

Harpenden Arrows Running Club



AGM

Feb 29th 2020 7pm

Aldwickbury Golf Club

- 7:00 Welcome from Graham Harper – Chair of Committee
- 7:05 Arrows Highlights 2019 and plans for next year – Simon Spiers – Men’s Captain
- 7:10 Financial Report – Chas Andrews – Treasurer
- 7:15 Membership Report – Lyndon Hearn – Membership Secretary
- 7:20 Election of new committee members – Michael Hessey – Club Secretary
- 7:25 Members Questions (pre-submitted only - none received)
- 7:25 Closing remarks from the Chair
- 7:30 Meeting Close and hand over to Stephen McKee – Social Sec

Annual Dinner and Awards Evening

Last orders at the bar 11:30

Carriages at 11:45

Clear by 12:00 midnight

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Chair's Welcome – Graham Harper - Chair

Welcome to the Arrows AGM which marks the end of our 12th year as a club and the end of my third year as Chair. Thank you all for coming along. We have quite a lot to get through so each of us speaking tonight will try to be brief.

We've had another great year this year and the list of people I need to thank for supporting the club in many different ways is very long. Please don't be offended if you aren't mentioned by name.

We hosted our first Midweek League event in 2019 and we got some terrific feedback both from other clubs and our own members. A huge number of people contributed – Simon headed that up and many, many members helped with course setup, marshal points, catering, car parking etc etc.

Louise headed up the team for the Invitational 5k once again and recruited a team of helpers to deliver another great evening. Incidentally, they say what comes around goes around and you may be interested to know that we've now been invited to the Wheathampstead Warriors 5k invitational in July.

The invitational fitted in perfectly in 2019 to be the 'graduation run' for our first ever beginners course which was inspired and led by Jillian's enthusiasm. Sadly Jillian is standing down from the committee this year but has agreed to continue with the Beginners program. The next course starts in April and I know Jillian has already started recruiting people to support the course again. It's something which I think has had a very positive impact on the whole club. Thank you Jillian.

Thank you to all of you who helped with those events and also help in other ways: Making tea, bringing cake, organising Christmas Carols, standing on cold street corners marshalling for our club 5k or spending hours inputting and analysing data for our various awards.

Lets not forget though that when you turn up on a Tuesday or Thursday evening for a regular club night we all need to support each other too.

For some reason, as a club, we don't seem to be able to get people commit to leading runs or other activities very much in advance. We do have a rota of run leaders where you can put your name down to lead a run of a specific length / pace but with a few exceptions (like the ever popular 5k handicap, and track nights) the rota is usually blank and we end up trying to organise who is leading what on the day, or even on the night. It often falls to the same small group of volunteers to make the club sessions work. The committee would welcome suggestions on how we can get our plans organised in advance, as many other clubs manage to do. We do offer run leader training for people who would be prepared to lead runs but last year we had committed budget for training courses that went unspent. Thank you for your continued support for those of you who do lead activities.

I just wanted to mention the Arrows Away marathon which in 2019 was Budapest and in 2020 will be Cologne – and there's still time to enter. There's a bit of a theme developing with Away Weekend with lots of people signing up for marathons, half marathons and particularly Team Relays making the Away Weekend accessible to a wide spread of abilities.

As the club continues to grow and running becomes more and more popular its great to see the Arrows so well represented at lots of local – and not so local – events. Too many to mention but congratulations on all your amazing performances in 2019 and good luck with your running in 2020!

So once again welcome to the AGM and Awards night and I hope you enjoy the evening that Stephen in particular has worked so hard to put together.

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2019 Highlights and the year ahead – Simon Spiers – Men's Captain

Thank you Graham, you've done a great job in talking over everything that has been achieved by the club and it's membership over the past year. In terms of the future, I think the committee has seen little reason to break with a successful formula on many of the events we can do such as the monthly and invitational 5k races, track nights, the away marathon, road and trail club leagues plus the other special one-offs with speakers such as Mara, circuits or the CPR courses.

