



WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL MASTERS SWIM CLUB? SOME THOUGHTS FROM TEDDINGTON MASTERS

LIZ TORODE AND KEN BAILEY

MANY DIFFERENT INGREDIENTS



Potentially many different recipes
for success

AND ... WHAT IS SUCCESS?

- Competition results?
- Membership numbers?
- Inclusivity?
- Financial stability?
- Stakeholder satisfaction?

KEY INGREDIENTS

- Inclusive – cater for diverse needs
- Flexible and fair
- Aim and plan for growth
- Governance – self governing, light touch
- Cake! 😊



INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE

- Age: 18+ age range currently 18 to 81
- Cater for a range of needs:
 - Technique focus
 - Competition skills
 - Endurance
 - Open water





INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE - SUPPORT

- Developing masters group - minimum ability standard, 2 dedicated sessions a week
- Novice gala
- 5 regular coaches plus 4 as back up cover
- 13 sessions in 5 different pools – morning, lunchtime, evening, weekend
- Informal groups to support special interests e.g. open water, 400 club, cold water swimming, swim camps

FAIR AND FLEXIBLE

- Mx/DMx
 - Train 0,1,2,3 or 4+ times per week
 - Completely flexible / no “nominated sessions”
- Two dedicated, coached, DM sessions
- DMs also welcome at 4 other sessions
- Incentivise frequent training:
 - M2 fee is break-even, M1 more expensive,
 - M3 & M4 more economical
- Fair play: Pro-rata fees, scale up & down, credit, refunds etc

GROWTH



- 30 members in 2000, 200 in 2018!
- 2 weekly sessions in 2000, 13 in 2018!
- Conservative budget:
 - steady-state membership
 - 5% increase of costs
 - Hold 3 months operating cost reserve
- Growth generates surplus
- Surplus used to fund loss-leader increases in capacity
- Internal capacity management – promote quiet sessions
- Lunchtime sessions

GOVERNANCE

- Arms-length from age-group club since 2011 but good relations
- Light touch but hardworking, collaborative and tackle some challenging issues
- Few face-to-face meetings, mostly email
- Most work falls on Treasurer
- Works jointly with Membership and Masters Secretary
- Spread the load:
 - Coach co-ordination
 - Open Water
 - In-house Galas/Team manager
 - Social Sec

CAKE



- Baking ability much appreciated – club award
- Cake after Thursday and Saturday sessions
- Other social events – summer picnic/Xmas party
- Ad-hoc gatherings – pub or elsewhere; social swims
- Regular communication: email/Facebook, post training