

Jesmond Community Leisure

2019 Annual Report, Presented September 2020

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Jesmond Community Leisure is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with registered No. 2645699. It is also a registered charity, No.1010563, with registered office at St. George's Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 2DL.

Telephone Number: 0191 281 2482 ; Website: www.jesmondpool.online .

Chairs Report.

I have been a contributor to our Annual Reports for more years than I care to remember, but I am confident in saying that there has never been a stranger report than this!

Our annual reports always cover the previous calendar year, which is also the financial year covered by our audited accounts. This means that by the time we write this report we always have a few months at the beginning of the next year, which can be covered briefly. Usually much of this consists of “carrying on as before”, so it doesn’t cause too much confusion.

But how could we possibly have guessed as the year 2019 came to an end, where we would be in three months’ time? The pool and gym closed; many trustees and customers isolated at home; nearly all our staff on “furlough”. (Who had even heard the word “furlough” three months ago?)

If anyone can still put themselves back to the New Year, 2020, we were very pleased that 2019 had been a year of tremendous success: excellent customer numbers, good financial results, improvements to the website and social media output, and the completion of some splendid redecoration and refurbishment schemes, notably in the upstairs gym and the staircase area. I particularly liked some of the new graphics around the building, but that is not to underestimate the value of all the other improvements.

As a charitable company, we have always benefited from the input of volunteers, to supplement and complement the work of our superb staff. New volunteers often bring new skills and enthusiasm to the company, which is very welcome to those of us who have been around for longer. This year we need to particularly thank our new Finance Director, Deborah Easton, who faced a big challenge in taking over from Duncan Davies, but has come into her own superbly over the course of the year. The trustees have also benefited greatly from Jessie Salmon’s efforts to record the minutes of our sometimes rambling and inconclusive Board meetings!

A lot of people have made tremendous contributions over the last year and a half, and it would be tedious to rehearse all their names: you know who you are!

I would just like to thank Phil Drape and his fabulous staff team, and all my fellow trustees, members of the company, and volunteers, and of course the customers without whom our efforts would not be bearing such tasty fruit.

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Please read the rest of this report for a more detailed account of our activities throughout 2019, and keep up to date with our website www.jesmondpool.online and Facebook www.facebook.com/JesmondCommunityLeisure/ .

Chris Clarke

Chair of Trustees

Communications Group.

It's been a busy year for the Communications Group as we continued to market Jesmond Pool. The main thrust of the year's marketing activity centred around the rebrand of the Pool.

Research into our membership showed how the emphasis has changed from swimmers to gym users however that same research also indicated a lack of awareness about our gym offer, even amongst regular pool users, and a need to target a more senior audience.

As a result, the name was changed from Jesmond Pool (Jesmond Community Leisure), to simply 'JESMOND POOL & GYM'. We used a clear and modern sans serif font in capitals. The colour palette was upgraded to a modern dark grey, (a colour that has been adopted throughout the building), whilst keeping the pool blue of the existing brand, to maintain the integrity of the original. A new strap line was created 'MORE THAN JUST A POOL' which better reflects the variety of services now on offer: from swimming to gyms, from activities to personal training. The overall effect is modern, clear and professional.

The Comms Group was instructed to carry the re-brand throughout the building. We looked at the interior and exterior areas and how best to tell our story to those passing by and how best to guide people through the building once inside.

Listing the various services was an obvious way forward, as well as incorporating motivational words. We did this throughout the building using cut out vinyls to give a clear directive. Wording can be seen on the upstairs gym exterior windows, at the north end of the building, within the pool hall and gym areas.

The upstairs gym external window graphics were outdated and replaced with simple white vinyl text. Now passers-by can read about what goes on within our building and actually see the gym in use, hopefully enticing onlookers to join.

Both the upstairs and downstairs gyms were also given their own individual identities renamed as 'The Poolside' and 'The Basement' respectively, to better reflect the demographic of each area. The Poolside was re-equipped with more rehab focussed machines and as a result has become very popular in attracting a more senior user - the perfect solution for a long sought-after targeted audience.

