveys. The most popular outdoor activities are walking, cycling, running, and swimming. Fitness classes, swim sessions and gym sessions are the most popular indoor activities.

The factors most commonly found to affect the ability to be active a lot or quite a bit are: time (42 percent), price (33 percent), health conditions (30 percent), travel (28 percent) and suitability (27 percent). Younger age groups are much more likely to rate price and time as affecting their ability to be active. Childcare is much more likely to be rated as a main factor by those in the 30 to 39 and 40 to 49-year age groups. Health conditions are more likely to be rated as a main factor by older age groups and those who consider themselves disabled or as having a health condition.

The survey responses to the question 'What prevents or restricts you from being or staying active?' highlight the different challenges people face in maintaining an active lifestyle, including time constraints, health issues, accessibility and availability, cost, environmental factors, knowledge and confidence, motivation and routine, and specific needs. Looking at use of leisure centres, the report shows slightly more than half (51 percent) of people say they never do physical activity at a leisure centre, while nearly 40 percent do physical activity at a leisure centre at least once or twice a week. Nearly four-out-of-ten people say their most often used leisure centre meets their needs very well (15 percent) or well (24 percent), but around one-third say their leisure centre does not meet their needs very well (17 percent) or at all (16 percent).

The main reasons people gave for leisure centres meeting their needs include welcoming and supportive staff, the quality and variety of classes and activities, good facilities and equipment, opportunities to meet new people and socialise, and community-focused programmes and events that encourage participation, convenient locations, and flexible timings of sessions. The main reasons why people say leisure centres do not meet their needs include limited class availability, cost, facility issues, accessibility challenges, inadequate timetables, lack of specific programmes, booking and membership issues, and preferences for outdoor activities.

The survey suggests sessions for beginners, those on healthy weight and health conditions sessions and informal activities are most likely to encourage people to be more active in using leisure services. Lower costs and more activities are the improvements most likely to make people use leisure services more. Many people also want to see improvements in health and wellbeing services and community services.

Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of people ranked community sports facilities as a top three priority for the council. Some 61 percent rated health and wellbeing programmes and nearly half (49 percent) ranked disability and inclusive facilities in their top three priorities.

## **Our own survey results**

Settle Area Swimming Pool was not specifically referenced in the North Yorkshire survey, though some replies probably referred to us. We did however conduct our own survey in early 2025. This was mainly conducted on line, but with an opportunity to respond on paper.

