



Reg. Charity No 1082638

Blackpool Polar Bears Annual Report 2023

Charity Objectives

To help persons with learning and physical disabilities to achieve their full potential and to encourage their integration in society and in particular by the provision of facilities for their recreation and leisure time occupation, in particular water sports activities, for them and their families and carers, in the interest of social welfare in order that that their conditions of life may be improved.

Governance and Management

The charity's constitution requires the trustees to be elected at the Annual General Meeting. The following were elected as trustees at the AGM in 2023.

Shantell Christie, Alan Morrison, Tracey Crook, Donna Hollamby (Secretary), Lynda Inglis, Mel Joyce (Treasurer), Andrew Finlayson, Emma Inglis, Ann Foster.

Meetings of the trustees were held remotely throughout the year to report on swimming and social activities, fundraising and other matters to enable the running of the club.

Delivery of the Charity's Objectives

The charity does not employ any staff. The trustees have defined the responsibilities and level of financial authority of the officers that manage the day-to-day activities of the charity.

Consultation with members and volunteers on these activities is achieved via the Swimming and Social Events Committee. We continue to work in partnership with Blackpool Council as they hold their Learn to Swim lessons alongside our own lessons.

Membership

In 2023 we had 121 member swimmers and 33 registered volunteers.

The club also has a very long waiting list for swimming places at the moment.

Swimming Activities

The club is affiliated to both Special Olympics (GB) and NASCH who both provide training, support, and opportunities for members to participate in competitions. Our swimming takes place on Sundays between 09:05 and 11:50 am at Moor Park Swimming Pool. Activities are organised in five sessions with ASA qualified coaches leading the groups within each session. Volunteers also perform a "Helper in the water" role, to help swimmers who need assistance or support to participate.

Three of our volunteers passed their Level One Assistant Teacher course this year.

Ann, Donna, and Alan. (Sponsored by Glasdon)

And Joseph Harrison passed his Helper in the Water training course too.

Swimming Competitions

In May we held our Club Gala at Moor Park Pool.

The theme was King Charles' Coronation.

In Gala One, 39 swimmers took part

They achieved 40 gold, 40 silver and 30 bronze medals.

AND 70 Personal Bests.

In Gala Two, 30 swimmers took part and they achieved

30 gold, 30 silver and 30 bronze medals.

In June we took 18 swimmers to Liverpool

for the Cheshire Penguins Special Olympics Gala.

They won 6 gold, 3 silver and 10 bronze medals

five 4ths, four 5ths, six 6ths, five 7ths,

with 3 DQs, one speeding ticket and 17 Personal Bests.

In September we hosted the Special Olympics Gala at Palatine Pool.

19 of our swimmers took part.

They won 7 gold, 8 silver, and 9 bronze medals.

five 4ths, six 5ths, three 6ths, one 7th and one 8th place

Plus 3 speeding tickets AND 27 Personal Best Times.

We also qualified for the NASCH Nationals, and 9 members went to Leamington Spa in November as part of the North West Team.

They won FIVE 1st place trophies, 2 silver and 3 bronze medals.

Special Olympics

Congratulations to Charlotte Foster who took part in the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin as a member of the GB swimming team back in June.

She achieved a team 4th place in the mixed relay.

For her individual swims, a 4th place for 25 metres freestyle and a silver medal for 25 metres backstroke.

What a fantastic achievement!

Your Polar Bears Club Coach Emma Inglis was selected as the GB swim team head coach for the Berlin Games. She also became the face of the Games Volunteers in Berlin.

Lynda was also selected to attend the games as a carer for the swim team.

Well done to both of them for supporting the athletes at the games and at training camps too.

The publicity around the 2023 World Games brought Blackpool Polar Bears extra recognition, and led to the Special Olympics media team filming at our Palatine Gala to spotlight swimming.

Social Events and Activities

Our Club Sponsored Swim in November saw 77 members take part.

They swam a total of 45 thousand, 220 metres.

Raising a whopping £2,589.50

In December our Christmas Fun Day rounded off the year with a visit from Santa.

Awards

In September Some of our volunteers attended the Blackpool Council Active Lives Community Awards ceremony at the Winter gardens.

Blackpool Polar Bears won Club of the Year.

And for her achievements at the World Games our swimmer Charlotte Foster won the Award for Contribution to Disability Sports.

There were also Highly Commended for

Charlotte Foster for Sports Person

Emma Inglis for Coach of the Year

Lynda Inglis for Volunteer of the Year

and Joseph Harrison for Young Volunteer of the Year

Well Done to EVERYONE!

AND In November Lynda and Emma represented the club at the Active Lancashire Sports Awards where POLAR BEARS was again nominated for Club of the Year

This time we achieved a Highly Commended.

Accounts

As per the handout sheet. All ringfenced money donated has been allocated as directed.

Donations of over £100.

May - Blackpool and Fylde BCPA CP - £6,000

July - Davies Federation - £1,000

September - Glasdon's - £1197

September - Highfurlong School - £200

October - Masonic - £850

November - Co-op - £1795.78

December - D.J. Sidebottom and Glasdon Charitable Programme - £500

OTHER

World Games

Income - £5846.50

Expenditure £1558.83 (2023) and £1667 (2022) = Total £3225.83

Memberships -

Income - £9470

Expenditure - Pool - £9112.50 Insurance - £1263.35 Misc. Costs - £345 = Total £10,720.50

We have been invoiced for a 5% rise in Pool Hire this year already, and other costs are increasing all the time.

Therefore, we have to raise the cost of membership by £10 across the board when you renew next month. You will see this on the renewal forms you have received today.

However, we believe that this still represents excellent value for money.

Thanks

We could not do this without the help of our fantastic team of volunteers who give up their Sunday lie-ins.

Thanks go to the trustees and committee who work hard behind the scenes as well.

Many of you would be shocked at how many hours we actually put in throughout the week to keep your club running smoothly.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the club during 2023.

And finally Thank you to all those who have made donations to Blackpool Polar Bears during 2023.

Blackpool Polar Bears Summary of Accounts 2023

Description	Income	Expenditure
<u>General Operations</u>		
Membership	£9,470.00	
S/O Membership	£380.00	
Blackpool Council Pool Hire		£9,112.50
Special Olympics & NASCH Affiliation Fees		£1,263.35
Staff Training		£1,197.00
<u>Club Galas</u>		
Entry Fees and Medals	£571.65	£441.10
<u>Social Events</u>		
AGM & Presentation Event	£589.00	£1,041.11
Christmas		£1,000.99
<u>Fundraising & Donations</u>		
Donations	£10,372.53	
Football Cards, raffles & Misc Fundraising	£207.00	
Sponsored Swim	£2,589.50	£162.00
<u>Merchandise</u>		
Sales & Stock Purchases	£287.50	£816.30
<u>Administration</u>		
Postage, Stationery / Mobile Phones		£345.30
<u>Competitions</u>		
World Games	£5,846.50	£1,558.83
Blackpool Palatine Gala	£2,782.00	£2,302.01
Liverpool SO Gala	£270.00	£270.00
NASCH Galas	£135.00	£52.00
TOTAL	£33,500.68	£19,562.49
		£28,910.82
Opening Balance 01/01/2023		£42,849.01
Closing Balance 28/12/2023		£21,313.85
Reserves 01/01/2024		

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Blackpool Polar Bears

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2023

**Charity no
(if any)**

1082638

**Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view, and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

- In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention
1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Hilary Ainge

Date:

31/01/2024

Name:

Hilary Ainge

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Address:

32 Powell Avenue Blackpool FY4 3HH