

# E-BULLETIN

## 3 MARCH 2021



# BETTER TIMES ON THEIR WAY BACK?



## Chairman Chat

### Phil Reay

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*Phil joined the club in 2010 and from 2016-18 was the Men's Team captain. Outside of running he works in Marketing, Sales and Business development roles. Phil enjoys long distance running and has completed over 59 marathons, including the ultramarathon Marathon des Sables in 2016.*

*[chairman@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:chairman@readingroadrunners.org)*

Hi everyone,

Blossom, Spring flowers, the accelerated roll-out of the vaccination program, a roadmap out of lockdown. We have reasons to feel optimistic.

With the government announcement regarding the easing of restrictions, we're hopeful of being able to return to Reading Roadrunners-led sessions at track and outruns soon after 29 March. This is dependent on confirmation from the government, EA and Palmer Park management as well as the availability of our volunteers.

Final preparations are being made for our club Annual General Meeting. This will take place virtually on 16 March. Please check your email from our Gen Sec, Bob Thomas. Being a part of the team on the committee is a rewarding volunteer role and a great way to give back to our running community. All roles are elected, and everyone is welcome to through the simple nomination process to stand.

A reminder that the renewals period for Reading Roadrunners membership is now open. The Reading Roadrunners subscription for 2021/22 to £5 (+£15 EA fees). This applies to existing members who renew before 31 Mar 2021. The link to login and rejoin Reading Roadrunners for 2021/22: <https://webcollect.org.uk/rrr>

I never get tired from seeing your positive stories and activities across social media. Well done to the team for their racing as part of the National round of the EA Road Relays and all those who took part in the February selfie challenge. I'm looking forward to seeing more positive social media posts in March. Enjoy the lighter nights, cautiously embrace the optimism and let's stay disciplined in sticking to the guidelines for just a short while longer.

We'll all be together again soon.

Phil

[chairman@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:chairman@readingroadrunners.org)

## Editor's Note

Ben Fasham

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Dear all,

I hope everyone's well and keeping as fit and healthy as they can. It'll surprise no-one to learn there's not much in this month's Newsletter, but what there is worth reading of course. There's an update on the club's phenomenal pandemic-defying fundraising for **Parenting Special Children**, encapsulated in spirit by **Kathy Tytler's** poetry collection below (and, I understand, by her inevitably two-legged delivery method). It's a big month for club admin as it's AGM time again, and **Bob Thomas** updates us on the details of the Committee for the benefit of the many interested newbies who've not had the chance to grasp the detail before. **David Dibben** guides us through the club's successes in the Virtual Road Relays final, and **Peter Higgs** introduces us to the many benefits of jigsaw puzzles, with a couple of online examples to get us going. Having just lost several days of my life to a 1000-piece map of Brussels, I can confirm that jigsaw puzzles do indeed transport your mind to another place, often for hours at a time.

All the best,

Ben

[newsletter@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:newsletter@readingroadrunners.org)

## Poems in the Time of Corona

Kathy Tytler

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Every year Reading Roadrunners adopts a charity at our AGM in March. The money raised by the races that we organise, refreshments at our events and the Reading Half Marathon, along with individual runners raising sponsorship, and donations at our weekly club nights.

This year we adopted 'Parenting Special Children'; then, almost immediately, we were hit by lockdown, race cancellations and we were unable to meet at club nights.

It has been a strange year, but Reading Roadrunners have been very imaginative in their fundraising ideas. We have had monthly challenges, virtual events and an on-line bake-off competition.

As a *Running Poet* my poems have been inspired by this unusual year, often when out running on my own. I have produced this collection and I am donating the proceeds to 'Parenting Special Children'.

In a time of adversity my running club, Reading Roadrunners have carried on supporting members, keeping us involved and motivated and raising money for the club charity.

I hope you enjoy the poems, which are a reflection of my 2020, and maybe resonate with your experience of this strange year.

To get your own copy please email Kathy at [kathy.Tytler@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.Tytler@gmail.com)

Please donate via: <https://localgiving.org/fundraising/readingroadrunners/>



Parenting Special Children's mission is to provide specialist parenting support to parents and carers of children and young people with Special Needs, so that they can create positive change in their lives.

Parenting Special Children was founded in 2006 by Ruth Pearse, the CEO of the charity, to meet an unmet need that she had identified, whilst receiving a diagnosis for her daughter.

What is unique about Parenting Special Children, and important to the families who receive their services, is that all the staff, trustees and volunteers are parent/carers of children or young people with special needs.

