

# FELLOW BIOGRAPHY

## Paul Medicott

### FSMA



It is often difficult to do justice to the contribution made by an individual when the individual in question believes that their role is to act as a cheerleader for others. It is, therefore, with sadness that we now attempt to pay tribute (without it sounding like an obituary!) to Paul Medicott and the work he's done for the SMA over a grand total of 15 years.

Paul first came to Sports Massage Therapy in the early 2000s, after looking for a change to a successful career in the City that he sensed would lead to burnout. He qualified at LSSM with Andy Stanbury, another of the SMA's Directors, in 2003 and then joined the SMA Board in 2005, along with Rodger Davis and two other LSSM graduates.

Paul will tell you himself that the early years of the SMA were characterised by a fair amount of in-fighting amongst different factions of the then-Board while the SMA tried to find its place and voice within the wider industry. Give it enough time, lubrication and prompting and the infamous AGM of 2008 will certainly come up in conversation, even though Paul was not on the Board at this point.

Paul stepped back from the SMA in 2007 for family reasons (not least the birth of his younger daughter!) but was invited to return by Rodger in 2009 to try help with a resetting of management for the SMA. He credits Rodger with holding the SMA together while away, despite a collapse in member

numbers – and therefore finances – threatening the Association's existence.

The SMA started to regroup in 2009, following Paul's election to Vice Chair and Rodger as Chair. We were approached by LOCOG to help manage the recruitment of therapists for the 2012 Olympic Games - Paul put together the interview team for the Games and recommended Nick Mooney for the role of Clinical Lead for Sports Massage. It is a role that Paul would have been proud to take on himself but he felt it would be unfair of him to spend so long away from his family while they were still settling in to their new lives down in Devon. This tendency to put others before personal ambition and to make sure that the right people are in place to do the relevant jobs has been fundamental to Paul's approach to managing the SMA.

Paul took over from Rodger as Chair at the start of 2013 and his background in finance meant that he always had an eye on finding a way to make the SMA financially stable. When the administration of the organisation was taken totally in-house for the first time in July 2011, it was off the back of Paul writing a business plan to submit to our bank in the hope that they would lend us the money to do so. Had this not been successful, Paul and Rodger had worked out that they had enough personal savings between them to fund the initial investment into our current website and membership software. It is testament to Paul's institution of good financial practice that the SMA has been able to ride out seismic events such as the Covid pandemic without existential threat.

You could ask Paul what he felt his major contributions were and he would shrug diffidently (uncomfortably) and say anything achieved was all down to having a good team around him. The truth is that good teams are not built by chance and the SMA owes a great deal of its current position to the wisdom, good humour and patience that typified Paul's tenure as Chair. These are qualities that we will miss enormously. GCMT would likely say similar about his years of holding the position of Chair with them, too. Paul, for his part, says that he will miss the conversations with colleagues and SMA members – especially the ones accompanied by a large glass of wine.