

## RLSS Thames Valley Branch

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 at Bracknell Leisure Centre

1. Present: M Jones, C Alder, R Green, I Williams, K Crothers, H Bowker, D Clift, J Bailey, S Bailey
2. Apologies: P Webb, K Cottell, S Kershaw
3. Minutes of the 2016 A.G.M: read and accepted.
4. Matters arising:  
Meg queried what had happened to Ben. Helen advised that he had completed his challenge but communication had been very poor.  
Chris Signed the minutes as a true copy
5. Chairman's report: Chris outlined that the Branch has continued to maintain a strong membership with a total of 1239 Life Saving Awards, including Survive and Save Awards, Life Support and NRASTC which is a slight decrease of 30 awards on 2015/2016. The Survive and Save awards were the highest undertaken in the Branch to date – 354 which is an increase of 57 from 2015/2016.

He again detailed that the Branch continues to find it challenging to reach and engage with membership, with low responses to correspondence. He acknowledged this places a huge burden on the small number currently working on the committee. Work will continue to try to engage with the voluntary members and to seek additional colleagues to join the committee and try to build closer connections with the clubs.

He gave thanks to Rachel Healey who has resigned and moved away for her work, thanking her for her commitment and support on the committee as Youth Development Officer, a team member and competitor of Wantage Lifesavers and as an instructor for Bracknell Lifesaving Club.

Chris commented that due to safety it was not possible to run The Open Water event in 2016 which was disappointing. The event has been planned again for 2017 as due to the continued rise in open water swimming, this is the Branch's opportunity to provide key learning for all, and is a key event to bring our work to the public's attention. The event will align with Drowning Prevention Awareness Week. Chris thanked Ray for his continued hard work in preparing and running the event.

Chris thanked Meg for her continued support in keeping on top of the information from HQ.

Thanks were also given to Pete for his hard work in continuing to ensure and reassure the committee of the financial governance, compliance and stability. He was disappointed that there had been few actual applications for financial support or grants as offered by the Branch.

There have been no vulnerable adult or child protection safeguarding or welfare concerns, and Ray was thanked for his role as Welfare Officer/Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer.

Chris was pleased with the representation at the regional and national competitions by the Branch.

Chris thanked Pete Webb who has continued to successfully run The Save a Baby Life courses in the Wantage area.

Chris thanked Pete and Rachel for providing training to a number of Thames Valley instructors in relation to AED use.

Chris thanked Helen Bowker, Branch LS Co Ordinator and welcomed the impact her ideas and co-ordination with HQ was having. Strong links have been developed with rescue services in Oxford in relation to her initiatives with the Don't Drink and Drown campaign which the committee supported. The John Lessingham Award has been awarded to Keith Cottell who completed 139 awards. Congratulations and thanks were given to Keith the trophy and cheque to be presented at one of her club sessions.

Chris concluded by thanking all the committee members for their continued hard work and support.

6a Awards report from Meg Jones: The number of Clubs and School registered as members has remained at 21, and the membership remains at 221. NASTC very strong and most popular. Survive and Save doing very well –

Award	2015/6	2016/7
Medallion Bronze	154	103
Medallion Silver	19	43
Medallion Gold	93	41
Sport Bronze	2	2
Sport Silver	7	43
Sport Gold	0	6

6b. Report from Ray, child protection: DBS can be done online, no new information from HQ, no reports of child or adult protection issues. DBS due to be renewed every 3 years.

He advised there would be a new format for the Dave Green Challenge cup this year to engage parents of Rookies more and looking to obtain feedback to improve for next year. Survive and Save Awards would be available to be undertaken as will the usual competition at the Open Water Event. All the information about the event for 2017 will be on the Thames Valley Website. He expressed his frustration that Windsor Lifeguard Club is not contacted in flood/emergency situations, possibly due to Health and Safety regulations. Stuart Bailey advised he would look into local Water Safety Groups to possibly supply advice and support.