The money raised by Parenting Special Children is supporting their work on Sleep. Most children and young people with additional needs are at increased risk of sleep difficulties. As a result, their parent/carers and siblings don't get enough sleep either, which causes a significant issue for families and the practitioners that support them.

Current research shows that sleep is a key element of both children's and adult's well-being and is just as important as having a healthy diet and getting regular exercise.

**Kathy Tytler**



## Reading Roadrunners Committee Meeting

Tues 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 7.30pm

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### The Committee

Phil Reay	(Chairman)
Alice Carpenter	(ex-Officio)
Jill Dibben	(Treasurer)
Anne Goodall	(Membership Sec)
Liz Johnson	(Social Secretary)
Paul Monaghan	(Social networks/Web)
Vroni Royle	(ex-Officio)
Claire Seymour	(ex-Officio)
Bob Thomas	(General Secretary)

### Apologies for absence

Anne, Jill

### Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as a true record by Paul, seconded by Claire.

### Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

Nothing to report.

### Chairman's report

Phil has reminded members via social media of the need to renew membership before 1 April to benefit from the reduced £5 membership fee. Membership formally expires on 28 February.

Phil was pleased to report that the Club has qualified to take part in the final of the England Athletics National Virtual Relays and congratulated all who have taken part.

Colin Cottell and the Shinfield race committee continue to explore options for staging a race this year, either virtually or physically with reduced capacity.

Finally, Phil reported that the January Challenge initiated by Sam Whalley to undertake 2021 minutes of exercise during the month raised over £600 for the charity.

### Treasurer's report

Nothing to report.

### General Secretary's Report

**Palmer Park.** Bob joined a video meeting hosted by Reading Sports & Leisure on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan at which the Council updated resident clubs on its progress regarding the development of Reading's leisure facilities.

Specifically in regard to Palmer Park:

- A Design, Build, Operate & Manage contract has been awarded to Greenwich Leisure Ltd, which will outsource management of the stadium.
- Provision of a 25M pool is confirmed.
- An application for planning permission was submitted in December.
- RSL expects to commence transformation activities in the summer.
- Forecast completion is autumn 2022.

As predicted, virtual elimination of local street parking without a permit has caused a marked increase in parking at the stadium. Checking the car park several times whilst the stadium was closed under lockdown legislation revealed 50-60 vehicles present. This will presumably continue at least until paid parking is introduced, as previously reported.

### Membership Secretary's Report

Anne reported that one new member joined during January.

### Social Secretary's Report

Liz reported that there are no social functions presently scheduled, though she is looking into options for offering something a bit different from the usual lockdown fare in the coming weeks.

### Coaching Report

Katherine Sargeant and Art Atwal continue to post training plans for members to access.

Claire reported that she and Art are progressing with their development towards CiRF coaching qualifications, which she expects they will each achieve in the spring.

### Any other business

**2021 AGM.** The Committee confirmed its intention to proceed with an AGM on 16Mar21, which will take place via Zoom.

Paul has researched options for providing a voting capability and successfully demonstrated a strawman based on Google Notes. Whilst it was agreed that this gave us a usable solution, it would not be feasible to attempt to undertake the election of Committee members in real time at the AGM. Hence it was agreed that we would circulate links to allow members to review the list of candidates and make their selections prior to the meeting.

The mechanism for nominating candidates will need to be modified to avoid needing to circulate forms between nominee, proposer, seconder and the Secretary. Instead, nomination will be progressed using email.

All of this will be laid out for members and circulated via email in due course.

**Medals for Virtual Challenge.** The Committee agreed a request Phil received from Sam Whalley to fund medals for the recent Virtual Challenge at a cost of £50.

### CLUB VACANCIES

**Treasurer.** Jill intends to stand down as Treasurer at the 2021 AGM. It would be ideal if her replacement could be in place in time to shadow her for some time prior to taking over.

**COVID Co-ordinator.** To continue group training, the Club has a responsibility to ensure that it is paying due regard to prevailing guidelines, for

which the Club needs to appoint a specific post of COVID Co-ordinator.

Members with Health & Safety experience or a specific interest in COVID-related operating practices are invited to speak to Phil in the first instance.

**Membership Secretary.** Anne intends to stand down as Membership Secretary at the AGM. It would be ideal if her replacement could be in place in time to shadow her processing renewals in the New Year. Members interested in taking over this role should talk to Phil in the first instance.

**Women's Captain.** Sam intends to stand down as Women's Captain at the AGM. Women members interested in taking on the role should talk to Phil in the first instance.

