

STAM FAQs

Is there a minimum standard to join the club?

- We have a wide range of abilities within the club, so provided you can swim lengths we should have a lane to cater for you. Our coach Josie will provide you with help on improving your technique, however we are primarily a training club rather than a teaching club, so if you are looking for lessons we would suggest getting in touch with Strokes Ahead Sandringham. If you're unsure, just contact Neil or Sarah, and they'll be happy to advise you

I swam as a kid, but haven't trained properly since – will I be good enough?

- Yes! Many of our members are returning to swimming after many years, having competed as children. If you have a background in swimming (however many years ago!) you'll definitely be fine, and the fitness will come back quickly.

How far do you swim in a typical session?

- The slowest lanes will swim around 1.5km (60 lengths) in an hour long session, while the fastest swim around 3km (120 lengths)

What type of sessions do you swim?

- Our coach sets a variety of sessions, with a mixture of sprints, distance sessions, kick, pull and drills, across all strokes. Below are a couple of example sessions which are typical of the middle lanes (each lane does a variation depending on speed and ability). Don't be put off if you can't do all strokes – you can adapt the session as needed.

Warm up: 200m front crawl, 100m backstroke, 100m breaststroke

Sprint set: 12 x 50m front crawl

IM work: 8 x 75m (25 kick, 25 drill, 25 swim – 2 on each stroke)

Pull: 2 x 200m

Cool down: 200m

Warm up: 400m front crawl

Main set: 10 x 100m (mix of drills & speedwork)

Kick: 100m backstroke

Sprints: 12 x 25m IM order (3 on each stroke)

Cool down: 200m

Can I/do I have to join in with competitions?

- We compete in several local galas each year, including the Herts Masters, which the club has won 10 times in recent years. Several members also compete in various open meets, the National Masters, and open water races. We would love you to join us, and there are plenty of opportunities for those who haven't swum in galas before to compete in a supportive and

relaxed atmosphere. However if competition isn't for you, there is absolutely no pressure to race (although you'd still be welcome to join us for the meal afterwards!)

Do you swim open water, or just in the pool?

- There is a small contingent of keen open water swimmers within the club, who will be found at the local lakes most weekends from April to November. We have a WhatsApp group to share plans, and will normally follow the swim with a group breakfast to refuel. If you haven't swum open water before but would like to give it a try, let us know – there will always be somebody happy to take you to the lake and give you some pointers. These sessions are informally organised between club members, and not included in membership costs (most lakes charge £5-6/session).

Do you have any social events, or is it all swimming?

- We hold regular coffee & cake evenings after training and many social events throughout the year, including a social triathlon (comprising at least as much eating as exercise), a summer picnic, winter walk and pub lunch, and Christmas party.

When/where do you swim?

- We swim Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday, either at Westminster Lodge or St Albans School. You can find more information on the 'Club Times/Venues' page. All weekday sessions are coached.

What are the membership options?

- Full membership is £38, which allows you to swim as many of the 4 sessions per week as you like. We also have an option for 1 swim per week, which is £27.

I'm interested in finding out more. How do I get involved?

- Contact Neil (neil@stamsc.co.uk) or Sarah (sarah@stamsc.co.uk) with any other questions, and to arrange a time to come along to your first session. We give all prospective members a 2 week free trial so you can try a few sessions and decide whether you'd like to join.