

Shap



Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024

Shap Swimming Pool: Trustees Annual Report 2023-2024

Objectives and activities of the pool

Shap Swimming Pool was established as a Community Interest Organisation (CIO) on 19 June 2015 to manage Shap Open Air Swimming Pool. The pool has been open since 1987, on land provided by the Parish Council and Lowther Estate. It was established after years of dedicated fundraising by the villagers of Shap.

The pool is widely used by the local community as well as visitors and operates during the late spring and summer, typically late May to early September. It is run entirely by volunteers although does train and employ lifeguards each season.

The pool is used by local schools for school swimming lessons, as well as other community groups such as Cubs and sports clubs. It offers season tickets and private pool hire as well as a small shop for the sale of drinks and snacks during pool opening hours.

The agreed objective of the CIO is:

“The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation for the benefits of the inhabitants of, and visitors to, Shap, by the provision of a swimming pool.”

This is broken down into specific aims to:

- Provide access to swimming facilities for local people of Shap and the surrounding area
- Support the provision of swimming lessons for local children through the school, sports clubs and other local groups
- Attract new and returning visitors/tourists to Shap village, to increase visitor income for the pool and other local businesses

Chair's report at AGM October 2023

After 2022 when we put in the new toddler splash pool, refitted the shop and replaced all of the grouting around the pool, we didn't need to deliver any major work for 2023. The weather was not very kind for us and numbers using the pool overall were down.

We applied for a grant from the Shap Community Enterprise Charity to support us giving a free season ticket for each child at Shap Primary School (who wanted to apply for one).

We hosted school swimming lessons for Shap and Selside Primary Schools. We held the prices of our season tickets at 2022 levels. This again meant that local families in particular can enjoy the pool during the summer months at a reasonable price, and children can practice their swimming in a safe and fun environment.

We welcomed weekly Fit4All sessions to the pool which were popular with adults and hosted 3 triathlons for local clubs. The British Naturist Society continued their monthly evening sessions, which were a good income generator for the pool.

Private hire sessions remained popular, with family groups and organisations taking advantage of the option. Often this meant we had a guaranteed income even if the weather wasn't good, when sessions might otherwise have been very empty.

Booking system

We continued to use BookWhen, an online ticketing system, to manage the tickets and number for each session. This works well for swimmers, who can plan their trip in advance and won't need to queue on busy days. For example, for visitors on holiday, who could guarantee a time to swim during their holiday. It is also helpful for our volunteers who don't need to manage a queue outside the pool and monitor numbers during a session etc. It has also improved our income reliability through the season. Season ticket holders who wanted to use the pool for longer than a one-hour session were able to by booking in double slots.

Achievements and performance

We opened in time for the May school half term holiday and closed at the end of the school holidays. With BookWhen, we have a better record of pool users and the numbers for the 2023 season are as follows:

3986 bookings and 1933 attendees

65 private hires of the pool

150 season tickets (including 65 tickets for Shap School pupils)

School swimming lessons for Shap and Selside Primary Schools

3 Triathlons and weekly "Fit4All" sessions in the pool

Note: the swim numbers aren't unique users, just the number of bookings.

We kept a simple price structure for this year and absorbed the cost of the booking system rather than adding it to the ticket price.

Lifeguards

We recruited 7 lifeguards for the season. They were trained with the other Eden outdoor pool lifeguards and all worked well through the season. We hope to retain some of the lifeguards for next year, to help with continuity and to help reduce training fees.

Volunteers

We are, as always, really grateful to all our volunteers. We couldn't run the pool without them. We were pleased that they had positive feedback for the new booking system, as it made their role less stressful on the whole. We will be looking at how we can encourage more people to volunteer, even if it is only for a few hours through the season. We retained the volunteer offer of a reduced-price season ticket for who helped us through the season. Particular thanks to Rich Morris, for his many years on the committee leading the plant room team. We'd also like to thank Robert Leckie for fixing a leak in the roof and Sandy Carr for fixing the boiler, both free of charge.

Future plans

When funds allow, we would like to replace our ageing filters and replace the doors across the building. We are also investigating the price for a pool liner, which would come with a 20 year guarantee and greatly reduce the annual maintenance for the pool, as well as improving the appearance. We have had a free energy audit completed at the pool, which recommended installing solar panels or similar. We have had a quote for c£8k to install panels. We will consider this as part of our longer term plans.

Treasurer's Report at AGM October 2023

The statement of accounts accompanies this report.

The income from swim sessions was lower, due to increased number of season tickets and lower numbers of visitors paying for one off sessions (likely due to the relatively poor summer weather). We also paid for lifeguards to cover the shop more often than ever before, due to lower numbers of volunteers. We need to review our costs before next season.

The private hire sessions were popular again and brought in good income. This included the 4 British Naturist swims, which contributed nearly £1k. The shop contributed well to our income for the year and remained popular with swimmers.

We continue to pay all our lifeguards at just above the living wage rate rather than in age brackets. We want to pay a good wage and help ensure we retain trained lifeguards across more than one season.

Grants received:

- £1983 from Eden District Council – rural pools annual grant

Donations received:

We received a £180 donation from the Shap Young People's lottery and we're grateful for their ongoing support.

Improvement works

We didn't undertake any major improvements works for this year but are already planning for fundraising and grant applications to replace our ageing filters and replace the doors across the building.

As set out in the constitution, we will retain a surplus in our accounts, to ensure we have funding for emergency repairs or unforeseen costs.

Chemicals for the pool treatment remain expensive. Electricity costs have gone up as the meter reading wasn't added correctly when we moved to the new 3 year plan, so had been underpaying for 6 months.

The annual report and accounts from 2022-23 have been filed with the Charity Commission on time.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is run by volunteers, with a dedicated committee and a small number of seasonal volunteers who assist in the pool shop and help with plant room maintenance, cleaning and general maintenance. The pool employs lifeguards during the season and funds their training course.

Briony Newsome remains as the Chair and Sarah Bruce continues as Treasurer. We still have a vacancy for a Secretary despite best efforts to find someone.

There are currently 2 Trustees, and if the vacancy for a Secretary is filled, they would become the third Trustee. The committee is hoping to recruit a Secretary in the coming year and is advertising across local newsletters and groups to advertise the position.

Shap Pool continues to be a part of the Eden Outdoor Pools network, and meets regularly with the other 5 outdoor pools in the area to share ideas and support each other with training and advice. The Shap Pool committee are grateful for the support of ACT Cumbria who chair and provides minutes for the meetings.

Reference and administrative details

Charity number: 1162318

Principle office: Shap Swimming Pool, Gayle Avenue, Shap, CA10 3NS

Trustees: Sarah Bruce (Treasurer), Briony Newsome (Chair)

Committee Members: Briony Newsome, Sarah Bruce, Stacey Lewis-Wrobel, Mel Wright, Kim Lightburn, Mellisa Bindloss

