



## Statement of Intent – Ben Murphy

### ‘Programme for Change’



***“If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll  
always get what you’ve always got”***

I consider it an honour to stand as Chairman of our Region which is steeped in Heritage and has an exciting future.

We have grown into a significant and sizeable organisation operating across 8 different disciplines and with regional finances in excess of £350k.

With the size of this operation, comes the need for a calm and experienced head, someone who understands the sport, the politics and the members. I believe I possess those skills.

Following the wonderful tenure of Anne McNeill, I would like to build upon the transformation she has inspired and take us to the next level. We are at a moment where change is needed, in order to review our procedures, policies and what matters most for our members.

### **Programme for Change**

As Vice Chair, and presently caretaker Chair, I have already embarked on a 'Programme for change'. Change is needed to bring our organisations governance up to a level to cope with the demands we are now faced with.

I have four key objectives in mind:

- Modernisation
- Unification
- Transparency
- Accountability

My belief is that once you secure good governance, you then have the foundations to build a very successful programme, one where we can learn from each other, where we listen to our members and move with them as officers of the region to shape a bright future for London Gymnastics.

I am all for empowering TC's to deliver services on the ground, however we need to ensure it is done with quality, consistency and unification of our members. A tightening of our rules and regulations is necessary, but also is the need for a human touch and common-sense approach.

## **Already achieved a lot**

During the last couple of years I have sat on a JTC/Management committee that has already achieved great things:

- A new London Gymnastics brand
- Exposure to disability gymnastics and the rewarding benefits for clubs
- Grant aid funding for clubs and coaches
- Increased communications with clubs
- A new regional website
- Improved newsletter
- Our competitive programmes grow
- Results improving
- Increased membership and affiliation

There is no doubt over the last 5 years that BG has also grown – developing a suite of services, tools and programmes to benefit members and grow a sustainable future. At a Regional level we have seen many improvements, not without some refinements along the way, but none the less the Region stands with a different purpose to what we had previously and this presents us an opportunity to evolve further. It is important that we focus on what we can achieve, both with the resources available and with the remit we are granted.

## **Focused objectives and values**

It is my belief that London Gymnastics focuses on 3 core pillars:

- Regional Competitive structure
- Participation
- Performance

Of course there are other areas we interact with, but actually most of the things we are involved with come from these pillars. Our members, clubs, technical officials that we support – all interact with these pillars.

To have a strong competition programme, we need a good volunteer programme, a good and consistent set of rules, a high standard of event organisation and delivery. Then add to this the excitement of a new Regional Online Entry system for 2015 and the development of a Judging/ Volunteers portal to drive efficiencies of time for our members and our officers.

Participation comes in all forms, but if I look at the growth of GfA competitions (over 2000 gymnasts in one weekend), I see an exciting and challenging future. How do we deliver a programme to keep them happy, to keep them in the sport, to foster them to be our future gymnasts as they dovetail in to other disciplines. Or perhaps they just enjoy the level they are at, which is equally important and so we need to ensure they are provided even more opportunity to break out into TeamGym, FreeG, coaching, volunteering and technical officials.

And of course once you have the base, you have the opportunity to develop performance. I am not so sure we convert the right number of gymnasts to performance at present, given we have so many gymnasts in London. We need to ensure we have the right training in place (Performance Pathway is the start of this), we obviously need to have appropriately qualified coaches and the right facilities for them to train in. We need to ensure that London Gymnastics stands out for Performance as well as Participation. A regional development and training programme that delivers the right growth and results we can all be proud of. I want to get back to the days of us taking gymnasts abroad represent London Gymnastics either through training or events.

So you can see that to focus on just 3 core pillars, already exposes itself to a wealth of activity and work! We are already a long way into the journey on some of these things, and the future is exciting to developing the rest. To me this is how we make our mark, and this is why you should be proud to be a member of London Gymnastics.

### **Finally...**

With a busy work life and young daughter I am not afforded the luxury of so many days off for meeting or being present at every event. However as my partner will tell you my Blackberry is my next best friend and my phone is always on! I believe in tackling things head on, with a common-sense approach but a reference to rules and regulations where needed. Channelling communication from the 'on the ground' challenges can be reported up via our Technical Committees, Regional Officers or dropping me a line!

In a nutshell, I love gymnastics and I love London Gymnastics (sad, but true). It has been part of my life since I was 5 years old, and I can look back and on some amazing memories and experiences the sport has already afforded me. I have always enjoyed drawing parallels between my sporting life and the commercial world in which I work on a daily basis. I think the mix allows me to help drive this region forwards and I am very excited by the future.

Ben Murphy