

HAYWARDS HEATH HARRIERS 55th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held remotely by Zoom due to COVID-19 pandemic
On Thursday 25th March 2021 at 7.30pm

MINUTES

Apologies for absence: Julie Essex and Mike Essex

Attendees: Amy Lovejoy, Andy Carter, Andy Hind, Arun Khursheed, Barry Tullett, Ben Gibson, Bethany Hilton, Carl Bicknell, Caroline Mackey-Khursheed, Carys Hind, Chris Faulkner, Claire Kenward, Dave Harper, Emma Singer, Eric Hepburn, Finn Blythe, Gemma Morgan, Graham Kenward, Greg Hilton, Ian Dumbrell, Ian Tomkins, Ivan Catterwell, Jac Barnes, James Collins, James Moffat, Jamie Topping, Jasmine Mamoany, Jason Robinson, John Morgan, John Rix, Karen Thompson, Kath Buckeridge (minutes), Linda Tullett, Lindsey Blain, Liz Earley, Lydia Levy, Mags Lazell, Marion Hemsworth (chair), Mark Sykes, Matt Howells, Matt King, Michael Burke, Michael Parish, Michael Scholes, Michelle Baillie, Mike Derrick, Nick Fellows, Nicolas Skov, Noah Blythe, Oliver Cooper, Olivia Treharne, Paul Cousins, Pete Francis, Peter Harding, Richard Bates, Rob Watts, Rupert Purchase, Samantha Ridley, Sarah Hamilton, Sarah King, Shelagh Robinson, Siobhan Amer, Tim Hicks, Mike Bale, Martin Delbridge, Jonathon Parkin.

Andy Hind welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through housekeeping and format for the meeting. A slide show presentation was given throughout the meeting to illustrate the content.

- 1. The Minutes of the 54th AGM** were agreed to be a true record proposed by Mark Sykes and seconded by Ian Dumbrell and were signed by the Chairperson.
- 2. Matters arising:**
Kath Buckeridge spoke about the England Athletics Consultation that is currently taking place with regards to the formal membership of UK Athletics following an external review (The Street report). Members have been sent the details of this in an email. The club have been asked to complete a consultation survey by 5th April 2021 on this matter. Kath asked for any opinions on which option we should vote for to be sent to her for consideration by the committee prior to the survey deadline date.
- 3. Officer reports:** Head Coach, Treasurer, Chair, President
These reports had been put on the website for members to look at prior to the meeting.

3.1 President's Report by Mark Sykes

The year got off to its usual start: Cross-Country Championships, Final X/C league matches, last rounds of the Sports-Hall League meetings, the early winter season road races and Half Marathons. All was suitably progressing towards a vibrant summer of racing as we met for our AGM on the 6th March last year. Well just a little echo of some new virus in China and Italy.

What little did we know. Grounded, confined to barracks...call it what you will...progressively between 16th and 23rd March we were locked down. Exercise – yes, but not much contact and certainly no more racing/team events. We learned about Zoom. After a month or so of this lonely diet, one of our newer members, Chris Faulkner, gave us a prod about considering some kind of “virtual handicap race”. And so, after some thought we launched a virtual race series for members using (mostly) – predefined routes using GPS and Strava’s segment leader functionality. The ideas we had, grew and grew; with results cut from every angle – speed, age bands, Age grading...against target...You could only win the latter once.

As time progressed, we introduced some team-based competition – firstly a 6 leg version of the SDWR and then one based around our summer Blackcap handicap run. We repeated a version of the latter in December when we honoured Chris Smith by joining with over 170 runners from ourselves, BHR, Lewes and Phoenix. Our expertise had filtered North and in August we ran a challenge against Bridlington road runners: 5k, 1mile and a lot of book-cooking led to an honourable tied result. Our Juniors wanted in on the activity, so we ran a couple of summer holiday events for them too.

It’s quite a busy programme when you look back at it

<u>VR #</u>	<u>Window</u>	<u>Activity</u>
	5 May	Quiznight
1	8-10 May	5k
2	22-25 May	10k
3	5-7 June	5k
4	20/21 June	6 Leg SDWR
5	3-5 July	Blackcap 5m + Team event
	20-26 July	Junior 2k
6	24-26 July	5k & Bridlington RR Challenge
7	7-9 Aug	10k
	21-31 Aug	Junior AG Challenge
8	23-29 Nov	5k
	24 Nov	Quiznight 2
9	5-13 Dec	Blackcap 5m Chris Smith team Challenge (with BHR, Lewes, Phoenix)
10	1-10 Jan	Lindfield 5m (incl EA RR)
11	18-21 Feb	10k
12	25-28 Mar	10m
13	22-25 Apr	HM

“Just racing” was only part of the story. We also wanted to keep a certain “club spirit” going at the same time and communication/Social Media was integral to that: Strava Kudos and Comments, Beetroot Chat on Whatsapp and regular and “interesting” reporting on the Website News. Rather than rather staid AW style reporting we tried to keep a current of humour running with a variety of “guest” journalists giving commentary. Many thanks to hacks young & old, sober or sotted, identified or mysterious who wrote with wit and diligence.

