

**David Broadbent** started his career as a coach in Sheffield, where his passion for swimming also began. He swam at national level until the pandemic dashed his plans of swimming at 2020 Olympic Trials (i.e. British Championships) in April of 2020.

He joined Hackney Aquatics as head coach in September 2020 and steered the club through the difficult late pandemic and post-pandemic period. In 2023 he took on the position of Director of Swimming and simultaneously leads both Hackney Aquatics and the Anaconda swimming clubs.

David has coached both competitive and non-competitive squads of all ages. Over the years becoming a highly respected, approachable, kind and professional Director. David's natural talent for swimming, being a national swimmer himself, is an invaluable asset to his skill set as leader. He is approachable to all members of the clubs and sets an example to the swimmers of what they can achieve, whilst having a kind and caring nature when things don't quite go how they were expected to; he is able to do this because he truly understands the journey they are on and some of the difficulties they may face along the way, he also beams with pride when the swimmers of his clubs reach their own goals.

One of the things that makes David so special is his kind and caring nature, encouraging everyone at every level of swimming. David has time for everyone, and he leads by example. David is humble to his own achievements however he draws from the experiences and channels that into the swimmers. He has struck the perfect balance of being able to push someone to their full potential and understanding when they need support, whether that is with balancing school and swimming life, battling nerves of a competition, or helping someone who is not quite reaching the goals they want to, in the timeframe they would have liked to

or taking time to help someone who is going through a difficult time mentally or dealing with a challenging situation at home.

Another thing that makes David special is his knowledge of, and passion for, sports science. It permeates through his coaching, his planning, his thinking and probably his veins. Always ready with a stat or a concept or a graph, the science always underpins what he says and what he does. And he humbly shares it with his swimmers and parents/carers in an articulate and digestible way. It breeds confidence in his plans and training, takes the swimmers along an informed journey and can frankly be infectious.

It's clear from speaking to him how genuinely proud he is of everyone within the clubs and how passionate he is about their individual journeys. David has sat with new, young swimmers at their first competition to ensure they felt supported when they have felt overwhelmed and overstimulated in the environment, he had shown understanding and empathy when goggles have twisted and fallen down a swimmers face during an important event meaning the race plan was completely forgotten because all they could think about was the goggles wrapped around their face for the next 200 meters. He's able to recall a historical race or a feature of a race or a split time in an instance from his swimming brain – and for swimmers beyond his own squad and without advance warning. He uses science to develop ways of demonstrating to swimmers their improvements, or the results of their hard work, other than achieving personal bests. He shows pride when swimmers reach their goals at any level from junior European Championships to a non-competitive swimmer mastering a technicality they were struggling with.

It's clear that David's love for swimming has helped propel both clubs into the inclusive, ambitious, and loving community it is today. He is an innovative thinker and is always looking for ways to improve the clubs further. The collaboration of some squads and sharing coaches among Hackney Aquatics and Anaconda has meant that the swimmers get a wider range of experience and knowledge, they learn new drills and techniques and have more leadership within the squads.

The swimmers and their parents/cares/guardians in the clubs have huge respect for David. Below are some quotes from the parents/carers and swimmers.

*"David has transformed our son's life enabling him to achieve more than he ever thought was possible."*

*"David is an amazing coach who is beyond talented and helpful. He puts in so much work and effort and deserves more appreciation. He is understanding and so helpful, most definitely the best coach I have ever had and ever will have."*

*"For his understanding of both mental and physical capabilities of the swimmer. His positive attitude, his knowledge. He's such a fantastic person and coach. We love him!"*

*"I like how David adapts to new challenges, how much time, energy and thought he puts into making HAC more successful!"*

Someone once said, "A good coach can change a game; a great coach can change a life." That certainly counts for coach David. As David has such a gentle and humble nature, it would be easy for his contribution, efforts and passion for the clubs and the sport of swimming to go unrecognized. We feel this is David's time to be seen for the truly remarkable leader he is.