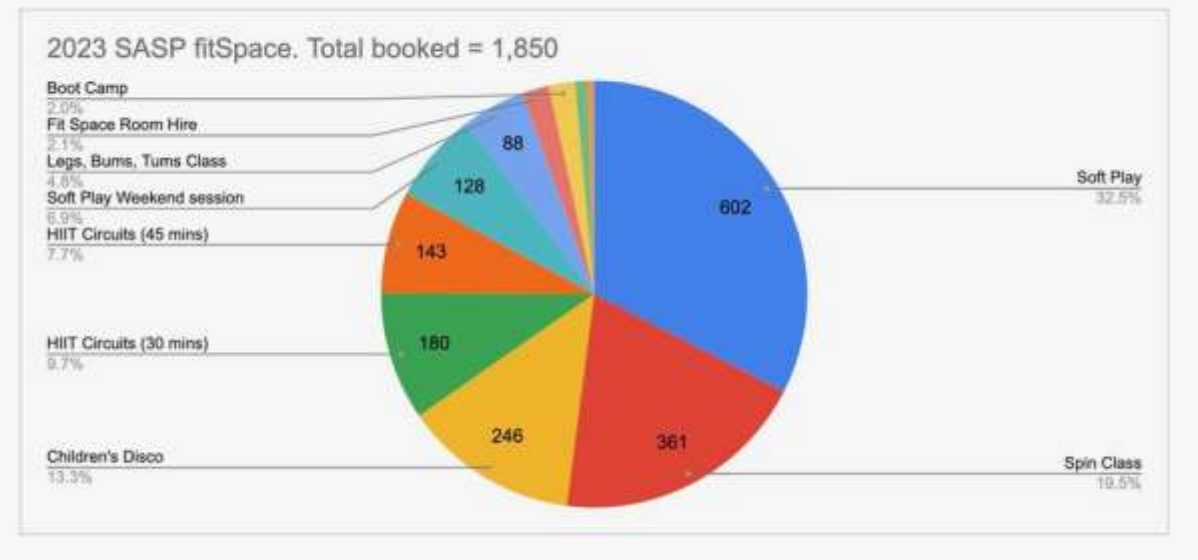
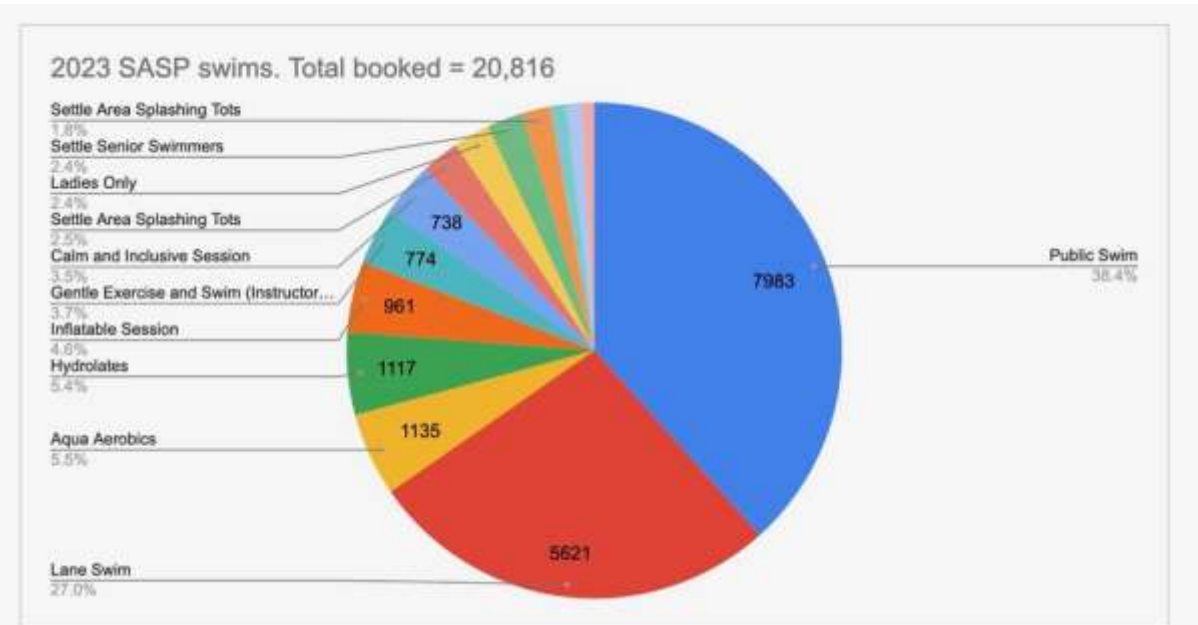
More than 260 people responded to the survey, 256 of them on line and a further ten on paper. Nearly 80 percent of the respondents were female and the largest proportion (88) were in the 60-69 age group. None of the respondents was under 18; just five were in their twenties; 30 in their thirties; 44 in their forties; and 49 in their fifties. There were 43 responses from people over 70. Just over a hundred respondents lived within a mile of the pool; 69 between one and five miles; 58 between five and ten miles; and 33 travelled more than ten miles to use the pool. In light of our recent environmental audit we asked how important the environment was to respondents. Two hundred and twenty eight said it was either very or quite important to them, with just 27 saying it was not important.

In terms of what people like about the pool, the friendliness of the staff was mentioned most frequently, as was convenience (not surprising given many live within a mile of the pool) and the cleanliness of the modern facilities, especially in the changing area. In terms of areas where we could do better, the most frequently mentioned were requests for higher water temperatures and lower prices. There were a number of criticisms of changes made to the timetable at short notice; the number of people swimming lengths during open sessions; and specific maintenance points, particularly regarding the showers. The limited opening hours of the café was referred to by a number of respondents, as was lack of communications between trustees and users. A number of respondents went into details about particular issues.

