

# Gravesham Community Leisure Limited

for the year ended 31 December 2022

# Annual Report



# Company Information

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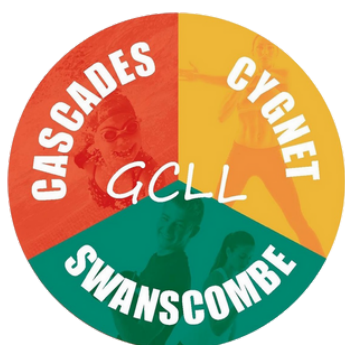
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Registered in England as a Community Benefit Society

Registration Number: 28949R

VAT Number: 725070850

Formed: 10th August 1999



# Contents

Page 4      **Foreword**

Page 6      **About GCLL**

\* Charitable Objectives

\* Our Shared vision



\* Our Values

\* Our Mission

\* Our People

Page 8      **Management Board / Senior Staffing Structure**

Page 9      **2022 Performance**

\* Income

\* Expenditure

Page 10     **2023 and Beyond**

\* Operational Excellence

# Foreword

Welcome to Gravesham Community Leisure Limited's (GCLL) Annual report for 2022 – our Twenty Third year of operation.

At GCLL, we care about our Community, Partners, and Team members – and it shows. Our focus on people, genuine relationships, and shared values has created a unique and defining company culture.

Our Team Members are key to that culture, so we also strive to hire the right people that genuinely care about Health & Wellbeing and serving our community. At the core we have integrity and trust each other, support each other, appreciate each other and we love celebrating success together.

The Leisure Industry is described by Community Leisure UK as a Challenging Landscape for any Leisure company operating in the UK today. That said it never fails to impress, how well GCLL staff have performed in 2022, albeit within a difficult landscape, however, there remains a positive feeling among the team that GCLL has a lot more to offer and there is a real appetite for future growth. [Community Leisure UK Members – 2022]

We now have a 'Clear Vision' for GCLL, identifying a new approach to our day-to-day operational model, redefining our Values and Mission statement which will determine both the Structure and Culture of the organisation moving forward.

It is our belief that GCLL is uniquely positioned now, within a disruptive landscape caused by both the pandemic and Economic uncertainty, to deliver "A Shared Vision" which has a powerful focus upon Community inclusion. This Vision identifies and promotes the positive contribution that GCLL can make, operating as an integrated component of the Community.

The new Vision sets out to identify the organisations' purpose and to be our communities First Choice for Sport and Leisure services, championing both Health & Happiness through regular exercise.

Our vision will create a Safe, Fun and Affordable space for everyone to Get Active and improve their Physical & Mental Wellbeing, whilst cultivating new Friendships, and bringing communities together.

As part of our recovery post pandemic, we have championed a better way forward, to be more socially relate-able, which in turn will change the way we think about innovation, governance, our people, community, and our purpose – ultimately our reason for being. This new approach will have an emphasis on collaboration, diversity, decentralisation, interconnectedness, trust, and inclusion – mostly it will dissipate the emotion of fear that pervades the Leisure Industry.

The return of customers to our swimming pools and sports halls has been very positive. Health and Fitness members and weekly swimming lessons are continuing to return, this gives us confidence that our community are reengaging in our Leisure services.

## 2023 and Beyond

Trading period for 2023 will be our 3rd stage of our post pandemic recovery for GCLL, where we will endeavour to re-introduce as many activities as financially viable, improving our dry coaching programme, and offer activities again for all ages.

We will continue to maintain our buildings for our partners Gravesham Borough Council and Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council and continue to forge partnerships with our community suppliers, contractors, and external organisations.

Gravesham Borough Council's has now announced that forward planning has started for the next stage of the project to build a new leisure centre for Gravesham, ushering an exciting new era for sport and recreation in the borough. The current Cascades will stay open while the build takes place and GCLL is hugely excited to offer its expertise and experience to help provide a modern leisure facility that will best serve the local community needs. Cygnet Leisure Centre will remain open and will not be affected by the replacement for Cascades.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone at GCLL for going the extra mile this year, which I am sure will continue for the years ahead, for building a stronger business and serving our community a little better every day.