6c. Report from Pete, Treasurer: There has been an increase in income from membership, but unfortunately, award income has dropped. Expenditure has also dropped, but the Branch did give a grant to support the Don't drink and Drown campaign being run by Oxford University. Therefore there is slightly more money in the accounts. Still chasing dormant accounts, Pete to ask HQ to chase these, been ongoing for too long, money in these accounts could assist clubs

with equipment. Still able to offer ½ price alternate years on manikins or AED trainer to clubs, also able to help with costs of running courses for training Survive and Save TA's.

6d. Report on Youth Development by Rachel: Attended a very helpful conference. Branch Facebook page has been updated – RLSS UK Thames Valley Branch, with official header, getting viewings. Using it to put info/photos on. Facebook is linked to website. Any photos posted have been done with agreement in line with child protection. Lots of links to drowning stories. Rachel also reported a very successful Officials course had been run and attended by members of the Branch.

6e. Report re competitions, Keith: Entrants in the Juniors, Individual and Masters took part in the National Championships, with the Masters obtaining some podium positions. Need more candidates for Masters competition. New rules now available in line with Survive and Save Manual, rules have been adjusted and amended. Competitors need to enter as individuals now, closing date for entries 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week in June. The National Championships will be held in Leeds in 2017

6f. Helen Bowker, advised that all awards and qualifications are currently being looked at by HQ due to underlying qualification levels and outside organisational requirements for some awards, e.g. First Aid at Work. She will keep the committee updated. She advised HQ are piloting a 3 day Open Water Lifeguard qualifications, the pre-requisite being candidates hold an open water qualification. Helen advised she had made good links with Oxford Brookes, Oxford University, Oxford City Council, Thames Valley Police and Fire and Rescue. A campaign had recently been run in Oxford City with coverage from BBC South, local radio, local newspaper and ITV in relation to Don't Drink and Drown Campaign. Thames Valley Branch gave a grant of £600.00. There was good engagement. The Police and Fire and Rescue want to expand this work. Helen advised she was encouraging youth engagement together with 4 Fire and Rescue watches to visit years 8 and 10 in Secondary Schools which have been classed at high risk of a drowning incident occurring; the work to incorporate Water Safety. She has also arranged for coverage for Drowning Prevention Week. Discussions are underway for a sign on Donning Bridge to try to prevent this bridge being used by people jumping in the river. Helen advised she had been sent water incident stats from the emergency services to see if she can establish a trend.

7. Election of President: Iwan was proposed by Ray and seconded by Chris.

8. Election of Committee: There remains a vacancy for Youth Development Officer, Chris has had no nominees to fill this role and it remains vacant. He is looking for people who would like to take this on who are over 18. It would be possible to have a sub-group of younger members to support this work.

Stuart advised that even though the committee had been elected for two year tenure last year, they still needed to be elected annually and he proposed the

existing committee members should be re-elected en-block. There were no objections.

<u>Position.</u>	<u>Name</u>
Chair	Chris
Welfare Officer	Ray
Branch Administrator	Pete
Deputy Administrator	Meg
Community and	Keith

#### Competition

9. Stuart Bailey outlined his role as Ambassador which is to provide a crucial link between the Trustee Board, the Community Drowning Prevention Co-ordinator and localised community drowning prevention in branches. He advised that Regions no longer exist, there is just an Ambassador in that area. His role excludes competitions, which he now assumes falls to individuals within 'old regions' to do this. Branches are not allowed to cover entry fee or running costs for entrants for competitions. HQ hold the funding. Stuart advised he had a pot of money he could use to support running training courses and would welcome feedback or ideas for these which may possibly incorporate other Branches being involved. One of the objectives of the role of the Ambassador is to support planning in the Branch of a possible business/strategic plan where 2 or 3 key campaigns could be picked to be undertaken.

10. AOB: Ray would like to have some display boards and reflective jackets for Assessors, Judges and other officials for open water events. He has prices and will forward to Pete for approval.

There being no further business, meeting closed at 1.30pm.