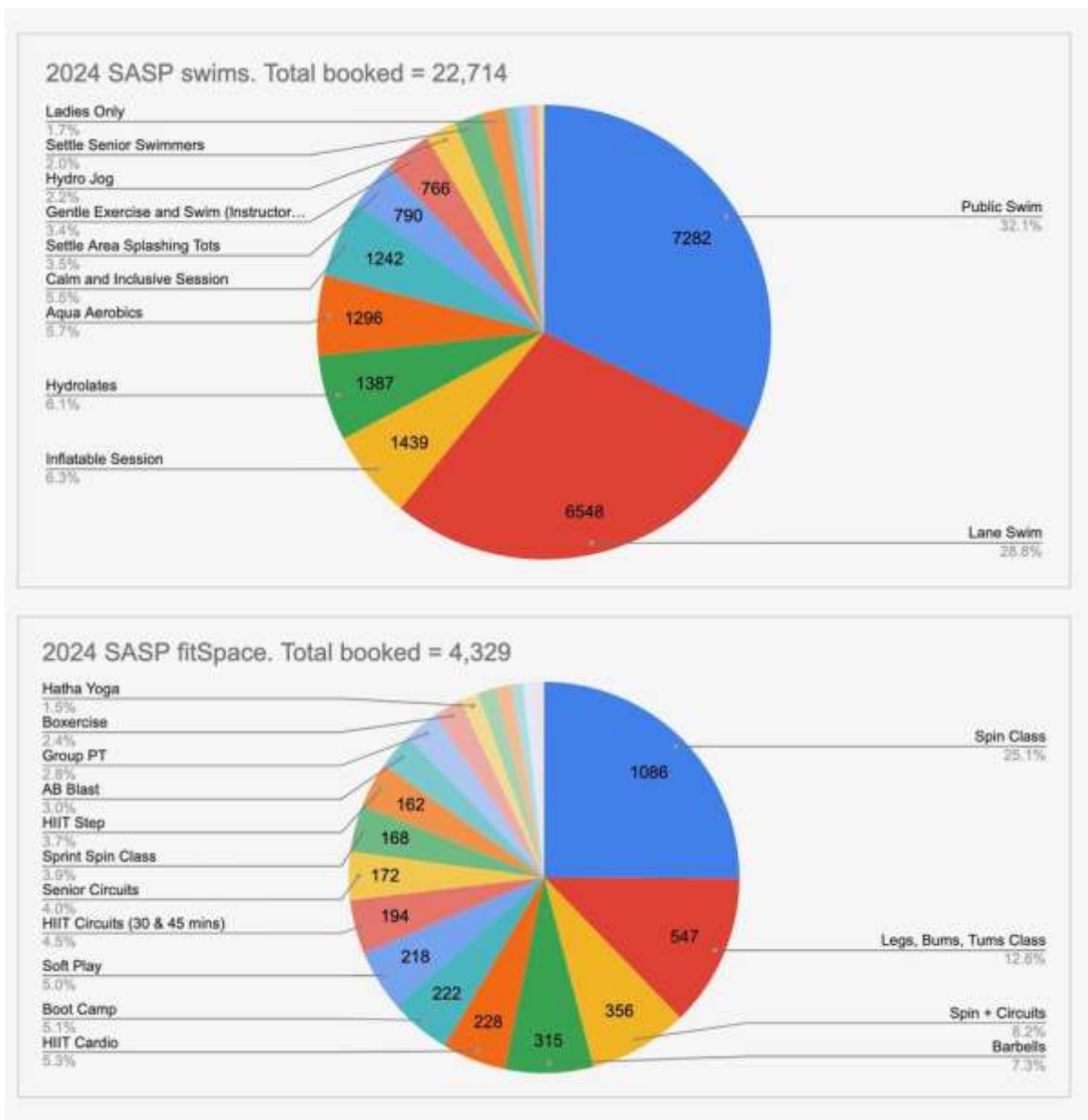
The trustees are grateful to all respondents for their comments and are they are reviewing them in detail. A detailed response will be given on the pool website and users are encouraged to raise specific issues with staff. A number of issues raised had also been acted on by the end of March 2025.