**Stephen Wren**  
**Managing Director**  
**Gravesham Community Leisure Limited**



**Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox**  
**Chairman and Council Representative**  
**Gravesham Community Leisure Limited**



# About GCLL

Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL) was established in 1999 as a staff-owned industrial and provident society and is now registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit and Societies Act 2014. It has charitable status and operates on a not-for-profit basis by reinvesting its surpluses back into the service and/or facilities it operates – all for the benefit of the local communities it serves.

GCLL is governed by its Management Board all of whom, give of their time and commitment on a voluntary basis. It includes professional representation from staff society members, council representatives, the leisure industry, users, and others with specific skills/experience.

GCLL has been hugely successful with its operation of three publicly owned leisure centres under two partnership contracts – Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) and Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council (SGTC)

## Charitable objects

'The objects of the Society shall be to provide for the General Public, in the County of Kent, facilities for recreation and leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare and health, and to advance the education of the public in leisure activities' [Gravesham Community Leisure Limited -Society Rules 2006]

## Our Shared Vision

- Our vision is to be our communities First Choice for Sport and Leisure services and to support in improving both Health & Happiness through regular exercise. We will create a Safe, Fun and Affordable space for everyone to Get Active and improve their Physical & Mental Wellbeing, whilst cultivating new friendships, and bringing communities together.

## Our Values

- **Our community** – We make service our top priority by giving our time, knowledge, and experience to serve the needs of our community, partners, and team members.
- **Building Trust** – Trust and shared belief create strong organisations. We will support our community, Team members, Suppliers, and Partners in creating a truly Sustainable Organisation
- **Being Better Every day** – We are always on a journey to be Better, with our communities help we will strive to be Better everyday.
- **Promoting Diversity & Inclusivity** – Our Core Values foster an environment of diversity, equality, inclusion, and belonging, and create the framework that guides everything we do.
- **Creating Enjoyable and Purposeful jobs** – We promote a developmental culture, share success, have fun, and create meaningful and satisfying work.
- **We Value each Other** – An environment where everyone understands their, and others', needs or limitations and feels comfortable to ask for, or provide, Help and Support.
- **Making the Right Decisions** – We want to make the right decisions for the community we serve, If it isn't right for our community, we simply won't do it.
- **Our Environment** – We will always strive carry out our activities in ways that minimise the negative environmental impacts of our business while maximising the positive one.

## Our Mission

- Create a truly Sustainable Organisation, whilst being the Leisure Employer of choice in Northwest Kent. We will actively promote our Training and Development culture and outline clear career progression opportunities within the Sports and Leisure Industry.
- Champion 'Health and Fitness' and promote the benefits of regular membership to include Myzone & TRAKK our Health and Fitness monitoring tools and our complimentary Body Composition service Boditrax.
- Actively promote the benefits of our Swim programme and lessons and increase community participation by providing the best-in-class tuition for all age groups as well as creating a fun and Safe environment for families to swim and be together.
- Fully utilise and make available our Sports Halls for Community activity and actively encourage Group Sports, Fitness, and Fun in the spirit of togetherness and creating new friendships.

## Our People

Our teams are our biggest asset, we aim to be the local 'Leisure Employer of Choice'. Currently 99% of the workforce live in the local area of benefit to our sites, 72% live in Gravesham, 13% in Dartford, 13% in Medway with only 1% living outside of the local area.

Local employment is an important part of our community, and the benefits are reflected not only in the borough but also in our organisation and with our customers. GCLL cares about its Community, Partners, and Team members – and it shows.

As we move forward, we will focus on people, genuine relationships, and shared values to create a unique and defining company culture. Our team members are key to that culture, so we will strive to hire the right people that genuinely care about Health & Wellbeing and serving our community.

GCLL already provides a wide range of training opportunities for employees including, certified online training courses, weekly National Pool Lifeguard (NPLQ) training on site at Cascades and Cygnets for all those who hold the NPLQ qualification and First Aid at work and other opportunities through our partnership with the YMCA.