Large graphic images have been used throughout the building. They depict our customers, both young and old and illustrate the various activities now offered by Jesmond Pool & Gym. Graphic boards and

digital wallpaper combine to give the interior a total lift, acting as a soft sell to users as well as enhancing the buildings visual appeal.

We continue to create regular posters which are posted on our social media channels, as well as interesting blogs on our website, a website refresh making it easier to book and view our diverse range of classes. Facebook and Twitter are used daily to promote classes, events etc.

This year saw the introduction of The Mermaids. They have been promoted via posters, leaflets as well as online and have become a massive hit with customers, as have pool parties - both are examples of initiatives coming from staff brainstorming.

Swim classes continue to expand, and a brand refresh has been pencilled in for 2010/21.

It has been exciting to be involved in marketing Jesmond Pool & Gym and my thanks go out to Phil Drape, Donna Rumney, Chris Clarke and latterly Katie Steele, I am sure we can continue to be successful in the future.

After many years I now hand over the chair to Katie, who I'm sure she will prove to be a great addition to the Comms Group.

Paul Rea

Communications Group Chair

Personnel Report.

Once again, we were very lucky to continue with a stable group of nine permanent staff throughout 2019. Phil Drape lead the team as operations manager, with 19 years with us so far; Tim McGahey (27 years) and Donna Rumney (17 years) continued as duty managers; Julie Redshaw (27 years), administration manager; Scott Armstrong and Craig Johnson, senior leisure attendants; Leanne Short and Alex Smith, part-time leisure attendants; and Joan North and Alex Smith, part-time swimming teachers. Terri Sambrook, duty manager, was on maternity leave throughout the year and Julie Redshaw dropped a day in preparation for retiring next year. In addition, at the end of 2019 Ann Smylie, fitness instructor with older people; James Tait, physical trainer/masseur; Michelle Blake, holistic therapist; and Sean Beech, physiotherapist, as well as approximately 10 self-employed gym instructors provided services for us.

Following introduction of the category of ‘friend’ of Jesmond Pool and Gym, and with some members migrating to become friends, at the end of the year our trustees consisted of Chris Clarke (chair), Mike Miller (vice chair and chair of finance and buildings sub-committees), Simon Leach (company secretary), Deborah Easton (finance director), Annette Hames (chair of personnel sub-committee), Paul Rea (chair of communications sub-committee), Martin Hunt, Barrie Thompson and Keith Butcher. Members were Les Hodgson, Dave Rushworth, Peter Hall, Jill Winter, Liz McAlpine, Paul Ryder and Phil Moxon. Secretarial support was provided on a voluntary basis to trustee meetings by Jessie Salmon, customer.

During this year, the personnel group wished to recognise and reward our loyal staff group. Therefore business dealt with included: recommending an increase in employer’s contribution to staff pensions; introduction of medical insurance for staff; we developed a post of volunteer listener, for staff; we discussed and advised on changes to the emergency action plan, following an incident at the pool where the volunteer listener was immensely useful; recommended an increase in the staff training budget; proposed customer care training for all staff; confirmed what was involved in inductions for new trustees; clarified the need for DBS checks for all trustees and members who are using the pool frequently and introduced a new category of friend of Jesmond Pool and Gym; and continued with (rather unsuccessful) attempts to link with social prescribing through the local GP services.

Update for 2020

The start of the year has involved us updating the trustee handbook, to include all policies relevant for trustees.

Annette Hames

Personnel Group Chair

Finance & Fundraising Group.

Our Finance Director Deborah Easton has been with us for a year. My thanks to Deborah for all her hard work helping Phil keep our business in such a healthy position.

I again must thank Phil and all his many Staff and volunteers for their amazing contribution during 2019. We are so lucky to have such well-motivated and happy staff and I know from discussions with many customers how important this is in our continued success. On behalf of the Trustees thank you.

During the year we have invested in our building again the details can be found in the building report.

As part of our budgeting process the Building Group provides the Finance Group with a rolling 5-year CAPEX plan for JCL. Unfortunately, as the building is nearly 90 years old, we will always get surprises expenditure wise.

