

## Report from Wotton Swimming Pool

I am very pleased to report that we have enjoyed a successful season, and again I am grateful for the support I have seen coming to the pool from dozens of kindly and generous people giving their time, money, effort and skills to help with the running and the development of the facility. We have also enjoyed the benefit of a core of dedicated and professional employees providing the operational support needed to run the pool day-to-day. This year we have added a new Trustee to the board by co-option in anticipation of some planned retirements.

This season has been one of steady operation capitalising on our experience. This stability and confidence in the routine operation aspects of the pool has allowed us to focus very strongly on-site development and fund raising (see below). Once again, we were delighted to retain the entire management team and the successful mix of sessions (public, lanes, parent and child, families, ladies therapeutic, adult general swim). We continued to offer private bookings and the school use and swimming lessons. These offers are still economical despite our (first ever) entry price rise, well attended and greatly appreciated by families in the area.

Continuing with previous successful experience we got the pool ready in advance of the swimming season and used it to train the cadre of lifeguards. And this is a significant contribution to the social, educational and personal development we provide to Wotton youth. As before this meant we had a useful quota of freshly trained-and-tested supervisors to get the season going, along with the group of lifeguards who we trained last year and remained in the town — many go away to college/university each year.

As regards the facilities we obtained planning consent on 6 December 2016 for the refurbishment of the changing rooms, including recladding the exterior, building a veranda at the south end of the building and replacing the asbestos roof. This fired the starting gun for the work to proceed and in January, using both volunteer and professional labour, we dismantled the outside of the changing rooms, replaced the rotting structure and re-clad it in weatherproof natural wood. At the same time, with the plans and planning consent granted, it was possible to start fundraising.

Considerable input has been obtained from the local community (Wotton Triathlon Club, Kingswood Parish Council, Heaven of the South, St Mary's PCC, Wotton Recreational Trust, and several very generous local donations/fund-raising events). In addition, a successful bid (£31,400) was made to The Cory Environmental Trust. This money was used for the oak frame for the veranda and the new roof – both are now in place. Also, a planning application was made to install solar heating on the roof of the building. This was approved on 3 August 2017 and this enabled a bid to the Summerfield Trust to be made for financial support (£8,600). Summerfield approved this grant in mid-November.

As with previous years we have arranged a public meeting to inform and consult the public of Wotton who pay through their council tax for us to run the facility this was attended by 17 people. And we have continued to operate in accord with the keynotes we defined for the facility last year, namely: safe, high quality, indefinitely ongoing, low maintenance, community enterprise and fun for all.

Alan George

Some photos below showing the replaced roof, the solar panel installation and the new veranda and decking