In 2022 over 600 training elements were detailed in our HR system and an additional 100 sessions of Pool Lifeguard training across the sites will have been undertaken, demonstrating the team's commitment to learning development. Recent appointments which have been made by way of promotion will be reviewed and individual training needs will be identified and adopted to ensure every effort is made to offer further development as this is encouraged across the team.



# Management Board

The GCLL team have a wealth of experience. Our approach is about bringing forward a “Shared Vision” which is truly sustainable, which creates an inclusive culture, creating a day-to-day working environment that is in sync with the changes and challenges within society and specifically in the local area of benefit. Our goal is to deliver a leisure experience that is socially relevant to the Community, making service our top priority by giving our time, knowledge, and experience.

The Management Team saw the retirement of Mr Robert Swain Managing Director who had served the community as part of GCLL since 2001. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Robert for his service. With 2022 being a challenging year, the Management Board should be applauded for their support and guidance.

## The Management Board

Chairman and Council Representative	Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox
Staff Representative	Mrs Sonya Sims
Specialist Skill Representative	Mr David Hopkins
Staff Representative	Miss Cassie Jackson – [25 <sup>th</sup> April 2022]
Council Representative	Cllr Peter Scollard
Customer Representative	Kathlyn Thomas
Customer Representative	Mrs Sue Butterfill
Staff Representative	Mr Wayne Pedrick – [25 <sup>th</sup> April 2022]
Staff Representative	Mrs Helen Lake – [25 <sup>th</sup> April 2022]
Managing Director	Mr Stephen Wren - [July 2022]

## Senior Staffing Structure

Managing Director	Stephen Wren – [July 2022]
Head of HR & IT	Helen Lake
Head of Finance	Nicky Pye
Head of Operations	Wayne Pedrick
Centre Manager - Cascades	Cassie Jackson – [1 <sup>st</sup> October 2022]
Centre Manager – Cygnets	Sonya Sims – [1 <sup>st</sup> October 2022]
Fitness Manager	Gisella Webzell
Sales and Marketing Manager	Lisa Hankinson



# 2022 Performance

## Income

Operational income has shown a considerable increase generating £2,920,660, achieving an additional 62% above last year. GCLL has also received various grants in 2022, and a utility recharge amount from Gravesham Borough Council.

GCLL was also involved with Kent County Council in a one-off post pandemic scheme called 'The Reconnect Scheme' and we received £36,300 across all 3 sites to help fund positive experiences and opportunities for young children and young people in Kent.

GCLL also received £10,000 relating to an economic stimulus grant; this government funded grant was paid to us on completion of a successful grant application with Gravesham Borough Council in 2022.

In 2022 we have seen a substantial increase in energy prices. GCLL and Gravesham Borough Council have worked closely together to ensure that all leisure services have remained open, and since October 2022 GBC have committed £66,267 of support towards the increase in utility costs.

Operating income in 2022 has focused on our Swimming Academy and Outline Health and Fitness. These areas have seen good growth in 2022, we have an additional 186 swimmers in the academy and an additional 559 Outline Health and Fitness members.

Outline Health and Fitness Income received from Annual memberships has significantly increased in 2022, an additional £51,408 income has been deferred into 2023 from this year.

## Expenditure

Salary costs have been controlled well, with savings in the earlier part of the year due to vacant positions. An additional position of Centre Manager was agreed throughout in 2022 as the business grew faster than expected.

Repairs and maintenance costs in 2022 have been controlled well and even though the age of the buildings requires constant monitoring we have been able to keep the expenditure within budget.

Substantial utility cost increases in 2022 have been challenging. Our goal has been to reduce usage by 10% which will help with substantial savings as we are facing gas cost increases by 72% and electricity by 45%.

The catering department in 2022 has seen growth, with the café at Cascades opening once again offering drinks and snacks. This has been a success and the department including vending across all 3 sites has provided a surplus of £30,769. The above performance is encouraging, and although GCLL is reporting a deficit in 2022, this is better than budgeted forecast and sets the business up well for 2023, as we enter our 3rd stage in the post pandemic business recovery plan for GCLL.