We're also still proposing to continue with participation in mid-week road race league and will again be hosting a race for Divisions 2&3 on the 20th May given the success of last year's event. Whilst the cost of membership of the league will go up this year in their efforts to subsidise some of the increasing expenses for the hosting clubs; we still think it represents great value for money per race for all participants and we may very well get up to a £200 subsidy for our race too.

We'll also still be members of the Sunday league, we are also hoping to offer to host an event in the 9th year of our participation of the League. Of course, this is contingent on finding a route and obtaining relevant permissions and we're hoping to have this finalised before the Sunday League AGM after the VLM. Any ideas on routes, etc would be welcomed.

Finally, we're even looking at the potential to host our first commercially run race. This is very much an aspiration at the moment, but likely to require some upfront investment and costs to make it viable. There's a lot to think about – alongside more and more races in Harpenden and the local area.

So I would consider the club is still giving back to the membership with 5 Cross country, 5 MWRRL, 1 invitational and up to 10 club 5k but is now also paying back more to the running community in the various events we've been participating in over it's 12 year history.

Finally, before passing over to Chas, I would just like to say a personal note of thanks to Jillian who's been an absolute rock as Ladies Captain with an inspirational smile and enthusiasm. Thank you so much for all your efforts – especially with the Slog and corraling support for the cross country. Really appreciated

With that, I will pass over to Chas

Treasurers Report – Chas Andrews and Alison

Thank you Simon. We now move onto what I'm sure for many of you is the **highlight of your evening** - a detailed and lengthy insight into the Club's finances. You'll therefore be disappointed to hear that my fellow Committee members have culled the 20 minute speech I had prepared to just 5 minutes.

At the beginning of the year, the **Committee approved a budget for 2019** based upon what had happened in the previous year and the collective thoughts for the year ahead. Having done this, we found ourselves expecting the Club to make a **loss of £332**.

Inevitably things changed as the year progressed, and fortunately these were financially positive for the Club. Not only did we incur a lower level of expenditure than normal, but the Club also generated a significant amount of additional income than had been expected, which meant that for the year ended December 2019 **we made a surplus of £2,375**.

There were a number of things which drove the Club's improved financial position:

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- The Club ran its first 2 **Beginner's Courses** which generated extra income of **£1,130**, made up of both course fees and membership subs
- We made of saving of **£585 on the AGM** held in 2019, as the room hire fee was refunded
- The **training budget went largely unspent** due to insufficient interest from members (for example for Run Leader courses), resulting in a £360 under-spend, and
- The **Mid Week Road Race event** which we hosted cost **£220 less** than we had initially expected.

Inevitably, running your Club costs money, so I want to highlight some of the things which **your subs were spent on** last year:

- **The main ongoing expenditure for the Club is the room hire at St George's.** We spent £1,000 on this in 2019.
- We spent about **£500 on various Club Affiliations** and race fees which enable you to compete for free in events such as the Mid Week Road Race League and Cross Country
- The trophies and medals which many of you will pick up this evening for completing your Club Standards cost about £400
- **Mara Yamauchi** came to the Club again to run one of her training sessions and to give a talk, which cost just under £300.
- The **Track Nights** which the Club started running cost about £200
- The **Mid-Week** event we hosted cost nearly £300
- We bought a new **event shelter for about £160**
- And finally, there are a number of **administrative costs** such as IT and the website which cost about £140

In terms of the **Club's assets**, at the year-end we had stock (comprised of Club running kit) of just under £1,000 having just had a delivery of new kit before Christmas, and a bank balance of just over £7,000. The cash position fluctuates significantly throughout the year; most of our subscription income is received in April (or sometimes even later for those of you who don't like to pay promptly...!), with various lumpy payments throughout the year. For example, already in 2020 we have paid over £400 for the kit which was delivered in December, and we need to pay our rent for the room at St George's.

We have just **moved the Club's bank account from HSBC to Lloyds**. The key reason for doing this was to enable us to make payments on-line, whilst still requiring two signatories to authorise each payment. So going forward, **please don't make any payments to the old bank account** which you may have stored in your own banking apps.

