

ANNUAL REPORT

INCLUSIVE SKATING SCIO

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT – YEAR TO 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014





**Statement by Margarita Sweeney-Baird (Charity Trustee and Chair of IS)**

**This is the Third Annual Report of the Inclusive Skating Charity (IS), which is registered as an SCIO in Scotland and regulated by the OSCR.**

**This third year of operation has been marked by notable success for IS with the third international club event for skaters with impairment taking place in Reykavik, Iceland. The inclusive skating system of competition for the inclusion of skaters with any form of disability has therefore moved to an established event that is capable of transfer to other countries and implementation on an international level.**

**Inclusive Skating marked the inclusion of Inclusive Skating within the National Ice Skating Association official activities with a change of name to Inclusive Skating with effect from after the Dumfries May 2013 event.**

**The IS Classification system is continuing to developing and further improvements made as a result of the Dumfries and Iceland events and were usefully applied. These developments included the training of classifiers in Iceland.**

**Inclusive Skating once again owes a huge debt of gratitude to the Classifiers, who developed the Classification system, applied it at the Iceland 2014 Event. As a result of this work the third edition of the Classifiers Handbook has now been developed. The classification team includes leading medical personnel in Canada and the UK and they have given their valuable time and expertise freely and generously. May I take**

this opportunity to thank the classifiers on behalf of all the skaters who will now be able to benefit from the IS classification system.

Through innovative thinking a system of classification that will allow skaters to be included in ice skating events at all levels and even where there are few IS competitors and this system therefore marks a huge step forward for inclusion of skaters with impairment in the sports of figure skating and speed skating. It also creates a system that could be used in other sports too.

At the Iceland event skaters from Canada, Iceland and Britain participated and the event was a great success at a technical and emotional level and once again many spectators were overwhelmed to see the joy of achievement by these skaters. The skaters were fantastic and the spirit of participation and support for fellow competitors was a joy to behold. The prizes were presented by the President of Iceland and the Inclusive skating movement feel rightly proud to have been honoured in this way.

The Reykjavik 2014 event was permitted by the Icelandic Skating Association and Special Olympics Iceland and incorporated the first Special Olympics Iceland National Figure Skating competitions. The unique Special Olympic ethos was evident throughout. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the event organizers (and most especially Helga Olsen), the OSP Club, Special Olympics Iceland, the Iceland Paralympic Association and the Icelandic Skating Association for their support and funding for the event.

We look forward to the further development of Inclusive Skating and its partnership with Special Olympics in 2015 and 2016 where we will be expanding participation and seeking to increase the regional event and development structure in the UK.

More future events are under active development regionally, nationally and internationally and ice skaters should consult the inclusive Skating website for further information on future events.

A significant development in 2014 has been the success of a permanent Inclusive Skating Club at the Time Capsule in Coatbridge in Scotland. This club commenced operation in May 2013. This session is designed to provide an entry method for participation in ice skating for skaters with any form of disability and follows the pilot at Auchenhavie in the summer of 2012. The session uses a family based model. This is the model that most closely fits the needs and wishes of skater's with a disability as it allows the skater to skate in the supportive environment of their close family and carers. The session is proving to be a great success and at the

time of writing this report now has a full membership, an established club constitution and officials and a very strong volunteer base and has been awarded £10,000 of National Lottery funding.

Inclusive Skating has been recognized as a Legacy 2014 project for the Commonwealth Games and the session and club development structure developed at Time Capsule is the legacy that Inclusive Skating wishes to develop further. Funding for the development of this model across the UK is now needed.

Inclusive Skating would like to thank the officials and volunteers who have contributed their expertise to developing and implementing the Inclusive skating activities. They have given generously of their time and professional skills and have not often not even claimed expenses. Thank you one and all.

This Annual Report fulfils one of the legal requirements of the Charity to report on the activities of the Charity. It will also be sent to the National Ice Skating Association of the UK (NISA) as the Inclusive Skating SCIO is an affiliated association of NISA.

The NISA Chief Executive Officer Nick Sellwood and certain members of the Board have contributed greatly to the fulfillment of many of the activities that have been undertaken by the IS Charity in it's third year of operation and we would like to note our thanks and appreciation to for their valued support.

However, Alistair Wilson consistently refused to give approval to the Announcement to allow an event to be held in Great Britain in 2014. All reasons given were spurious reasons and as a consequence NO inclusive Skating event was held in Britain in 2014 and the decision was taken to hold the event in Iceland. The Announcement of the event was used very successfully in Iceland so Inclusive Skaters who were able to travel did have the opportunity to compete and did so very successfully as they came home with 5 gold medals.

Further delays in obtaining approval for the 2015 event continued and was finally given very reluctantly by Alistair Wilson hours before the public announcement was made by the National Lottery Sport for All award decision to fund the Glasgow 2015 event.

No funding support has been provided by NISA to Inclusive Skating for any activities in 2014 (or 2015). As disabled ice skaters are required to be members of NISA (under ISU and NISA eligibility rules) Inclusive Skating is not a membership organization and is therefore not able to rely

upon membership fees for its operation. Membership fees are paid by the disabled ice skaters to NISA.

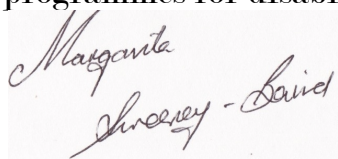
Margarita Sweeney-Baird provided regular reports on Inclusive Skating activities and proposals to the NISA Board requesting funding and the implementation of badge and club development programmes and no funding was provided and no badge programme for disabled ice skaters was implemented by NISA.

As the Reykjavik event was funded by the OSP Club in Iceland and Margarita Sweeney-Baird self-funded all her activities (as did Mary and Oliver Blatchford for the Iceland event) the Inclusive Skating charity made significant progress despite the lack of funds and support by NISA.

As a consequence of the unnecessary delay by Alistair Wilson which considerably impacted upon the activities of Inclusive Skating the decision was taken by Margarita Sweeney-Baird to issue a formal complaint against Alistair Wilson to the NISA Board which is still in process but has been overtaken by the unprecedented action taken by UK Sport in June 2015 to transfer funding from NISA to the English Institute of Sport on grounds that include the behaviour of one of the NISA Board members and substandard corporate governance.

Looking forward to next year. Following the success of the Glasgow 2015 Event we are hoping to welcome many more skaters to Glasgow 2016 for the international club competition, which will again be held under International Ice Skating Union (ISU) rules and are seeking participation from as many countries as possible. The event is to be permitted by NISA and Special Olympics GB and will again incorporate the Special Olympics GB National competitions. This follows the fourth International IS Event that at the time of writing successfully took place in Glasgow in April 2015 and will be covered in the Annual Report for the year to September 2015.

However, future development within Great Britain of ice skating for disabled ice skaters is dependant on improvement in the governance of NISA and consequently Margarita Sweeney-Baird has at the time of writing offered to join the working party on Corporate governance of NISA and will be seeking to achieve improvements in the corporate governance of NISA and the inclusion of representation of disabled ice skaters within the governance structure and the development of programmes for disabled ice skaters within Britain.



Margarita  
Sweeney-Baird