Also, Many Thanks to the following members who contributed in various ways to the whole “non-conventional” programme in 2020 with route planning, route piloting, writing up instructions and safety reviews, managing entries and teams, processing results, making commentary: Marion, Martin, Andy Hind, Ben & Hannah Gibson, Ian Dumbrell, Chris Faulkner, Rob Watts, John Rix, Linda Tullett.

I haven't mentioned our coaches, group leaders and their tremendous response to working with members in these “interesting” times, only because others have said more about that already. 2020 will go down as one of our more unusual years. However, with the spirit and creativity that exists inside the club it's clear that it is in good hands.

3. 2 Chair's Report by Marion Hemsworth

- A year ago, March 2020 we held our AGM and Awards evening at St Francis Social Club as usual. Elbow bumps were a novelty, but otherwise we had no idea what was to come and what a strange year it would be
- So, let's look forward to the rest of 2021 and beyond. I believe the past year has shown us what amazing members we have, and how special the club is to all of us. I am hopeful that, not only will we be able to resume training and start organising and participating in our usual events soon, but there will also be new ventures happening as well. Everyone can't wait to get together and celebrate socially too
- Thank you to all those who have kept us amused and busy in 2020. Such a range of Virtual Races which Mark talks about in his report – but probably won't mention his own part in this. A huge amount of work went into these races. Many members also took part in the quizzes we held in 2020. Again, a great effort from Josh Franks, Rob Watts, Mags Lazelle, Andy Hind and Ben Gibson. Thank you.
- Head Coach Mike Bale has led from the front in keeping us all training with excellent leadership from Martin on the endurance side, and Linda with the juniors, plus the rest of the run leaders and coaches. It has not been at all easy observing government and England Athletics guidelines, while wanting to keep fit and active in the way we are used to. We are very grateful to all those who have helped. Mike has detailed this in his report
- Sadly, in the latter part of 2020, we lost two key members, our sprints coach, Bob Ruff, and international mountain runner, Chris Smith. We miss them both but will treasure the contribution they made to the club for many years to come
- Thanks to Rob Watts and Andy Hind, 2021 will see a reappearance of an old favourite, when our much-loved newsletter, 'The Highwayman', returns in a new format. Watch this space for further news. Meanwhile, catch up on old editions on the website. Thank you to John Rix for all the painstaking scanning and uploading
- During 2020, committee meetings were held on Zoom and I would like to thank all the members for staying positive and for their hard work Andy Hind has moved our communications a long way forward with a smarter website and social media presence. Mike Parish has kept an eye out for any members who have been struggling during the pandemic, with his kind words and positivity

- The Track Project is still alive but 2020 has seen little progress. The good news is that all parties are still on board, so we hope for greater action in 2021
- Lastly, the Awards. This year we decided it wouldn't make sense to award our traditional prizes, as competition was almost non-existent. So, instead, we will highlight and reward those who have helped to keep the Beetroot flag flying in 2020. See you on the 25th to find out who did what!

3.3 Treasurer's Report for Financial Year 2020 by John Rix

Thank you Madam Chair and good evening to all Harriers.

You will no doubt have already been to the website and studied both the Accounts and my Report so I will just give a brief overview of cash and membership trends.

But first, some key points as we trod water in 2020:

- When the committee met to set fees in April last year lockdown was in place and any short-term expenditure – hiring of venues, etc – was unlikely. So, it was decided to collect no fees until there was a clearer picture of how things would pan out
- In September the decision was made to set fees such that we would hopefully remain cash-neutral for the year. This calculation set fees at half rate
- All our Events were cancelled with a great loss income
- But there was some investment in coaching – LiRF courses

Here are the last five years' worth of accounts (shown on slide)– yes, the print is a tad on the small side but those who are really interested will have gone to the website.

Here in larger print are the bottom-lines for the last nine years' worth of Accounts.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Events	1,583	1,866	1,634	2,215	2,704	3,381	4,590	6,868	-394
Operating: Surplus (+) / Loss (-)	-1,560	-2,556	-5	-3,197	-1,273	-4,946	3,055	2,504	598
Overall: Surplus (+) / Loss (-)	23	-690	1,629	-983	1,432	-1,564	7,645	9,372	204
Cash @ Year End	20,235	19,544	21,173	20,191	21,622	20,058	27,704	37,076	37,280

- Second row of figures shows to what extent Fees cover our everyday expenses – not the case for the first six years
- Our Events hopefully make up for any shortfall such that we increase our cash balance every year – again, not the case for the first six years
- In 2018 the committee embarked upon a plan to increase our cash reserves so that if the *Track Project* were to come to fruition, we would have something to contribute. As a result, all fees were raised substantially, with a further rise for Juniors in 2019
- Two further Events were added: Wakehurst Willow in 2017 (NB: 2016 proceeds were all for charity) and Redwood Run in 2019
- So over 2018 and 2019 some £17k was added to our reserves through increased fees and our new sell-out events ...

