



Reading Roadrunners

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2024-25

19:00 11th March 2025 at Suttons Bowls Club, Lower Earley

1. Apologies were received from Paul Monaghan, Caroline Monaghan, Martin Bush, Mike Worsfold, Colin Cottell.
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 12th March 2024: proposed as a true and accurate record of the meeting by Kerri French, seconded by Pip White.
3. Annual reports were delivered by the relevant officials:
 - Chair Chris Manton
 - General Secretary David Fiddes
 - Treasurer Phillipa White
 - Membership Secretary Ian Giggs
 - Social Secretary
 - Coach Liaison Kerri French
 - Men's Team Captain Chris Moseley
 - Women's Team Captain Chloe Lloyd

3.1 Chair Report

As I look back on the it is with mixed emotions. I'll start by recognising the loss of established members of the club, in particular Sian James who was a big part of my time at the club, and whilst a sombre moment the vision of green and blue tops piling out of Palmer Park down to the Thames was a site to behold.

That event sums up what makes the club should be all about, a community that supports itself on or off the track.

The highs are seeing the flagship events at Bramley and Shinfield being successful as well as over events like the summer relays and the Palmer Park Track nights which are a great new adaption of the old and a great addition to the Roadrunners calendar. Putting on such events is not an insignificant task needing Race Directors, Committees and various and numerous other volunteering roles to make them happen, thank you to anyone who has volunteered this year, in particular the Race Directors and Race Committees who give of their time over the year.

The club has grown over the course of the year which whilst really good to see is creating challenges around the number of people wanting to use the track on a Wednesday night, as a Committee we recognise that the sheer numbers do create a challenge and we continue to work to find ways to ensure all members get a positive experience. Of course, the Wednesday and Friday evening sessions are led by a number of coaches and LiRFs who give up their runs to coach other, thank you to them also.

The burgeoning number of runners in the club is a very positive thing and it is of course pleasing to see the green and blue vests spread out amongst the wealth of running events which demonstrates the inclusiveness of the club offering something to everyone. It is also great to see members donning alternative colours be that Berkshire or England vests.

The success of the club be that on or off the track is underpinned by the main committee, which unfortunately has been challenged in terms of numbers this year but has rose to the

challenge of administering and managing the club, managing the finances dealing with management of membership over the course of the year, coordinating coaching, despite the lack of a nominated charity at the start of the year was able to identify a charity and coordinate our support to that charity as club and of course lay on social events for the members, this has meant the committee wearing multiple hats, pulling together and working hard to ensure a positive experience for members which involves some complex discussion and decision making aimed at ensuring we act in accordance with the best interests of club, thank you to all the committee members.

Looking forward the club is in a good place, and I am hopeful that what, based on nominations promises to be a strong committee can continue to drive the club on throughout the next year. Already the challenges have started given the impending closure of the track for replacement which will need some planning and coordination to ensure the club can continue to offer coaching sessions and also maintain strong communications whilst for that short period groups may be geographically dispersed throughout Reading. With Shinfield getting closer in the race calendar and the first of the Palmer Park race nights coming and Bramley already taking entries for next year you can see that behind the scenes there is always something going and long may that continue.

3.2 General Secretary Report

Affiliations

The club remains affiliated to Berkshire Athletics, South of England Athletic Association and England Athletics.

London Marathon

The club were allocated 2 London Marathon places through the England Athletics club allocation. Congratulations to Grant Hopkins and James Chandler, who were drawn out of the hat.

The club were allocated and additional 2 places in response to providing marshals. These were won by Vroni Royle and Hrushikesh Padhi. Thanks to Carl Woffington for organising the marshals and marshals' draw.

Committee Meetings

The monthly committee meetings continue to be held virtual via Zoom calls.

Palmer Park Stadium

The club trophy cabinet was restored and re-installed. Thanks to Jim Kiddie and Carl Woffington for their excellent work. I understand that Richard Harrison from GLL was very helpful with the re-installation.

The number of people on the track on a Wednesday has become a concern and inductions and new memberships have been temporarily suspended. The completion of renewals and the closure of the track from mid-April for three months should mean that new members will soon be welcomed, but we may have to repeat the exercise if we exceed 600 members again this year.

Friday attendances are quieter, and we continue to track share with Reading University during term times and Reading Joggers or Wargrave and Twyford Runners on an ad hoc

basis. Three Palmer Park Race Nights are planned for this year. Thanks again to Fergal Donnelly who is working with Reading AC to make this happen. The quieter track suits new member inductions if and when they are re-introduced.

