

Clara & District Recreation Association Ltd

Wellness through Water Fitness



Annual Report 2017



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Introduction

Established in the 70's Clara Swimming Pool continues to serve the people of Clara and neighbouring areas. Operated by a voluntary board of directors this community owned facility is a limited company not having a share capital, this means that all income generated at the pool goes directly back into the daily operating & maintenance of the pool.

Following a lengthy campaign by board members over many years the pool underwent a major refurbishment in 2015 underpinned by a €1.2m investment mainly from the Government, National Lottery & Offaly County Council. This has resulted in significant improvements for pool users and visitors with first class changing area, viewing area and reception area.

Local employment is a key element of the pool operation and this is made possible with the support of the POBAL community service programme. The future success of the Clara swimming pool however depends on the continued support of the whole community coupled with the regular pool users from the surrounding areas including schools and special needs groups.

In addition, the participation and involvement of new people to serve on the voluntary board of management will be vital to ensuring the future of Clara Swimming Pool

Directors 2017

Cllr. Frank Moran: Chairperson

Tim McMahan: Secretary

Chris Sheridan Treasurer

Cllr. Dervill Dolan

Louise O'Keeffe

Theresa Fitzpatrick

Due to business commitments the former chairperson, Mr Billy O'Brien resigned from the board during the year. The board wishes to express its sincere thanks & appreciation to Billy for his leadership during the campaign to secure funding for the pool refurbishment.

The dedication and involvement of previous directors in recent years is also gratefully acknowledged including Dominic Fleming, Jacinta Fitzpatrick, Vincent McKeon, Tracy O'Brien, Johnny Guilfoyle and Barry Flynn.

While they are not directors of the company the board wishes to extend special thanks to Yvonne Tierney and Michael McKeon for their ongoing work to promote swimming in Clara.

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Operation of Board

The board of directors meet monthly to review financial & operational reports to ensure the sustainability of this important local enterprise in Clara. Board members also serve on several sub committees dealing with Finance, Staffing and Fund Raising. The board support the work of the manager and all staff to manage & operate the pool in a safe, professional, friendly & efficient manner on behalf of the whole community.

Staff 2017

CSP Funded

Michael Keating:	Manager
Frances McKeon:	Head Lifeguard
David Feely:	Senior Lifeguard
Natasha McKeon	Lifeguard
Mark Delaney	Reception/cleaning

Pool Funded (casual staff)

Ms Katie Rigney:	Lifeguard	Mr Keith McCarthy:	Lifeguard
Mr Kurt Lynch:	Lifeguard	Ms Haley Lynch:	Lifeguard
Ms Natasha Sims:	Lifeguard	Ms Tamara Murray:	Lifeguard
Mr Sean Tierney	Lifeguard	Mr Tadhg Molony	Reception

Clara Swimming Pool is a registered training centre with both the Royal Lifesaving Society and Swim Ireland. All our lifeguards undergo compulsory training each month and through their professionalism & dedication Clara Swimming Pool is widely regarded as one of the best places to learn how to swim.

Health & Safety

Our health & safety record to date has been excellent with a small number of minor incidents reported during the year.

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Activities

Efforts were made during the year to enhance the range of activities provide at the pool and the current timetable included the following:

Children's Lessons	Ladies Only Lessons	Adult Lessons
Aqua Aerobics	Aqua Sculpt	Pilates
Public Swims	Lane Swims	School Swims

The pool is also available for private hire for birthdays & special occasions and is used by groups including Special Needs and Swimming Clubs

Pool Tank defect

Pool users will be aware of the damage present in the pool tank. The result is that paintwork continues to degrade coupled with cracks in the seal on the floor of the tank. Immediate steps were taken to ensure that nobody was placed at risk and following consultation with our project manager it was decided to deploy rubber mats in some locations to eliminate any risk of injury to pool users.

While the root cause has not yet been determined the issue first came to light immediately after the pool reopening following completion of the refurbishment work in late 2015. Because of prolonged engagement by our project manager and the design team remedial work was undertaken by one of the subcontractors in mid-2016 to rectify the problem. This operation however was not successful.

Throughout the past 18 months there has been ongoing engagement between our project manager and the main contractor to find a solution with much of the focus on the subcontractor who carried out sealing work in the pool tank. Following a recent meeting with Offaly County Council it was decided to place a deadline on the main contractor to come back with satisfactory proposals to address the problem.

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POBAL

The Community Services Programme gives grants to community businesses that delivers services and creates employment for people from disadvantaged groups. Funder by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection and managed by POBAL, the CSP supports over 400 community companies and co-operatives around the country.

Clara Swimming Pool successfully renewed its contract with POBAL for the period 2015-2017 to ensure that our local community retained the benefits on having a local swimming pool coupled with employment for a manager and 2.5 equivalent full-time employees.

POBAL carried out a detailed audit of the company earlier this year and we have had ongoing communications with POBAL because of the findings issued to address a small number of corrective actions.

During the year the directors prepared its business plan for the period 2018-2020 as part of its application to have the CSP contract renewed for the next 3 years. The Board are pleased to report that our application has been successful and a contract has been awarded for the next 3 years.

Plans

The board have identified several key projects that need to be implemented as soon as funding becomes available including:

- Installation of privacy screen at the shower area
- Upgrading the car parking facilities with tarmac surface and lighting
- Additional changing facilities

Offaly County Council

The Board continues to work in partnership with Offaly County Council under the Swimming Pools programme.

The board wish to acknowledge the financial support received from the council and the advice and assistance from Monica Cleary & Frank Heslin during the year.

Clara Community Playground

Because of decisions taken at the Annual General Meeting in 2016 the company has now assumed overall responsibility for our local playground. ROSPA carried out its annual inspection in September 2017 and overall the findings were very positive with some remedial work to be carried out to address minor defects.