**Co-Chair’s Report 2021 / 2022**

**Welcome to another AGM and Awards Evening - Beetroot style!**

It has taken a while but we are slowly returning to normal. This means most club activities are back and we are looking forward to moving on with no more lockdowns, group restrictions, sickness and cancellations. Here we go, Beetroot Army! Fingers crossed!

This time last year we were still organising virtual races for the endurance group and the juniors were at home following training plans devised by Linda. Summer training started at Whitemans Green in groups of six but avoiding the pavilion. It was great, though, to have athletics back on the track.

In September, we were able to return to Winter training indoors at Warden Park Academy, though some were still reluctant to mix inside. Gradually, more members came back and new members, both junior and senior joined the club. One long term effect of Covid, is that increasingly endurance runners choose venues other than Cuckfield. Junior training times at the school have also changed.

The cross-country league, relays and championship events took place over the Autumn and Winter. We were approached about hosting a league event at Ardingly Showground in December. This went ahead and was very successful, all credit to the organising team of Linda and Barry Tullett, Tim Hicks, Andy Carter and John Rix.

There have been many individual achievements and an impressive number of club records both set and broken in the last twelve months. More on this at the Awards ceremony when we hope to celebrate some fantastic results. In contrast, our club competitive edge in team events has been slightly dulled. This is despite the best efforts of the whippers in. Something to ponder.

We are lucky that so many members contribute to the smooth running of the club by taking on roles, some more onerous than others, BUT they all make a difference. Currently, we need an Equipment Officer (to replace Andy Carter) but more generally we rely on people doing what they can. A ‘little and often’ approach really does make a difference – you don’t need to join the management team to be involved (but you are very welcome to do so if you so wish).

As co-chairs, we want to actively encourage members to engage on club matters and to bring your ideas and experience forward. To help this, we will be publicising committee meeting dates so that members have an opportunity to participate on issues that are important to them and, more

importantly, encouraging direct engagement on these matters. Much like our ongoing drive to bring more coaches into the club, we would really encourage you to get involved in your club.

A great deal of work has been done to improve our social media, website and club communications. It is easier these days to get in-touch but the choice of channels is bewildering and trying to suit everyone’s preferred method is challenging. Andy has been leading on this behind the scenes with the new Club Hub, and thanks go out too to Paul Cousins and Mike Parish who write our press reports.

Very sadly, we recently heard that Jenny Denyer had passed away. This was a great shock to many as only last year Jenny was competing. She took part in almost all track and field events, loved cross country and road racing too. Her huge contribution to the club over many years was remarkable. A longer tribute to Jenny will appear soon.

At the end of 2021, Ian Cooper, a club endurance coach and long standing member, passed away. We remember Ian for the many club records he set, his excellent coaching and his sense of humour!

**So, moving forward…**

We have a ‘Get into Coaching’ initiative in train at the moment. The aim is to attract more coaches into the club, particularly in the junior and track and field groups. Look at Andy’s amazing stuff here:

https://www.haywardsheathharriers.co.uk/getintocoaching.html

An easy way to support this is simply by spreading the word to friends and contacts. Coaches really do come from all walks of life and, with your help, we can ensure the club

continues to provide high quality, safe, structured and fun training to everyone in our community. Speaking of which, congratulations to Ian Dumbrell who recently joined our ranks as a fully qualified EA Endurance Coach!

Our Track Project has been on ice. Both of the schools involved, Burgess Hill Girls and Burgess Hill Academy, have new head teachers so there has been difficulty in getting any clarity on their views on this. This will be discussed further at the AGM.

We look forward to another outing of the Wakehurst Willow and Walstead Five later in this year. The WSFRL races are back and the Sussex Grand Prix has returned too.

In mid-April we move back to Whitemans Green when it will be so good to be together in person doing what we all love best: running, jumping, throwing and generally having fun!

**Andy Hind and Marion Hemsworth**

Co-Chairs HHH