Having been general secretary for three years I have decided to step down and let someone else have a go. Thanks to committee members past and present who have helped me make it an interesting and enjoyable experience.

3.3 Treasurer Report

2024 has been another good year for the club's finances, and we closed the year with a small surplus of £3K adding to the reserves, so we continue to be in a secure position to support the on-going running of the club.

We ran two really successful events in 2024, Shinfield and Bramley which were a real testament to the hard work of the committees and all the volunteers that helped out. Both events faced the challenge of significant unavoidable cost increases such as charges for the road closures but despite that we still managed to generate a small profit for them which I think is a great result, and everyone in the club should be proud that we run these events.

Most other costs are largely in line with previous years- small increases in the annual renewals for our insurance and accountancy, IT costs. Additionally, we did make a few investments in the year of around £2K, buying new equipment and facilitating our CIRF and LIRF team to go on training courses.

Looking to the current financial year we're in; we obviously have the track closure imminent. We're currently unaware of what that means for the track charges to the club once we return in the Summer. I think we have to expect an increase but hopefully it won't be too significant. Given the position of the clubs finance I don't think there's any cause of concern at all, but it's something we may need to factor in when reviewing membership fees for 2026.

3.4 Membership Secretary Report

At the end of February 2025, we had 623 members which is an increase of 32 from January.

This consists of,

- 471 1st claim including EA affiliation
- 81 1st claim without EA affiliation
- 30 2nd claim members
- 17 Social members
- 20 Life members
- 4 Junior members

Due the increase in membership and the upcoming track closure, we have decided to cap membership and are not presently accepting new members. The committee will review this position once the track re-opens after re-surfacing.

In the past 12 months we had 148 brand new members, which is a decrease from last year.

Male 365/623 (59%)

Female 258/623 (41%)

Our youngest member is 16 and we have two members over the age of 90. The average age is 46 which is down from 48 at the end of March last year.

Sadly, we lost two members in the past 12 months. Firstly, was Sian James who died suddenly last August. Then in November we lost former chairman, David Miller.

3.5 Social Secretary Report

There was no social secretary on the committee this year. Thanks to ex-officio Liz Jones for taking on responsibility for organising the Annual Awards Event for 29th March. She has also organised a few social events in her capacity as interim charity organiser.

3.6 Coach Liaison Report

The Coach and LiRF Team are the backbone of the club and the rise in Membership numbers is all the proof you need. People no longer come try us out and never come back. When they see the quality of what we offer, it is quite the opposite.

During the year we have continued to offer a good variety of fun, inclusive and challenging sessions and cover each other whilst on holiday.

I can't thank them all enough for their dedication to the club and their athletes. It was nice to be able to recognise their contribution by offering a waived club fee element of their membership and a branded umbrella for those who turn out all year round and in all weathers.

We've had to navigate the sad news when Sian James suddenly passed away. She had a real zest for life and was a fantastic supporter of her fellow Coaches and club members. She continues to be missed by all of us.

Over the year I've worked hard to try to bolster and future-proof the team. I've developed a budget tracker which is approved by the Committee for any spend.

Four LiRFS have trained as Coaches and bar one assessment day will be fully qualified in May. (Debbie Clay, Angela Burley, Pete Jewell and myself).

We also have one new LiRF (Ashley Pinder) who has completed all of his course requirements and has his final assessment scheduled for later this month.

Jamie Smith is also self-funding the Event Performance Qualification

We also have one Coaching Assistant booked for the summer (Hannah Pool) and others interested not yet booked.

I'm not sure in the history of the club (Covid aside) that we've had so much investment and development going on in one year.

Thanks especially to those stepping forward and the Coaches who have mentored them.

I have also been speaking to our Regional Rep at England Athletics for guidance on track congestion and best practice. I have also been trying to make contact with similar-sized clubs. What I've found so far is that clubs either aren't as big as us or don't have as many who come to track nights. *I'm yet to hear back from Serpentine.* I will continue to share my findings with the Coaches and Committee for discussion.

It has been a very rewarding year, and I've really enjoyed being part of such a dedicated team of people.

3.7 Men's Team Captain Report

I've enjoyed my (nearly) year as men's team captain. It's been busy, and we haven't got everything right, but I feel it's been a successful year for the men's team.

Alex Harris, Pete Jewell and Dave Parton finished 4th in the **British Masters Road Relays** in Leicestershire.

It was a struggle to fill the teams for the **Ridgeway Relay**. But we achieved some good results. The 'Mostly Men' team finished 3 minutes quicker than the previous year but one position lower, in 3rd place. The vet's team only went off course a couple of times and won their category by nearly 30 minutes. And the Mostly Ladies team finished 2nd.