- ... Back to 2020 and you will see that the half-rate fees meant we did in fact hold our cash reserves unchanged during 2020 as planned.

Here you see the membership figures for the last three years

	31/12/18			31/12/19			31/12/20		
	F	M	Tot	F	M	Tot	F	M	Tot
Junior	58	85	143	45	76	121	31	61	92
Senior	43	70	113	35	70	105	35	69	104
Associate	5	12	17	10	18	28	10	14	24
O60	6	11	17	6	11	17	4	11	15
	112	178	290	96	175	271	80	155	235

Membership has fallen, mainly among Juniors.

I have put this slide in to show what goes on behind the scenes. You will see that 16 different invoice types have to be defined to cover all combinations of: Mem Cat; EA fee; Vest. So do have sympathy for Tim if you aren't sent the correct one next month

Invoice Description	Female	Male	Total
Associate - half rate (no EA fee)	1		1
Associate (including club vest but no EA fee)	1		1
Associate (no EA fee)	4	10	14
Coach (including EA fee)	4	4	8
Junior/Student - half rate (including club vest but no EA fee)	1	1	2
Junior/Student (including club vest but no EA fee)		4	4
Junior/Student (including club vest and EA fee)		1	1
Junior/Student (including EA fee)	29	49	78
Junior/Student (no EA fee)	1	6	7
Over 60 - half rate (including EA fee)		1	1
Over 60 (including EA fee)	3	10	13
Over 60 (no EA fee)	1		1
Senior - half rate (including club vest and EA fee)	4	2	6
Senior (including club vest and EA fee)		3	3
Senior (including EA fee)	30	64	94
Senior (no EA fee)	1		1
Total	80	155	235

Finally, the age distribution of our membership

Female	Count	Male	Count	Total	%
9-14	23	9-14	47	70	29.8
15-19	6	15-19	16	22	9.4
20-24	2	20-24	0	2	0.9
25-29	1	25-29	3	4	1.7
30-34	7	30-34	7	14	6.0
35-39	5	35-39	10	15	6.4
40-44	7	40-44	22	29	12.3
45-49	9	45-49	11	20	8.5
50-54	7	50-54	12	19	8.1
55-59	6	55-59	9	15	6.4
60-64	1	60-64	6	7	3.0
65-69	1	65-69	4	5	2.1
70-74	4	70-74	2	6	2.6
75-79	0	75-79	4	4	1.7
80-84	1	80-84	1	2	0.9
85-89	0	85-89	0	0	0.0
90-94	0	90-94	1	1	0.4
95-99	0	95-99	0	0	0.0
	80		155	235	100

Perhaps one thing to draw out is how few members we have in their twenties – just 6! That's it! All these tables are on the website so if you come up with any questions later do contact me and I'll do my best to answer. Thank you.

Marion Hemsworth stated that Accounts were not checked this year as there was no need for this but that last year they had been checked by Pete Francis and they will be checked next year

Rupert Purchase asked whether the membership fees putting off young families from joining the club and how can we make the club more attractive for family members for younger members joining the club. Linda Tullett advised that main drop off for the juniors is not fees, there are still juniors waiting to join the club and she did not feel the fees were an issue.

The accounts were proposed by Andy Hind and seconded by Jac Barnes. John was thanked for his work last year.

3.4 Coach's Report by Mike Bale

Looking back at 2020

As others will have mentioned 2020 was a singularly different year to any other:

- Jan – late March: Training at Warden Park as normal (remember normal?)
- late March – late June: Lockdown 1

- late June – October: Training at Whitemans Green under Covid guidelines
- November: Tier 4 Lockdown
- Most of December: Training around Haywards Heath or the Triangle under Covid guidelines
- Late December to date: Lockdown 2

So just 8 months of club training, albeit mostly under Covid restrictions. Hopefully many of you found ways to stay fit, and healthy, during the lockdowns.

Forward to 2021

Return to Training

The coaches, with committee agreement, have decided there is little point in returning to the Triangle or Warden Park for just 2-3 weeks before we would return to Whitemans Green anyway.

Instead, we would prefer to return to WG as quickly as possible after March 29th. Currently we are in discussion with MSDC to establish when we can return. As I write we do not currently have a date but would presume Tuesday 20th April would be latest.

