

DLGC History Of The English Channel

Dover swimming club was founded in 1886 and changed its name to Dover Life Guard Club (DLGC) 1935. The Club managed by dedicated volunteers, is a very successful swimming club within the South East Kent area. It supports a number of swimming activities including learn to swim, competitive pool swimming, open water swimming, masters swimming, lifesaving and water polo, it is a registered charity with over 400 members.

DLGC has a very successful English Channel swimming history; it's first recorded relay team crossed the channel in 1975 in a time of 12 hours 46 minutes. In 1981 a DLGC relay team took a new **world record** relay time of 7 hours 17 minutes from England to France. It was not until 1995 before the DLGC made another relay team attempt when they put two successful relay teams across the channel in times of 8 hours 53 minutes and 10 hours 35 minutes, one of these teams won the youngest team of the year trophy. 2005 saw their next attempt when their first DLGC all female team complete a successful crossing in a time of 9 hours 47 minutes.

During the 1980s and early 1990s 6 out of the 12 Great Britain Open Water Team were DLGC members, resulting in the DLGC having some very successful solo swimmers and amongst them three world record breakers. In 1982 Richard Charlsworth was the clubs first recorded solo swimmer to swim the channel from France to England in a **world record** time of 8 hours 52 minutes. In 1984 Lyndon Dunsbee beat Richard's time and took the new **world record** time for a France to England swim in a time of 8 hours 34 minutes. 1985 saw Tim Dunsbee become the first DLGC solo England to France swimmer in 9 hours 20 minutes and Bridget Young became the first DLGC female solo England to France swimmer in a time of 9 hours 58 minutes. In 1988 Richard Davey took the new **world record** time for a solo France to England swim in a time of 8 hours 05 minutes which still stands today due to French Coast guards stopping France to England attempts. In 1989 Richard Davey swam again, this time he swam England to France in a time of 8 hours 33 minutes. In the same year Lyndon Dunsbee swam solo again, this time he too swam from England to France in a time of 9 hours 03 minutes. 1996 Rob Granger swam England to France in 11 hours 33 minutes and 1997 Lee Wakeham swam from England to France in a time of 11 hours 45 minutes taking the fastest British male time in that year. In 2003 Sophie Papougnot finished in a time of 16 hours 45 minutes from England to France. Sophie Mitchinson's successful swim equalled Bridget Young's time of 9 hours 58 minutes in 2005 and Siobhan Philpott made her successful attempt in 2006 in a time of 15 hours 08 minutes. 2007 saw Megan Forbes become DLGC youngest person to swim the channel in a time of 14 hours 27 minutes at the age of 16 years 2 months and 1 day.

The English Channel is considered to be the most prestigious of open water swims and one of the hardest in the world. The English Channel is a 90% mental challenge and is a swim that most swimmers would like to have on their swimming CV. The English Channel demands respect and any swimmer considering making an attempt should be of the understanding that this is no walk in the park, picnic, jolly or day out.

New aspirants should be both mentally and physically prepared

There are so many reasons why people from all over the world want to swim the English Channel. They may commit themselves to this quest to make a dream come true or to challenge a world record time.

“Prepare for the worst, hope for the best”

Lee Wakeham
DLGC Open Water Secretary