Overall, whilst 2019 was an unexpectedly **healthy year for the Club financially**, the Club can't assume that the same will happen again this year. Not only were some of things which helped us financially last year one-off in nature, but we already know that **our expenditure will increase this year**:

- The events which Simon mentioned that we hope to host in 2020 cost money to put on – a public event in particular would require some upfront financial outlay

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- And the St George's room hire charge is likely to increase this year as we expect to be charged for the full time that we use the room (for instance for the beginners courses), as well as for the times when we use St George's field and their track, all of which we have previously received free of charge.

Just before I finish, I'd like to **say a quick thank-you**: whilst you will know me as the Treasurer (well if you didn't before this evening, you do now), what you may not know is that there are two of us doing the financial admin for the Club. Alison Andrews was co-opted onto the committee during the year, so I'd just like to publicly acknowledge, and say thank you for, all the hard work which she puts in to help support the Club and its members.

And now I'd like to hand over to our resident statistician Lyndon Hearn to update you on all things membership related. Over to you "Stato"...

Membership Report – Lyndon Hearn – membership Secretary

Thank you Chas 'just one more signature' Andrews...

So let's talk a little bit about us - the members.

Total membership this year is **227**. This is a **growth of 15** on our membership last year of 212.

Our membership is composed of **175 renewals** from last year, and **52 new sign ups**. **26 of those have joined us from beginners courses**, where as part of the course benefits we include a year of membership. It's good to know that we are broadly getting things right.

It's great to see our numbers growing and of course **with growing membership comes the growing membership fees** which supports everything that Simon has told you about, as well as beer fund. But we should be mindful that whilst some of our beginners course members have gone on to participate in our regular club sessions, not all have and thus **we may not see them choose to renew** in a few months time. Thus our core membership count is more realistically flat year on year.

Another thing important to me is that 37 of our members in 2018 chose not to renew, and whilst there's many reasons this could be from moving away to a general dislike of the drivel I put on facebook, it's important for us that we remain an **inclusive club** that offers all our members what they love and that's about everything from the experiences we offer through to feeling safe and happy when running with other members on a normal club night.

Our members who are also part of **England Athletics has seen considerable growth**. We have **154** versus 123 last year, and thus our overall club participation in EA is up from nearly 60% to **nearly 70%**. EA membership offers some important individual benefits such as race discounts and eligibility for some specific races. If we can retain our number of first-claim holders **above 150 next year we will have TWO ballot places for London Marathon** - to double our member chances to get a non-charity place outside of Good For Age, the Ballot. Never has there been so much opportunity to pound the pavements of London!

So let's talk a little about our **membership composition**. Perhaps in this new decade gender is less important, but this year **46% of our members 'identify as female'** :-). This is a considerable shift

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since last year which was nearer 40%. Now, there has not been a rise in men masquerading as women in order to improve their WAVA score, all Viddy does seem to be role modelling this. The main driver is our **beginners courses** which do **tend to attract female participants**. We feel this is a **good sign** as potentially we are offering something here that our main club does not, thus supporting our mission to be inclusive.

We have a great heritage - **83 of our members** have been with us for **over 5 years**, and many of them are attending today. Thank you for your loyalty, and your support in so many ways over the years.

Whilst the vast majority of our members can be labeled with that depressing title of 'middle aged', we have a solid representation from the younger generation with **8 members under 25**, myself included of course and, **19 members over 60** including our lovely Bryan Yates and Georgie Hamilton who continue to churn out races with smiles and good cheer. So whilst our diversity is ok, we'll continue to see what we can do to inspire a more representative spectrum of the population to take up, or join us for their running.

So when **we look ahead** there are a few things that are on the committee's agenda. How can we **keep our club a great place for existing members**, how can we **appeal to runners who are not part of a club yet**, and **how can we help non-runners** enjoy the sport that we love so much (when the race is over, of course).