We have had a very good 2019 as the figures and Deborah's report will show. As we move into 2020 January and February business has been good.

In March we received confirmation of what almost everyone had already expected that all Leisure facilities in the UK were to close on March 18th until further notice due to COVID-19.

Immediately Phil actioned a series of measures to reduce expenditure with the help of our Staff.

Through much hard work, due diligence and a series of fantastic Trustees, Members, Customers and most of all STAFF we find ourselves in a somewhat privileged position of having reserves to the tune of £600K. They have been hard earned and will hopefully more than tide us through these exceptional times.

With Mr Sunak's announcement of a furloughing scheme it has meant that we do not have to shoulder the whole cost of closure. On March 19th 2020 many of our Staff with their agreement have been furloughed and JCL is bringing their wages up to 100% by adding 20% to the government's contribution. It is the first time ever a scheme such as this has been devised and it has given Phil a huge amount of extra work putting all the payroll details in the required format and layout.

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I hope while we remain closed that all our Staff, Trustees, Members and Customers remain safe and we look forward to the day when we can re-open again to provide a very necessary service to our Community.

Thank you.

Michael Miller

Finance Group Chair

Finance Director’s Report.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Financial Statements for the 12 months to 31 December 2019, which have been approved by the Trustees and filed at Companies House. The company qualifies for an audit exemption, but decided not to make use of the exemption this financial year and, following a competitive process, appointed Robson Laider to audit the accounts.

Income and Direct Costs

The year to December 2019 was once again a record breaking year for the Pool & Gym, with revenue from charitable activities increasing by 10%. There have been gains in all areas, especially the swimming pool; for lessons, general swimming and fun activities like mermaid parties.

Income £'000s	2019	2018	Change £	Change %
Commercial and other income	73.8	65.5	8.3	13%
Donations, Fundraising and Grants	3.1	2.5	0.6	23%
Dry Activities and Coaching	67.4	65.7	1.7	3%
Memberships	182.5	165.7	16.8	10%
Swimming lessons	259.5	239.0	20.5	9%
Swimming Pool activities	165.7	146.0	19.8	14%
Total Income	752.0	684.4	75.5	10%

The charity received money from charitable donations, including £2,000 from Jesmond Tesco. There was a further £3,000 in interest accrued during 2019 despite the low interest rate environment. This is a reflection of the growing level of reserves held by Jesmond Community Leisure, following a number of good trading years.

Direct costs increased by 28% due to most of the increase in activity being led by the high quality teachers and trainers that the Pool & Gym pays.

Operating Costs & Surplus

With most of the cost for the increased activity being in direct costs, the team were able to manage operating costs very closely this year. These were only 3% higher than last year, a great result when managing the organisation at full capacity in places. The largest element of overheads are the staff costs, which were slightly lower than 2018. We also made savings in professional services (audit and accounting fees) with the new accounting system now well established.

Areas where we saw increases in costs included premises (maintenance services) and utilities. Despite being below budget, we still experienced increases in electricity and water costs.

After charging £59,000 of annual depreciation (a non-cash item) there was a good surplus of £98,000, substantially above that of previous years. The trustees recommended the payment of a staff bonus based on this performance, and the surplus is stated after that bonus.

Balance Sheet

The balance sheet continues to show a healthy position, including cash balances that have increased consistently over the last 5 years. Cash on hand at the end of 2019 was £583,000.

During 2019 the charity invested £100,000 into the assets of the Pool & Gym - the main items being the new lift installation to make the Basement Gym accessible to people unable to use the stairs, and the full refurbishment of the Poolside Gym.

The financial results for 2019 were again very positive and built upon the commitment and efforts of our staff and volunteers, and the ongoing loyalty of the customers that use the facilities. 2020 is a more uncertain year, but we entered it in great shape thanks to those staff, volunteers and customers.

It was intended to make further investments following a new planning round, but two events at the start of 2020 overtook us. Firstly, high winds damaged the roof in February, and then the pool was closed in March. From those surplus reserves we will need to fix the roof, and are continuing to pay staff with support from the government. We also have to pay any overheads the team has been unable to cut.

