

# Almost Athletes AGM

## April 30<sup>th</sup> 2025

There were 68 members present.

Apologies were received from Paul Jones, Simon Lewis, Claire Hawes, Jeanette Guillick, Chris Benjamin, Ian Poole and Mark Bush.

Minutes of 2024 AGM were agreed by members, proposed by Lorraine Taylor and seconded by James Clay.

### **Chairman's report and annual review**

Our club has now been running for 36 years and it was another successful year for this wonderful club. We have had a very good year with increasing membership which currently stands at a huge 422 as we have seen a continual stream of new members joining after losing some members who didn't renew last year. Whilst about 3/4 of our members are between the ages 40 and 70 we are still attracting younger members.

We have continued our journey this year to becoming a more sustainability club and the lift sharing with others on club activities means we are reducing the clubs carbon emissions from travelling to club runs, events and races and doing our bit to do the right thing our planet. Our race director adopted a number of more sustainable measures for the recent Linda Franks race and the committee has also last week adopted a Sustainability Policy which can be found on our website. I would like to thank all of you, but with a particularly mention to Katie Coleman, Duncan Mounsor and Hamish Adamson who are all passionate about this and have supported me.

Shortly after the last AGM I had the pleasure of presenting the donations to our agreed charities at that meeting.

Firstly, Zakia and I presented a £750 cheque to the charity Scoo-B-Doo at the Neo Natal unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. We also received a tour of the unit which was very moving as we saw a very small baby in an incubator. And as Zakia works at the Hospitals and I'm a governor of the Hospitals our visit was included in the Hospitals CEO weekly email to all hospital staff.

Secondly Zakia and I paid another visit to Gloucester to the Smiles cafe where Hash Norat's charity Feed The Hungry provides meals and a safe place for those in need. We presented a £750 cheque to Hash.

It's been great to have given out 24 runner of the month awards this year as we continue to recognise the achievements of our runners on an ongoing basis. As usual it's often been quite difficult for the committee to decide who the winners are each month as so many of you are doing such phenomenal things with your running which is truly inspirational to me and other members of the club. And this evening will culminate in the runner of the year awards later, for which you have been voting online. We had 89 people voting this year, which was more than last year and it was really close for the males. And wasn't it difficult choosing who to vote for? More on this later.

The many achievements of our members have also kept our race report writers busy as they call out these achievements on a weekly basis and get you in the echo. I would really like to thank the wonderful team of regular race report writers of Claire Hawes, Alison Hume, Dave Nelson, Josh Hand, Nicole Hope, Natalie Wizard and Clemens Orth. I know we all really enjoy reading their fabulous race reports.

The Cross country season was very well supported last year by our members and a massive thank you to David Garnett for stepping in as overall caption with Dave McGrath and Patricia Dendy leading the male and female teams. Last year at the AGM I said the race in Pittville was a complete mudfest. Well it was

considerably worse this year and anyone not wearing spikes was literally all over the place. Unfortunately, I was ill so couldn't take part but on seeing what the conditions were like I wasn't so disappointed any more. Over the season Patricia Dendy won her age category and Sue Pearce, Neil Tring and Victoria Willoughby came 3rd overall in their age category. Well done guys! Cross country is fabulous fun....if you haven't tried it give it a go next season.

Our 3 races the Bugatti 10k, Linda Franks 5 mile and the Meteor Mile were all a big success again this year and with no extreme temperatures again this time. A huge thank you goes to Phil Jeyes, whose hard work again as race director ensured they were very successful. Although the trend is continuing of him delegating more to me on the day! He keeps saying he's busy which of course he is. This year I again got to start the Meteor Mile and then jumped into the airport truck with one of the timers to beat the runners to the finish - it was still very exciting and I smashed my time from last year with 2 mins 10 seconds! Phil has been Race Director for many years and we are truly grateful for that particularly as he does it so well. I would also like to thank all of our volunteers at all 3 events who help make them happen as you are all amazing too! And as we do every year I received lots of fabulous feedback from runners of other clubs.

Our road and off road race series were very well attended last year with some great competition in some of the age categories. This is continuing this year as we continue to support some lovely local races. Our presence in huge numbers was again hugely appreciated by race directors such as Rowan at Apperley and Mark at Alderton! A big thank you to Paul Jones who organised the 2 series for the first time last year. Great job Paul. Congratulations must go to Olga Goffin and Johnny Rea for being first overall in the Road series and to Patricia Dendy and Jamie Baron for being first overall in the off road series. I really recommend getting involved if you haven't done so in the past. It's great fun competing against others in your age category and there are always lots of familiar faces at the events and you will probably get to run lots of races that you have never done before. Last year I said I was looking forward to Dave McGrath no longer being in my age category this year but then Richard Knightley and Mark Bush started doing the road series and they are just getting quicker with age. Please stop doing that guys! I can't wait now to move up to the MV60 age category next year.

In the Gloucestershire AAA County Road Race Series some of our club members were successful. Allan Green was Men's Vet 70 Road Race Champion. In addition, Patricia Dendy and Claire Hawes were 3rd in their age category.