As Chas shared last year was good financially and led to a surplus, **but a large number of one-offs of income and low spending have meant this is not something we can rely on repeating**. We're also mindful that we have and want to continue to expand our offering with things like more guest speakers and track nights to maximise our appeal to existing and future members. With all this in mind, and a generally static membership base, we have **decided to increase our membership fee to £25**. This is the first increase in 10 years, which is a 2.3% annual growth rate for those that love stats (or perhaps it's just me?) so feels fair and close to inflation.

You'll soon see the renewal process start so please help us to complete the process promptly and encourage to do so too. It's now a sizeable amount of admin including processing EA memberships, and even if each person only takes 10 minutes that still 38 hours of time. In real terms that's about 13 parkrun sandwiches, and you know how much I love my sandwiches!

And just a final note. Whilst we all love running, accidents, sometimes serious, do happen - so when doing your renewal please double-check your ICE and allergy details. Thanks all and here's to another fantastic year of running ahead!

And I'd now like to **hand over to Michael** to discuss the election of new committee members.

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Election of new committee members –Michael Hessey officiating as Club Sec on 4 items

1. Alison's position on the committee was co-opted last year as she hadn't been an Arrows member for 12 months. We'd now like her position to be ratified . Her nomination form has been submitted.
2. Graham's 3 year term as Chair is complete and we have had no nominations for the role of Chair. He is therefore willing to stand again on the committee for a further period, acting as Chair until a replacement is found and then become an ordinary committee member . His nomination form for a new term has been submitted on that basis.
3. My (Michael's) 3 year term as Sec is also complete and we have had no nominations for the role of Sec. I (Michael) am willing to stand again on the committee for a further period, as acting club sec until a replacement is found and then become an ordinary committee . My nomination form has been submitted on that basis.
4. We have had committee nominations for 3 new committee members to fill vacant positions on the committee from Lisa Munt, Alex James and Rowland Hughes

As the total number of nominations received is less than the number of vacancies, I'd like to declare Alison, Graham, Michael, Lisa, Alex and Rowland duly elected.

Q and A – None received

Chairs closing address

Thank you, Mr Secretary.

I sent an email a while ago asking for any questions for the committee to be submitted in advance of the AGM but as none were received I'm going to go straight through to my closing comments.

I'd like to take this opportunity to offer my thanks to the committee for all their efforts in 2019. I'd also like to thank those people who aren't on the committee but still regularly help with track nights, Cross country teams, League tables, cake, Away events etc etc.

I'm delighted to welcome some new members onto the committee but we don't yet have anyone specifically to take on the role of Chair or Secretary which, according to our constitution are two of the three mandatory roles we must have. At our first committee meeting we'll be looking at all the roles etc of the committee members and as soon as things are decided in relation to who is doing what, this information will be published on the website. Michael and I will continue in the short term to act in our current roles whilst we find replacements and begin a handover process.

Looks like 2020 is going to be another busy year for the club. Remember that if you have suggestions for improvements or changes please do let us know – we don't need an AGM for that. But please be prepared to roll your sleeves up and do some of the work yourselves. It is your club.

We will be starting our 2020 / 2021 Membership Renewals process in March ahead of the 1st April anniversary this year. I would ask that you would please renew your memberships promptly and if you can please include the England Athletics option.

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Do please consider getting involved with the running of the club. Even with our new committee members there is still plenty to do. If you'd like to think about getting involved with leading some activities that would be great. Just let me know. Just to re-iterate, we do have something in the budget for run leader training etc. and we really should have qualified run leaders on every activity to ensure that we are following our own safety guidelines etc

And finally, I'd like to offer our thanks to Stephen and Rhona for organising social events throughout the year and in particular for this evening – and invite you all to shortly rejoin our guests in the main room for the Awards evening.

Thank you all for coming. Have a great evening and a successful running year in 2020. Enjoy your races tomorrow morning for those of you who have something booked.

The AGM is now CLOSED and I'd like to hand over to Stephen our Social Secretary who will confirm what happens next.