We didn't have much interest in the **Runnymede Relays**, whether that was due to their change in format, our failure to promote it, or something else. We'll try to push this event more this year as it's been popular in the past.

In the **Southern 6 Stage Road Relays** in Aldershot, the senior men's team finished in a commendable 59th place out of 103 in a highly competitive race. The V50 'A' team narrowly missed out on the podium, finishing in 4th place. We also had a V50 'B' team and a V60 team, finishing in 10th and 8th places in their respective categories.

We also had team success on the road at **Abingdon Marathon** in October [Callum Evans, Matt Sarjent, Robbie Patterson, Dimi Gospodinov] and at the recent **Bramley 20-mile** race [Rob Corney, Brendan Morris, Alex Harris].

In the cross country, we had an indifferent season in the **Hampshire XC League**, with some low turnouts hampering our main men's team score. But that changed at the final race at Prospect Park with the team at near full strength, finishing in a brilliant 4th place. This was enough to move us up to 8th place in the final Division 1 table and avoid relegation by the narrowest of margins! Pete Jewell retained his M60 title and the vet's team secured an impressive 2nd place.

It was a different story in the **TVXC League**. The men's team had been strong all season, completely dominated our home race at Ashenbury, and went into the final race in joint 1st place. Sadly, despite our best efforts, we had to settle for 2nd place behind Datchet. But it was still a great season: having the 1st place finisher in all 7 races, and 10 of our men finishing in the top 5 at some point in the season.

We also took part in the recent **National Cross-Country Championships** at a very muddy Parliament Hill, and the team finished 39th there.

There has also been lots of individual success...

Steve Ridley ran London Marathon in 2:29:49, Dan Moore set a new PB of 2:34 at Paris Marathon and Callum Evans keeps getting PBs, including 2:38 at Abingdon Marathon.

Rob Corney won lots of races, with perhaps the most impressive being the Helvellyn Sky Ultra (57k) in July in a new course record, and the Langdale Marathon in October, known as the toughest road marathon in the UK. He also set a new club record when winning our Bramley 20 mile race a few weeks ago.

Other men to set club records last year were:

- Lance Nortcliff (M50: 5k and 10k)
- Pete Jewell (M60: 5k – 3 times!)
- Nigel Hoult (M70: parkrun, 5k, 5 miles, and 10k)
- Eddie Thorpe (M80: 5k)

The rebranded **Palmer Park Race Nights** have been a great success with lots of PBs achieved at distances of 5,000m, 3,000m and 1 mile. Thanks to Fergal Donnelly and team for putting these on.

The **club championship** had good turnouts at some races: Wokingham Half, Maidenhead 10 Mile, Marlow 5 Mile. But not all races were so popular, especially at the marathon distance. The marathon part of the club champs has now been removed and hopefully we've picked a good selection of races for 2025 that appeal to members of all abilities.

In the **Berkshire Road Running Championship** there were gold medals for individual race wins for 9 of our men [Lance Nortcliff, David Dibben, David Caswell, Pete Jewell, Eddie Thorpe, Eoin McLeod, Alan Freer, Nigel Hoult and Alex Harris] and overall series wins for Alex Harris (M50) and David Dibben (M70).

James Lyne finished 7th at the **Berkshire Cross Country Championships**, qualifying to run for Berkshire in the Inter Counties XC Championships in Nottingham.

David Dibben represented England at the Masters International 10k in Birmingham. Sadly, Eddie Thorpe wasn't able to run due to injury. Ben Paviour represented England in the British and Irish Masters XC international in Belfast.

It was also a privilege to see **Pete Jewell** pick up the award for Veteran of the Year at the Reading Sports Awards. A great guy and an inspiration to many.

In sadder news, 2 recent stalwarts of the men's team have had to take a step back from running due to ill health. We wish them well with their treatment/recovery.

So, in summary, it's been an excellent year for the men with some top individual and team performances. The club is in a strong position, and I look forward to seeing some even better results in the various races in the coming year!

Finally, thanks to everyone who took part in the races and supported me during the year.

3.8 Women's Team Captain Report

Good evening.

It's hard to believe, but here we are once more, a whole year since our last AGM.

To prepare for my speech tonight, I've taken a moment to reflect on all that we've accomplished as a club in the past year. Thankfully, the newsletter has been a great resource for this. It's amazing to see how our club is represented (and recognised) not just in the UK, but globally - last weekend, we had athletes in Lisbon, Athens and Cyprus! A huge shoutout to David Dibben and David Clay for compiling this information every month.