Not long after setting the 2020 budget, it has been completely rewritten, with most staff furloughed and costs cut as low as possible. The focus at present is on managing costs, whilst providing a

service to the community, and maintaining the pool and supporting staff so that we can open up again in good shape.

Deborah Easton (Finance Director)

Building Report.

I mentioned in my 2018 report that in Phil Drape’s “Business Plan for the future” we would be looking to carry on a rolling refurbishment plan to keep the building in as good condition for our loyal customers as possible. This report details some of the work done in 2019. The group has a rolling 5-year CAPEX (Capital Expenditure) plan which helps Deborah, our Finance Director to have an idea of future expenditure.

Our new upstairs gym has been rebranded as “The Poolside Gym” with mostly new fitness equipment to appeal to clients of all ages and health groups, from rehabilitation to fitness. It has been a great success.

Our sauna has been redone and a new steam kettle to drive our steam room has been fitted.

All our stair flooring has been redone.

In 2018 our existing lift broke down and in view of its age being the same as its expected life expectancy and some spare parts being obsolete the decision to replace the lift was made. The new lift was installed early in 2019. An agreement was made that the existing rolling maintenance contract we were tied into for the old lift could be put on hold for a year and restarted under new t&c’s to cover the new lift. This has saved us a considerable sum of money.

Having researched the average lifespan of polycarbonate roofs and finding it to be 15 to 20 years we are starting to consider obtaining quotes for renewal.

Most of our plant and machinery that runs the building are on service contracts to improve reliability and maximum energy efficiency.

We have a list of jobs always to do. Often, they are cosmetic but are still important for the overall appearance of our facility. These include:

- a) Painting or renewing rusted metal brackets on changing room benches.
- b) Renewing rusted radiator covers in both changing rooms.
- c) Replacing door between Ladies and Men’s changing rooms.
- d) Regrout pool tank.

e) Paint all of the Pool Hall.

We are always open to new ideas so if you have any, we would love to hear from you.

Again, thank you to all the members of the Building Group that have put in so many hours over 2019 implementing all the changes you see in the building.

I am including some information for 2020 to keep you all up to date.

One Saturday night in February we had very strong winds in Jesmond that caused structural damage to our polycarbonate roof. Phil, Dave Rushworth and I surveyed the damage from the roadside and decided urgent remedial action was required. We decided that the roof required stabilizing in the short term for the safety of all and Paul, a Masters swimmer and roofer agreed to go up onto the roof and secure it. We have 2 quotes for a new roof and are waiting for the firm to return to quote for repair as we will be putting in an insurance claim. Soon after this our world changed with the arrival of Covid-19 and the subsequent closure of all Leisure facilities in the UK.

Immediately closure was announced Phil Drape put together an action plan that included:

1. Draining the Pool of water.
2. Ordering grout for the pool tank before suppliers closed or ran out of stock.
3. Mothballing circulation pumps and other equipment not used and turning off UV and heat to the pool.
4. Cancelling or putting on hold service contracts for gym equipment, broadband and other non-essentials.
5. Phil and Tim with the help of some volunteers have almost finished regrouting the pool tank. It looks fantastic!!

These actions have saved the pool considerable costs that are helping us to conserve our reserves in these hard times.

We are first in line with the painting company once they return to work for the Pool Hall to be painted and we are hoping to get the roof survey very soon so that we can progress that as well.

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To summarise all is done to carry out necessary work during our closure whilst ensuring social distancing. In the meantime, I hope everyone can remain fit and please take care.

Mike Miller

Building Group Chair

Operations Managers Report.

Key Tasks

Our key tasks during the year were to drive growth in income and usage and to develop and begin implementing our over 50 programme.

Overall attendances were up by 11% and we out turned with a healthy trading surplus. Key to this was a growth in group swimming lessons numbers by 16.9% and memberships a growth of 12.6%. This growth had continued into the 2019/20 financial year but unfortunately the corona virus lock down began.