**DONM:** Tue 9Mar21 19:00 by video call

#### *Main Club contact points:*

Chairman, Phil:

[chairman@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:chairman@readingroadrunners.org)

Membership Secretary, Anne:

[membership@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:membership@readingroadrunners.org)

Secretary, Bob:

[gensec@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:gensec@readingroadrunners.org)

Treasurer, Jill:

[treasurer@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:treasurer@readingroadrunners.org)

Social Secretary, Liz:

[socialsec@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:socialsec@readingroadrunners.org)

Coaching co-ordinator, Katie:

[coach@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:coach@readingroadrunners.org)

Website / Media, Paul:

[webmaster@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:webmaster@readingroadrunners.org)

Team Captains, Sam & Jamie:

[teamcaptains@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:teamcaptains@readingroadrunners.org)

Welfare Officer, Tom Harrison:

[tom.harrison13w@btinternet.com](mailto:tom.harrison13w@btinternet.com)



## Roadrunners Committee Structure

### Bob Thomas

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This update is to address an observation I've received that my recent AGM calling notice gave insufficient information regarding the Committee structure. If you're considering standing for a Committee post, this may be of interest.

#### Purpose

1. Broadly, the Committee exists to manage the affairs of the Club on behalf of its members, including, but not limited to:
  - Provide and continuously strive to improve services that members wish to consume
  - Manage the financial affairs of the Club
  - Actively encourage and support development of the Club's coaching volunteers
  - Support the Team Captains in engaging with external running events
  - Ensure that Club activities conform to the Constitution & Rules and prevailing legislation, and positively promote the Club
  - Recognising that some opportunities may be performance limited or gender-specific, in general, ensure that Club activities are available equally to all members
  - Select and manage interaction with service providers and suppliers and manage interaction with other third parties such as other clubs, Reading Council, and sport governing bodies
  - Handle day-to-day issues and opportunities as they occur to a beneficial outcome for the Club
  - Resolve disputes, falling back on the Club's disciplinary process if all else fails
2. The Committee reports to and takes direction from the AGM.

#### Structure

3. There are ten Committee positions, comprising three Executive Officers and seven Ex-officio positions.
4. The Executive Officers comprise the Chairman, Treasurer and General Secretary.
5. Of the Ex-officio positions, four are defined roles: Membership Secretary, Social Secretary, Coaching Liaison and Media Manager
6. The remaining three Ex-officio members are expected to pick up actions that fall outside the scope of the named roles.
7. If the number of nominations exceeds ten, or there is more than one nomination for a named post, the matter is resolved by ballot.
8. A quorum of five members is required for the Committee to take a binding vote.
9. The Club bestows no benefits on members of the Committee.

#### Commitment

10. A Committee meeting is held monthly, usually in the first couple of weeks of the month.
11. Meetings have traditionally been held in a Committee member's home, but lately by Zoom.
12. Meetings usually take 1 to 2½ hours depending on the business being discussed.
13. The Treasurer reports the financial position at each meeting.
14. The Secretary minutes the meeting and circulates an action list to the Committee.

#### Nomination

15. Any paid-up member is entitled to nominate him or herself as a candidate for any Committee post; there are no reserved posts.
16. To stand as a candidate, each nominee requires a proposer and seconder, both of whom need to be paid-up Club members.

17. Nomination usually requires a paper form to be completed by nominee, proposer, and seconder.
18. Owing to the prevailing circumstances, nomination this year will be by an email trail: nominee to proposer to seconder to Secretary.
19. The Secretary posts a list of candidates on the Club website and, in normal times, on the Club noticeboard at Palmer Park.

**Ballot**

20. In normal times, a secret paper-based ballot is held at the AGM during a 20min coffee break.
21. As this process is not compatible with a virtual meeting, members who have registered to join the virtual AGM will be invited to vote electronically in advance of the AGM.
22. If more than one member has stood as a candidate for a post, the member polling the most votes is appointed.
23. If more than ten members have stood, the ten candidates polling the most votes are appointed.
24. To be appointed, a candidate must poll at least 50% of the available votes, e.g., if 50 members attend the meeting, each candidate must poll at least 25 votes to be appointed.
25. There is no mechanism to vote against a candidate.

**Charity**

26. For the avoidance of doubt, the Committee does not manage charity fund-raising nor administer charity activities.



## England Athletics Virtual Road Relays

David Dibben

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**Jane Davies** and **Mark Worringham** were the headline acts of a superb performance by the Reading Roadrunners team in the final of the England Athletics Virtual Road Relay competition.