# ATTENDANCES 2023-2024

2023



2024



The illustration on the previous page shows the comparative attendance figures for 2023-24. The key findings are:

- Attendance at swim sessions rose by nine per cent between 2023 and 2024.
- Attendance at fitSpace sessions rose by 135 per cent over the same period.

This shows solid progress over the period since the re-opening after the redevelopment, particularly with regard to the new facilities. We will continue to monitor attendance and respond accordingly.

## OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Drawing on the national objectives of Sport England and Swim England, together with local demographic information and the surveys conducted both by North Yorkshire and ourselves, we currently have and seek to develop a programme that uses our facilities to match the national and local priorities.

In practice this means:

### IN THE POOL

**Giving the opportunity for children and adult non-swimmers to learn to swim in a professional, welcoming and safe environment.**

We do this through work with local schools; the provision of swimming classes for children and adults; and splashing tots sessions.

**Reaching older and disadvantaged groups, including those with disabilities.**

We do this through sessions for senior swimmers; hydro jog; gentle exercise and swim; calm and inclusive sessions; aqua aerobics and hydrolates. We also have ladies only sessions for women who prefer a female only environment.

**Giving the opportunity for regular and occasional swimmers to enjoy sessions that suit them.**

We offer lane swimming on a regular basis at different times of the day; public open swimming sessions – fun sessions particularly suitable for families; and inflatable sessions for simple, safe fun.

**Competitive swimming**

We recognise that having learned to swim, many will wish to go on to swim at a competitive level. We can provide opportunities for this through school galas, which we aim to organise on a regular basis, and also by hosting our local swim club when we can do so in a way that meets our other commitments and their ambitions, as a Swim England recognised swimming club.

### IN FITSPACE

The creation of a new dryspace and gymnasium gives us the capacity to expand our offer and our contribution towards the goals set by Sport England, whilst also meeting the needs of our local community.

We do this by:

**Providing a range of sessions aimed at different groups, with an emphasis on older and disadvantaged groups, but with provision for young children and also for active adults seeking to maintain and improve their levels of fitness.**

Sessions currently include: hatha yoga, senior circuits, children's soft play, spin classes, "legs, bums, tums" classes and high intensity circuits. The introduction of a well-equipped gymnasium supported by qualified instructors further expands our offer in a way suitable both for beginners and those seeking to maintain and boost fitness.

## **PROGRESS MONITOR**

We will monitor attendance at all sessions, varying our programme to meet changing needs. We will respond to requests and offers to run new sessions; ensure all sessions are run to a high standard in a welcoming and inclusive way; and seek to encourage greater participation through our publicity and marketing strategy (*see below*).

We are also conscious that tourism forms an important part of the local economy and that we are a part of the tourism sector. We will ensure that we welcome visitors to the area and, wherever possible, we will provide sessions that can be accessed on a pay-as-you-go basis. We will publicise our facilities through work with groups like Visit Settle and the Tourist Information Office.

## **PUBLICITY AND MARKETING**

An essential part of our mission is to reach out to our key audiences.

These are:

- users and supporters
- staff and volunteers
- local residents and visitors
- local employers
- voluntary and charity groups
- potential funders
- national and local sports bodies
- government bodies at local and national level
- elected representatives at parliamentary, county and town and parish level.

We do this through our website and social media presence; direct communications with individuals and organisations; biannual newsletters; and placing items of interest in the local media, such as *The Craven Herald*, local magazines and local radio stations.

Over the coming period we will:

Maintain and develop our regular communications and marketing channels.

- Develop an annual marketing plan
- Maintain and review our use of social media channels
- Develop our website
- Produce and circulate widely a biannual newsletter
- Seek opportunities to promote and publicise ourselves through a regular flow of news stories
- Produce, circulate and regularly update promotional leaflets and posters, especially those aimed at visitors to the area.

Undertake the following initiatives.