Some notable highlights from the past 12 months include:

- A team win for the women at Maidenhead 10 in April
- Another team win for the women at Marlow 5 in May
- The Ridgeway Relay. The men placed third, the women took second and the vets finished first
- At the SEAA Road Relays, the vets V50 team walked away with silver
- In the Thames Valley XC series, after eight races, the women finished third out of fifteen teams, behind Datchet and Maidenhead
- Just over three weeks ago, the women celebrated another team victory at the Bramley 10-mile event
- Two of our athletes, James Lyne and Kat Charles, represented Berkshire in the Inter-Counties Cross Country this month
- And while the women didn't secure a win at Wokingham 2 weeks ago, they finished fourth and had a strong presence in the Berkshire Road Club Championship league table.
- And of course, we welcomed back Sarah Gee, who is not only breaking long-standing club records, but has - in David Dibben's words - snaffled two British Masters titles, four Reading Roadrunners club records, the Hampshire League XC gong and two England Masters vests.

I couldn't be prouder of this club. I could easily go through all the results and share something about each member, but that would take all night, and public speaking isn't really my thing!

This year, I wrap my speech up with - "thank you for having me". I've been part of Reading Roadrunners for nearly nine years and Ladies Captain for the past two, but as of this evening, I will be stepping down from this role. Being Ladies Captain has been incredibly rewarding for me. Although I don't see myself as a natural leader, this experience has significantly boosted my confidence in what I can only describe as a warm and friendly environment. I'm excited to pass the baton to the next captain and would love to support them in any way possible. A special thanks to Chris; I truly hope you continue in the role of men's captain for many more years, as you have embraced it so effortlessly.

4. Election of the 2024-25 Committee

Returning Officer XXX announced the results as follows:

Position	Candidate	Votes for
Chair	Chris Manton	37
General Secretary	Mike Worsfold	36
Treasurer	Phillipa White	37
Membership Secretary	Liz Johnson	37
Coaching Liaison	Kerri French	31
Social Secretary	Sam Whalley	37
Ex officio	David Walkley	37
Ex officio	Colin Cottell	33

ballots cast 37

All eight candidates were elected in their declared posts.

5. Election of Team Captains

Chris and Claire were elected unanimously.

6. Club Charity Report for 2024/25 – Royal Berks Hospital

There were no club charity proposals at last year's AGM. The committee decided that rather than roll the money forward that Royal Berkshire Hospital should be the default charity in the event of no nominations or selection. With no official charity coordinator club charity responsibilities would be "light touch" and would fall on one of the committee members. Thanks to Liz Johnson for taken on this responsibility, and for doing much more than the minimum required of her, including organising a raffle for the awards night and an Abba Night. The amount collected on behalf of Royal Berks Hospital will be announced at the Awards Night.

7. Election of Charity to support through 2025-26

Angelique Haswell nominated "SAFE" Saving Abandoned Fly-Grazing Equines (registered charity number 1172769) who are based locally in Arborfield for this year's club charity. She started as a volunteer with them at the back end of last year. The charity is run totally by volunteers who also help with the fund raising as well as care for the horses.

Their mission is to - support and advise landowners, to legally rescue, rehabilitate and re-home abandoned and neglected horses in the Berkshire & Surrey area.

The charity incurs significant costs for veterinary fees, professional rehabilitation for the very poor ones, feed, hay and bedding, and other essential needs, which is where Roadrunners can really make a difference this year.

Some of the horses are lucky enough to be rehomed, while others remain with the charity permanently.

After a presentation by Angelique and the charity founder and trustee Alison a vote was taken, and the charity was confirmed as the club charity for 2025/26.

8. Sid Gibbs Award

The Sid Gibbs Award is an award recognising club volunteers. It is awarded in the memory of founder member Sid Gibbs who sadly died last year. The following club members were nominated for the award:

A secret vote was held. The winner was not announced at the meeting as it was going to be an award for the Awards Night.

Nominees were:

- Peter Higgs
- Jamie Smith
- Shirley Smith

9. Registered Other Business related to 2023-24

9.1 Fee changes

New membership fees:

- Joining fee = £20 (including club top) (previously £2)
- Senior annual subscription fee = £36 (unchanged)
- Junior/student annual subscription fee = £31 (unchanged)
- EA affiliation fee = £20 (previously £19)
- Social membership fee = £15

As per rule 4.3 of the club rules the change to the joining fee requires agreement at the AGM. This was agreed.

10. Closure

Chris closed the meeting.

David Fiddes
General Secretary
March 2025