I thoroughly enjoyed organising the handicap race series again last year where 47 runners took part which as always was closely fought with for the very first time joint 1st place for Lee Chapman and Andrew Lloyd with Mark Bush very close behind. This year's series starts on May 12th and you have all had an email inviting you to enter. Come and talk to me later if you haven't entered yet and want to. It's such a great concept where you are chasing all the runners slower than you and wondering if the faster runners will catch you! It's even more fun watching it as the handicap unwinds each lap. And literally anyone can win a race and the series!

I'd really like to thank all our coaches (James Clay, Michael Grant, Dave McGrath, Fi Barnes and Matt Barnes) who regularly deliver the club sessions each week for you to help you improve your running. And those who have stepped in occasionally to run a session when the coach isn't available. This year I'd particularly like to thank James Clay who recently stepped down from running the Monday track sessions after doing so for an incredible 7 years. I know he did this with mixed emotions and has taken on a coaching that will challenge him in a different environment (not running) and really aligns to his ideals. You will be missed by many of the runners as we saw from the comments on your Facebook post. So, I would like to thank you on behalf of everyone who you coached over the years with a gift from the club. Come up James!

I'd also like to thank our growing population of Lirfs who ensure that we can offer a pace and distance to suit everyone on the social Wednesday club runs. I'd particularly like to thank Dave McGrath for managing those evenings. Also our mental health champions (Kevin Beamish, Sam McGrath and Katie Coleman) who continue to arrange some run and talk sessions where we have had a suitable venue on a Wednesday evening to do that. There is one planned next month.

Finally, I'd like to thank the hard-working committee. Some of what the committee does isn't visible to you but the club continues to be recognised as meeting England Athletics club standards. You may not always agree with our decisions and we might not always get things right first time but we are a group of committed volunteers who are trying to do our best for the club. I'd particularly like to recognise the work of 2 committee members who are standing down this year. Dave McGrath has been one of our welfare officers for at least 4 years. And Amy Broomhall has been our membership secretary for the last 2 years. Both of them will be missed and I would like thank them on behalf of the committee. We do have gifts for you both so please can you come up to receive your gift.

To conclude we have clearly remained a strong, enthusiastic, hugely supportive and inclusive club and we can be proud of that. And we all play a part in that not just the committee! So, thank you to all of you for making this such a great running club!

### **Treasurer's report**

Accounts were emailed out. We made a profit of £2.8 k

Our races have been good. Bugatti made a profit of £700, Linda Franks made a profit of £1193 and the Meteor Mile made a profit of £529.

Subscription fees are being held at £35. Duncan Mounsor proposed and Cheryl Rodham seconded that as a club we should accept these fees.

**Election of the new committee** – Current members to continue are Peter Mitchener, Michelle Balchin, Kevin Beamish, Cheryl Rodham, Penny Lewis, Steve Taylor, Paul Jones and Zakia Hussain. New to join are Mark Bush and Graeme Stopp. Chris Benjamin will support informally.

All were proposed by Charlotte Jamieson and seconded by Steve Axford and accepted by those members present.

### **Charity nominations for next year:**

These are

Read for Good – proposed by Pete Mitchener and Michelle Balchin

British Blind Sport – proposed by Dave McGrath and seconded by Steve Taylor

Archie Matthews Trust – proposed by Dave Nelson and seconded by Kevin Beamish

The acceptance of the three charities were proposed by Dave Garnett and seconded Graeme Stopp and accepted by all.

Big Space Cancer Appeal – proposed by Kate Harker and seconded by Zakia Hussain. We will support this charity via the Linda Franks race.

### **Club Constitution**

This needs to have a small amendment to it as it states that the AGM will be held in May. Tonight, we are in April so Mitch suggested we amend it to say April or May. This was proposed by Dave Garnett and seconded by Kevin Beamish and accepted by all.

### **Any Other Business**

Pat Dendy mentioned about some of the race kit being too hot to run in. She asked if other more appropriate kit could be found. Steve Taylor has been researching this assisted by Johnny Rae. Our current kit provider is Scimitar. Johnny has arranged for fresh samples to be sent. Other tops have previously been sent but were rejected partly due to the fabric and also as the price quote was so high. Johnny is going to try another batch and hopefully the new quote will be about £45. Johnny thinks there is a minimum order quantity of 20 male tops and 20 female tops. The club will need names of people first before an order is put in.

Committee will continue to look into the kit situation and will feed back to members.

The main business of the meeting was then concluded.

We were delighted to welcome our guest speaker Yahya Pandor and his guide Andy.

They shared about their running experiences in training and in races such as the London marathon. Members also had the opportunity to ask questions.

### **Presentations of the club trophies.**

They were presented to the following: -

Female runner of the year – Fiona Barnes

Male Runner of the year – Elliot Jordan

Cross country cup – Patricia Dendy

Doug Waymark trophy - volunteering for club – James Clay

Rich Walklate trophy - commitment to club and own running – Steve Taylor

Dedicated Runner - perseverance – Kate Bestwick

There were no life memberships given this year.

The meeting closed at 8.26pm