- Aim to run four planned promotions/campaigns per year
- Regularly review signage on roads and approaches
- Target specific market segments: young people, women, people with low incomes, older people, people with limiting health conditions
- Update and maintain our distribution list
- Seek to engage with non-users
- Engage with local businesses, voluntary groups, especially sports clubs
- Review branding and name.

## **GOVERNANCE**

In the summer of 2025 a number of trustees are standing down after serving throughout a period of major changes. They include the current secretary and treasurer. We are grateful to them for their dedicated service and recognise that replacing them will be one of the major challenges in the immediate future.

Individual trustees have had to take on a considerable amount of additional work over recent years, beyond what would be expected of volunteers whose principal role should be one of oversight. A key task in the coming years will be to ensure that the staff are equipped to deal with such matters.

One way in which we have recently sought to ensure a more effective operation has been the establishment of a number of different groups of trustees and staff, in some cases supported by additional members, to deal with specific areas of responsibility. The publicity and marketing group, whose work is referred to above is one such group. The others are: facilities, finance and people. In addition, the shop committee plays a key role in the operation of what has become our major source of fund raising.

The following paragraphs look at our plans and objectives in these respective areas:

## **FINANCE**

A stable financial position, with sufficient reserves to cover any unexpected emergencies is essential for the future of the organisation. Action taken in recent years has helped to reduce costs for insurance and energy usage whilst successful grant applications have enabled the enhancement of our facilities.

We will endeavour to ensure continued financial stability by:

- Continuing to search out and apply for external funding to enhance our offer, to improve the building and to reduce our environmental impact.
- Monitoring core costs and ensuring that the pool/fitSpace operation is self-financing.
- Paying back loans taken out to pay for building works, whilst ensuring that sufficient money is generated by fundraising activities to do this prudently.

The financial position will be monitored by the treasurer and finance group, and reports given on a regular basis to trustees. The aim is to keep reserves at the ideal level of £75,000 and never to drop below £25,000. The accounts are presented to the annual meeting, open to all users and supporters of the pool, and submitted to the Charity Commission after being reviewed by a qualified Independent Examiner.

## **FUNDRAISING SHOPS**

Our two fundraising shops and online sales of donated goods are essential to raise income to pay back the loans we took out to enhance the building. We have a rolling annual lease on the shop in Duke Street, the lease on the Church Street shop runs until September 2026, when it can be



renewed. At present we have sufficient volunteers to staff both shops and do not need to pay any staff. There is an excellent stream of donated goods at all times of year and our shops are popular with both local people and visitors.

The excellent financial performance of the shops will be maintained by:

- An ongoing recruitment drive for volunteers to fill vacancies caused by existing volunteers moving on.
- Increased integration of the management of the shops with management of the pool, e.g. joint procurement, common policies and protocols etc.

It is envisaged that by early 2033 all loans will be repaid and at that time we will be in a position to review our fund-raising activities.

The leasing of a business unit on the Sowarth Industrial Estate to act as a donations centre from April 2025 is intended to take forward the fundraising operation by providing a larger facility for receiving, sorting and storing donations on a single site in a way that was not possible when we had to rely on the use of a number of different containers. This will also provide a better working environment for volunteers. The situation will be monitored closely in the coming period.

## **FACILITIES**

The redevelopment work carried out over the year starting in October 2021 in effect meant the partial demolition of the 50 year old building and construction of a new building around the core of the pool basin and surrounding area. That inevitably created a number of problems that could not be fully addressed during the construction phase. Dealing with snagging issues whilst improving existing facilities has been a major part of the work of the facilities group and staff over the past two years.

Sport England has run several initiatives for decarbonisation that were facilitated by North Yorkshire Council. This has enabled us to complete various projects to improve our energy efficiency. The addition of the second bank of solar panels was a major achievement. We have also injected insulating materials into a section of the existing wall and dealt with a number of leaks in the roof and issues around drainage. The installation of doors between the pool and changing area has helped both improve health and safety for pool access and improved the insulation of the pool hall. We will continue to work to reduce our carbon footprint and look to reduce costs for utilities and maintenance.