Jane (right) was the winner of her V60 age group in a fiercely competitive national round, returning a time of 37 minutes and seven seconds for the five miles. That earned the England masters marathon star the astonishing age grading of 87.84 per cent... but Mark did even better with 87.96 per cent!

Mark was the fastest Roadrunner in the event with a stunning time of 25:53. It won't be recognised as a personal best but it eclipsed the 26:03 he ran five years ago when smashing the course record at the Headington 5.

The former club men's captain is a modest guy who lets his times do the talking for him. So here's his splits... 5:10, 5:11, 5:10, 5:14, 5:07.

The time-frame for the competition had been extended due to poor weather and Roadrunners saved their best until last, the speedy council planning officer racing just a few hours before the final deadline.

Current club men's captain, **Jamie Smith**, hailed his predecessor by saying: "That's a fine performance by Mark, beating his time in the previous qualifying round by 17 seconds."

Jamie added: "It was a superb team effort and it was great to see new names taking part and giving it a go.

"A note of thanks to **Rob Corney**, who went out of his way — having been injured recently — to meet up with one of our youngest club members, **Jacob Atwal**, and pace him for his five-mile effort round Green Park. What a tremendous show of team spirit!"

Second fastest Roadrunner was **Brendan Morris**, whose time of 26:34 improved his best — run in the previous round — by over a minute. **Tony Page** (28:52) and **Matthew Davies** (29:14) were our other scorers, just ahead of new member **Adam Lewis**, who ran 30:18 on debut.

Leading our ladies home was **Jane Copland** (33:26 despite being just back from injury), followed by **Sarah Dooley** (33:36) and **Helen Pool** (34:04), with Jane Davies completing the scorers. That's Jane Copland pictured with son Sam, a potential future Roadrunner.

Proud women's captain **Sam Whalley** said: "It was great to see so many different people turn out for this round. Jane Copland managed a great time following some calf issues and Jane Davies proved to be the fastest F60 in the land.

























"Sarah Dooley and Helen Pool performed at their usual excellent standard, while Sara Lopez continued her recent run of form with a superb time.



“Thanks to **Katie Gumbrell** and **Alex Bennell** for uploading their efforts and well done to **Gill Manton**, who recorded an unofficial PB.”

Roadrunners were today confirmed as finishing 45th overall, an improvement of two places from the qualifying round. Wirral AC were the overall champions and will represent England in next month's international final.

Our graphics show all the RR finishing times:

79	_NZCY	Mark WORRINGHAM	M40	3	 READR	25:53.00	
123	_2D3X	Brendan MORRIS	M35	13	 READR	26:34.00	
316	_9EPV	Tony PAGE	M45	22	 READR	28:52.00	
357	_8O9I	Matthew DAVIES	SM	163	 READR	29:14.00	
435	_UV5R	Adam LEWIS	M35	52	 READR	30:18.00	
465	_EY8U	Stuart HYSLOP	M35	57	 READR	30:43.00	
472	_PSM1	Brian KIRSOPP	M55	4	 READR	30:50.00	
529	_M3ZE	Calum PRATT	SM	188	 READR	31:38.00	
605	_P49S	Jacob ATWAL	U17M	23	 READR	32:21.00	
626	_NILX	Michael HIBBERD	SM	197	 READR	32:42.00	
695	_FZSF	Jane COPLAND	W35	18	 READR	33:26.00	
705	_OEKJ	Sarah DOOLEY	W40	26	 READR	33:36.00	
714	_8NAE	Ian GIGGS	M35	73	 READR	33:44	
738	_ICMS	Helen POOL	W45	20	 READR	34:04.00	
802	_5JM3	Jon GREEN	SM	204	 READR	35:00.00	
869	_NT9C	Ben FASHAM	M40	73	 READR	36:38.00	
889	_8UQO	Jane DAVIES	W60	1	 READR	37:07.00	
923	_8QJS	Chris MANTON	M45	74	 READR	38:47.00	
956	_9OKF	Sara LOPEZ	W40	58	 READR	40:46.00	
999	_BFKW	Katie GUMBRELL	W40	61	 READR	44:29.00	
1003	_25G3	Alex BENNELL	W45	48	 READR	44:54.00	
1006	_JP5J	Phil REAY	M40	76	 READR	45:29.00	
1030	_NZ68	Gill MANTON	W45	51	 READR	1:02:21.00	