Investing in our Community

We invested £20k in the upstairs gym, this included specific rehabilitation equipment and easier to use gym stations. This allowed us to provide a service for our older population of Jesmond and surrounding areas. We identified this area to expand our work into the community by providing a safe environment for exercise and wellbeing. This new program has been led by Ann Smiley, our specialist rehab and older person coach.

We also invested £10k in signage and rebranding the two gyms. ‘The Basement’ gym is geared towards our younger clientele; however, we do allow our older clientele to use it!

‘The Poolside’ gym has specialist rehab/mobility equipment in, this allows easy access and usage of the equipment.

We also updated our inside signage allowing us to advertise all our activities and an easier pathway to find them.

We also updated our join online membership system allowing customers the ease to join at home. We are still looking into a system that will allow bookings of certain activities online. We have to outweigh the loss of that personal welcome that all our customers comment about against the march of technology.

Supporting Our Employees

To be successful Jesmond Community Leisure must be supported by well trained and knowledgeable employees who are motivated to deliver excellent services to customers. This is achieved by putting people at the heart of our decisions, treating them fairly and by giving them the skills knowledge and support they need to do a good job.

Focus for the Future

We had a busy year ahead as we continue to develop a strategy, which will ensure Jesmond Community Leisure is fit for the future. We will continue to offer great value health and fitness membership packages and support our customers through their wellness journey to ensure that their needs are met.

We had recently held talks with GP's and a specialist mental wellbeing team. This future development would allow a greater access to our facilities for all.

The staff have had a great year and I am honoured to see their confidence and performance grow. I am now looking forward to the challenges all businesses face with the current situation. My team and I will be giving 100% to ensure the survival and success of JCL so generations in the future can use our fantastic facility.

I would like to thank all of JCL's staff whether paid or voluntary as they are an integral part of how JCL delivers customer expectations. Without them we would not be able to deliver a totally individualised experience for each customer.

Phil Drape

Operations Manager

Who's Who in Jesmond Community Leisure

Staff and Volunteers	
Abi Bedford	Leanne Short
Adonia Hurst	Levi Croom
Alex Smith	Lily Shaw
Amy Armstrong	Liz Winn
Andre Vianna	Lucas Johnson
Beth Loomey	Matt Hambling
Charlotte Greg	Matty McGahey
Charlotte Porteous	Mhari McBride
Chris Tibbs	Michelle Smith
Ciara Drape	Mike Platten
Craig Johnson	Natasha Milton
Donald Gaze	Oscar May
Donna Rumney	Paul Etherington
Ed Briars	Paul Nathan
Erin Hope-Hume	Phil Drape
Evan Davies	Rosa Kirk
Grace Inman	Ruby Halford
Harry Wade	Scott Armstrong
Heidi Ratter	Steve Hails
Holly Mawdsley	Terri Price
Ian Jones	Tim McGahey
James Buckton	Toby May
James Tait	Victoria Ndirangu
Jess Levy	Will Hampton
Joan North	Will Hunt
Joseph Smith	Will Odonnell
Josh Dresser	Yuvel Soria
Julie Redshaw	
Kieran Stables	
Kiane Watt	
Kimiko Cheung	
Kirsten Laverty	
Kurt Cameron	
Larissa Sucan	

We would like to thank our staff and volunteer helpers for their special commitment to the project. Apologies to those left out of this list! There are in fact many more who have delivered leaflets and newsletters, put letters in envelopes, weeded the garden, taken photographs, typed minutes or helped in many other ways.....thanks to them all!!

Trustees	Members and Friends (all the trustees in the left-hand column, plus)
Keith Butcher (joined 2019)	Bron Aal
Chris Clarke	Peter Breakey
Deborah Easton	Peter Garratt
Annette Hames	Jane Gibbon
Martin Hunt	Peter Hall
Simon Leach	Holli Keeble (Resigned 2019)
Mike Miller	Joanne Kingsland
Paul Rea	Chris May
Barrie Thompson	Jan Morris
	Phil Moxon
	David Ogilvie
	Andrew Plasom-Scott
	David Rushworth
	Jessie Salmon
	Peter Slater
	Katie Steele
	Jill Winter