Installing full fibre broadband from B4RN has allowed more efficient operation of the online booking system and our electronic tills and telephones. This has, in turn, helped handle the increased number of customers and the large variety of sessions we now offer across a wide range of facilities, both in the pool and in fitSpace.

We constantly monitor facilities to ensure we comply with legal requirements, maintain the safe operation of the building, and strive to improve efficiency.

We are committed to:

- Maintain the pool at a minimum of 28 degrees and a maximum of 32 degrees.
- Ensure the pool is balanced chemically and tested regularly (minimum three times per day), to ensure customer comfort and safety.
- Keep all areas in a clean, safe and hygienic condition.

- Ensure equipment is in good working order, checked and maintained regularly.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

As stated above, one of the provisions of the grant to fund the second bank of solar panels was that we undertake an environment audit. This was facilitated by the consultancy Right Directions. It provided a great deal of useful advice, some of which we were able to implement immediately. As a result, between the initial audit in September 2024 and an update in January 2025 our score rose from 39 per cent to 70 percent. Our recent survey also demonstrated that the vast majority of our users regard environmental issues as either very or quite important.

We have now set the following aims and publicised them to our users:

- To reduce our carbon footprint.
- To increase our positive impact on the environment.
- To reduce any negative impact on the environment.
- To ensure we comply with all laws and regulations regarding the environment.
- To monitor our energy usage and to record, as far as possible, all aspects of our impact on the environment.
- To publicise to our staff, customers and supporters, information on our environmental impact in order to encourage more environmentally friendly activities.
- To work with other local and national groups to increase awareness of environmental issues.

We will be working to develop and implement these objectives over the period of this plan.

## **PEOPLE**

We currently employ 29 staff, on a full time and part time basis, led by the pool manager and operations manager. In addition we contract a small number of freelancers to provide specific classes. There are in addition around 40 volunteers who support the work of the pool, mainly through the fundraising shops.

We are committed to treat all who work with us fairly and in line with employment law. We are assisted in this by an HR consultant who provides advice, particularly on changes in legislation. We will ensure that staff are trained with recognised qualification, as necessary, and provide opportunities for staff to undertake training that will benefit them and ourselves.

We recognise that our volunteers are giving of their time freely and must be treated with respect and we must ensure that they work in a safe and comfortable environment, consistent with legal requirements concerning health and safety.

We will:

- Carry out an annual appraisal of all staff.
- Listen to staff concerns on any aspect of their employment.
- Review our remuneration policy on at least an annual basis.

## **FURTHER CHALLENGES AND CONCLUSION**

One of the major lessons from the 2020-2025 business plan has been that the greatest challenges are those which we did and could not have predicted when drawing up our plan for the coming period.

One current uncertainty of which we are aware concerns the future of the rest of the site on which the pool is situated. Our neighbour, Freda's nursery, is currently planning to construct a new building adjacent to its current premises next to the pool. This will make possible the further redevelopment of what was formerly the 'middle school'. North Yorkshire Council, who own the site, have not yet made their intentions clear and we are fully aware that the council is facing financial difficulties which limit their ability to undertake major initiatives. However, it is unlikely that the site will remain in its current state through to 2030 and that whatever happens will have implications, either positive or negative, for the pool. We will need to maintain close contact with the council in order to be aware and, if possible, have an input into whatever is planned.

There will inevitably be other challenges that we cannot anticipate. All we can do is to ensure we are in a sound position to face up to them.

The past few years have seen major developments that are now bedding in. In the immediate future we would hope for a period of consolidation, focusing on our core objectives. However over the medium and longer term, as recognised by our users and supporters, there is the potential for further substantial development in the services that we provide for the local community and in the use that we make of the site. Recognising this potential and seeking to build on our recent achievements will be one of the challenges that we will seek to face over the coming period.

## Appendix 1

### TRUSTEES MARCH 2025

Joint Chairs: Chris Hirst, Mike Smith  
Vice Chair: Ian Dryburgh  
Secretary: Ian Orton  
Treasurer: Rosie Sanderson

Trustees: Anne Galloway  
Ken Larkins  
Elaine Howarth  
Robin Bates

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Pool manager: Tash Ward  
Operations manager: Leah Galloway