## The Higgsaw

### Peter Higgs

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When we think of jigsaw puzzles, we usually think of a hobby, a way to pass time and relax. The truth is that, in addition to having fun for a while, they also have numerous health benefits. From helping children in their skills development, through improving your memory and mood, to preventing major illnesses in the elderly. Here are some of the surprising benefits of puzzles:

Mental exercise: Doing puzzles can be considered a complete brain workout since it exercises both the right and left sides. The right side is in charge of creativity, emotions and intuitive thinking, while the left is the logical, objective and methodical side. When you do a puzzle both sides must communicate and work together, increasing cognitive function. The occipital lobe is the area where the brain connects colours and shapes and it is also activated. Exercising the mind helps prevent cognitive decline.

Better Visual-Spatial Reasoning: To assemble a puzzle we see different pieces and we must place them within a larger image. Doing this exercise regularly helps us improve our spatial reasoning.

Improve memory: Jigsaws strengthen neural connections and increase the generation of new connections. This increases mental speed and thought processes. When you pick up a piece, you have to search among the others for a colour or shape that you have in mind and visualize the image on a large scale to see which pieces go together. Exercising the part of the brain in charge of storing this information helps to maintain and improve short-term memory.

Increase your IQ: Researchers have found that spending 25 minutes a day solving puzzles and riddles can raise your IQ by 4 points.

Improve problem solving ability: To solve the puzzles you take different approaches to try to solve a problem, since it is a trial-and-error test. You also learn the value of formulating theories, testing hypotheses, and changing your perspectives when something doesn't go as planned.

Better mood: Solving puzzles has a great benefit in increasing the brain's production of dopamine. This neurotransmitter is responsible for regulating mood and optimism. It also affects learning, memory, concentration, and motivation. Dopamine is released every time we do a puzzle and even every time we put a piece in the right place. This encourages us to continue to do so and challenge ourselves.

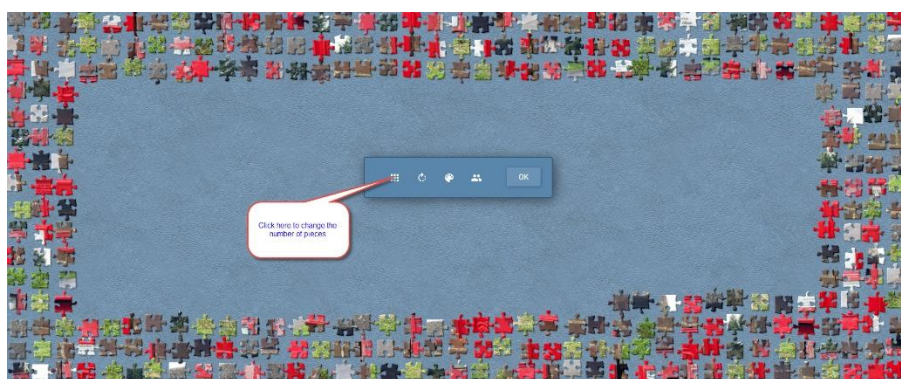
Decrease stress level (unless your 1000-piece jigsaw ends up being 999 pieces): In addition to challenging us, it also helps us relax. Our brains go from "Beta" or awake, to a state of "Alpha" when you are assembling puzzles. The Alpha state is similar to the state we are in when we are dreaming. This shift in consciousness comes with many benefits, including: the ability to make deeper connections, improvements in our moods, increasing self-confidence, stress relief, and lower blood pressure and heart-rate.

Keeping your brain active can delay the symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's disease studies have shown that keeping the mind active through puzzles and other problem-solving activities can reduce the amount of brain cell damage that occurs in Alzheimer's patients. It also supports the growth of new nerve cells and strengthens the connections between them. Researchers have also found a relationship between the number of years someone has been solving puzzles and the probability that they will develop Alzheimer's. So the sooner you start making puzzles a regular part of your life, the better. It is never too late to start protecting your brain.

And now thanks to the internet you don't even have to have hundreds of pieces spread across your living room table – and you will never lose any of the pieces.



With E-jigsaws you can even choose how many pieces you want your Jigsaw to be & have a favourite picture of Aunt Edith or one of your little cherubs covered in spaghetti, with E-jigsaws that can become your next Jigsaw & you can even share them with friends.



So here are a couple to get you started. Just click on the links and get puzzling:

<https://jigex.com/A7bu>

<https://jigex.com/rff7>

Do you have a favourite Running picture that you would like to share as a jigsaw?

Each month the editor will be choosing a picture sent in by you!