Initially we will again be following a guideline of “bubbles of 6”, certainly in the absence of any updated guidelines from England Athletics, etc. But we will open training up to a normal regime with no limits of group sizes as and when we can.

Covid-19 Procedures

When we do start up can I ask everyone please to remind themselves of the Covid procedures we have written and to follow them. No turning up to training if displaying Covid type symptoms, maintaining distance, use the hand sanitiser available, etc.

General Safety

Please make yourself also familiar with the general safety measures in place, particularly as regards the safety area around the throws sector. This is currently in discussion but hopefully will be decided in time for the AGM (and thus shown in the presentation pack), but if not, it will be in place in time for our return to WG and will be displayed on a notice board.

Coaches and Running Leaders

Over the last 18 months or more we have become blessed with a substantial number of running leaders (LiRF's). This has been of massive benefit to the Endurance Squad during those periods when we could only train in “bubbles of 6”. And they will continue to be a benefit as coaches send groups off on training runs away from WG or WP in the future.

In addition, all the coaches came to the fore to support “bubble of 6” training for the Juniors. This meant that every Junior who wanted could come and train during the periods when we were not in lockdown.

Without the commitment of all our coaches and running leaders we would not have been able to support all the training that happened last summer, and I want to personally thank them all for their hard work.

Of particular note has to be the hard work and commitment put in by our lead coaches Linda Tullett and Martin Delbridge, who have not only designed and organised the training regimes during those training periods but also provided their athletes with weekly training programmes, etc. to encourage them to keep training and to continue to feel part of the great team that HHH is. I hope everyone has maintained their training and stayed both physically and mentally healthy over this difficult year. Let's hope we will now begin to see the end of it and life will return to normal over the coming months.

Sadly, this year we lost Bob Ruff, one of our coaching stalwarts who had turned out week after week to provide sprints coaching for nigh on 30 years. He will be sorely missed, and we are fortunate indeed to have Lucie Venables to take this responsibility on, with Becky Healy currently working her way through the coaching course to join her.

Lastly, I want to touch on the need for further coaches. We have all too few coaches in the club, just 7 for 235 members, when the recommend ratio of 1:12 would suggest we have 20. And most of those are past retirement age and have been coaching for 20 years or more. We desperately need some younger blood if we are to continue providing our services. This affects both endurance and track & field.

Some of our coaches would like to take 'a step back' but are continuing only because they know there is no replacement. For some time (20 years?) we have not had a middle-distance coach and we only have one jumps and one throws coach in the club. If we are to continue to support the Juniors, give middle distance runners the specific training they require and prepare seniors better for all the leagues, we need more coaches.

So, can I ask members to think about the possibility of becoming a coach, even if it does not reflect the event group they themselves compete in. Coaches can be parents as well as athletes, and the existing coaches will be only too keen to mentor and provide support and guidance.

You would not necessarily have to coach every week, so it can be mixed in with your own training. If you have any questions, please come and talk to myself or one of the lead coaches. We will be happy to assist and will appreciate your help. Happy training

5. To elect Honorary Officers:

President – Mark Sykes took the chair. A slide was shown of the members who had put themselves forward for election. The committee were unanimous in wanting Mark Sykes to stay on as President which he has agreed to do. Andy Hind and Marion Hemsworth are putting themselves forward as co-chairs so that Andy can 'experience the role' over the coming 12 months. They will work closely together. Jasmine Mamoany has put herself forward to join the committee again, she was previously a junior member.

- a) Co-Chairs – Marion Hemsworth and Andy Hind
- b) Treasurer – John Rix
- c) Secretary – Katherine Buckeridge
- d) Fixture Secretary- Carl Bicknell
- e) Membership Secretary- Tim Hicks
- f) Head Coach – Mike Bale
- g) General Committee Members – Ben Gibson, Linda Tullett, Rob Watts and Jasmine Mamoany

Mark Sykes read out nominations for the above positions. There were no objections and so all were duly elected by a show of hands on Zoom. The meeting was handed back to new chairs of the club

6. Any Other Business

Paul Cousins said there was a gap in the 20-year-olds membership category which Siobhan Amer agreed with. Lydia Levy commented that there aren't that many people actually living in Haywards Heath of that age. Perhaps Parkrun would be a way to target the younger population once this restarts. Andy Hind has been discussing this and how to promote the club across a wider base. Perhaps after the pandemic there may be more people interested in taking up running.

Chris Faulkner commented that there are a lot of people running at the moment so how can we attract more people, Andy Hind suggested collating ideas and talking to individuals and linking with them on Strava. Banners could be used to advertise the club and places for these were suggested. The club has an Instagram account but this has been quiet recently as there is not so much activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. Awards – The meeting closed at 8.22pm and Awards followed the AGM