# 2023 and Beyond

## Operational Excellence

Being better every day' is one of our core values, we must always be on a journey to be Better. As we move into 2023, we want to accelerate our plans for Operational Excellence, where we put our community at the forefront of our thinking and Brand.

The Pandemic led to a surge in the use of digital technologies to communicate, interact and continue business. Following on from the pandemic we have continued to move forward introducing services such as membership applications and bookings online. GCLL has invested in an Artificial Intelligence (AI) system 'Keep me' to improve communications with our community and we have recently introduced a new App and an improved Front of House system.

Digital technologies and applications will assist in helping us to meet our communities' expectations and keep up with the latest modes of social engagement. We will continue to use technology and digital data to improve our business processes.

Our website is one of our most vital aspects and we will ensure that this is current, modern, accessible, and up to date. The GCLL App will continue to be developed as this offers the most convenient way to access what we offer at our sites and gives us

GCLL is committed to putting our customers first and delivering activities that are accessible to all. The provision of software to enable customers to book activities, manage their membership and update their preferences, is an essential part of this service. We will ensure that any software provided is compatible across all technology devices and we will give access via in house options for those who do not have access to technology. We will also continue to explore options to reduce queuing and provide quicker and easier access at busy times.

During 2023 an evaluation of the opening hours will be carried out using the results of customer feedback and consultation. Social distancing measures were introduced during 2021 these measures have since improved operations and in some cases proved to be more user friendly, for example cashless leisure centres and pre-booking of activities including casual swimming.

Further investigation will be carried out focusing on customer experience through mystery visits and as GCLL expands technology use we will be working towards further enhancement in the digital market.

GCLL has developed a Fitness Service Plan to the users of the Fitness Suite, a comprehensive Group Exercise Programme, and the Cardiac Phase 4 Scheme. The main purpose of the Fitness Service Plan is to minimise the attrition particularly focusing on new members within their first three months of membership. The Fitness Team has access to numerous IT programmes to monitor our members journey including Myzone, Boditrax and Trakk

We will continue to actively promote the benefits of our Swim programme and lessons, GCLL will maintain good working partnerships with external organisations such as Swim England and STA to help with teacher training, employment, and continuity of staff. Swimming lesson timetables are constantly reviewed to ensure that maximum pool occupancy is achievable, waiting lists are reduced and teacher cover provided.

GCLL continues to work with external health and safety consultants, Citation, with annual audits carried out on GCLL systems, standards and inspections and aim to continue to be a low-risk environment for staff and customers. This information is reported to GCLL Management Board monthly with any actions being addressed and implemented as and when needed.

GCLL has forged partnerships with suppliers, contractors, customers, and external organisations. The operational management of GCLL relies heavily on these partnerships. We aim to build stronger relationships with other external organisations through local Networking, Sports Development Departments, local clubs and groups and their sporting bodies.

We aim to expand the menu from a coffee/tuck shop to a Grab and Go food outlet but working within staffing parameters and ensuring financial viability. The bar area at Cascades will develop into being a daytime function venue for members, community use and children's parties.

Hot drinks vending options will be explored at Cygnet Leisure Centre to compliment the other vending options already available in the centre. A range of healthy drinks and shakes will be introduced at The Swanscombe Centre with a vision of growing this service into a juice bar area.

GCLL's Marketing and Community outreach will use all social media platforms, including our App to connect with our communities for the latest updates, promotions, and events. By using target marketing, it will make the pricing and distribution of our services easier and more cost-effective.

GCLL is in a unique position, to deliver "A Shared Vision" which has a powerful focus on Community inclusion at its core. We are therefore actively undertaking market engagement with owners / operators to explore options in the additional management of new Community Sports Centres / hubs.

By way of a summary, even with the challenges the Leisure Industry has faced throughout the last few years, GCLL remains confident that success will be achieved by continuing to work together as a Team, our Management Board, our strategic partners and with our wider community.

