INTERNATIONAL SWIMMING GALA

LIONS SHARE

BILLERICAY AREA OF SERVICE:

+ international

Project description

There was a need to create a service project to cement ties between twinned clubs in the UK, Germany and Belgium, as well as giving athletes with physical and / or intellectual difficulties the opportunity to travel and compete in swimming and give their families respite for a weekend.
Billericay Lions along with our Twin club in Germany, Voreifel, and their Twin club in Belgium, Brussels Royale, organise an International Disabled Swimming Gala which takes place every 2 years in each country in rotation.
Each visiting club brings a team (or two) of 10 swimmers with 5 carers to spend a weekend in the foreign country with group activities for all the athletes, carers and Lions on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in addition to the swimming gala on Saturday afternoon. The home club invites as many local teams as possible to compete.
The competition is friendly and enables the athletes to experience other countries, develop friendships.

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what went well?

This event is coming to the end of its 5th cycle of 6 years, 15 events, having started in 1989. Every 2 years the athletes have a goal of training for the event for 6 months prior, and talk about their memories for 6 months after.
Parents of the athletes get respite for the 4 days.
3 Lions Clubs have a regular international service project to support their Twinning.

Lessons learnt

Having a regular service project with Twin Clubs gives the Twinning a purpose and strengthens bonds of friendship between the various club members whilst helping others.

525 people served

(over 33 years)

8000 volunteer hours

(over 33 years)